making the CMCN official comes from the discussion of the institutionalization of a “sister” council, that of Hip Hop. Sergio, an employee of the Coordenadoria, describes the importance of turning the Casa de Hip Hop (the House of Hip Hop) into an official Council of Hip Hop in municipal law. The House of Hip Hop is a building that was provided by city hall to the organized hip hop community, and the creation of the Hip Hop Council is another extension of the Black movement into municipal participatory politics. The House of Hip Hop always geared its social and cultural projects towards poor, Afro-Brazilian youth, and prior to the Council’s formation, the House already had projects that were carried out in relation to the youth in the poorer neighborhoods of the periphery. The fight for a space for the youth voice in the community illustrates not only that the youth desires to be involved in municipal politics by diversifying the number of voices present, but that Afro-Brazilian youth also desire to be included in this diversity. Sergio says:

“Since the beginning of the [House of Hip Hop] there have been projects. What didn’t exist was the Council effective in the calendar of the municipality. It is one thing for you to establish something for four years. It is another thing to guarantee that the project stays permanent in city hall independent of who is in the administration” (Personal interview with Sergio, April 27, 2004).

For a council to be officially recognized is a significant achievement, as social authoritarianism, military dictatorship, and clientelist political practices stymied Brazil’s democracy. The various segments of the Black movement and the Afro-Brazilian organizations dealing with culture and education have a forum that unifies the various segments to debate specific needs as well as long-term goals for policies to improve the conditions for the community. The Black movement wants the public
policies they implement, including the creation of forums such as the Councils, to continue in the future. The law is one method to guarantee continuity:

“The idea that we have here regarding public policy is that we want it implemented and permanent. It is not only something for four years while the PT is in power. We want that the PT stays [in power]...[but] if the PT leaves, we want that the public policies that were constructed are guaranteed...independent of who is in power because it is a right of all people. The idea is not just to construct policy for four years” (Personal interview with Sergio, April 27, 2004).

Whether or not an administration agrees with what a council does, they have to respect that institution:

“If you construct just the house [of Hip Hop], you don’t have any concrete instrument or mechanism to guarantee that it will remain. This project, if you don’t have something that puts it into effect, will depend on the good will and desire of the administrator that is in city hall. If [the mayor] doesn’t agree and it is only the house, then she can say that she doesn’t like Hip Hop and it’s over” (Personal interview with Sergio, April 27, 2004).

The establishment of this forum means that city hall must at least acknowledge the work that is taking place within the Council. They may not like the CMCN and may not want to consult it for policy suggestions, but the CMCN still remains a public forum assuring that the Black community can continue to exert pressure on the government from an official forum. They will also be able to continue to debate, formulate, and propose public policies and projects to assist the population they represent. The forum for representation becomes legitimate:

“If the Council is officially in effect, [the mayor] cannot [get rid of the Council]. If she wants to get rid of it, she will say ‘gee! This is a project that is in the law, approved by the city council, so it is legitimate and is part of the municipal calendar.’ She doesn’t have to like [the Council]
or agree [with it], she has to respect it” (Personal interview with Sergio, April 27, 2004).

The existence of the Council in law is not a guarantee that city hall will be responsive to issues affecting the Black community in Campinas. After Sergio explained the strength of the Council in law, I asked him what the real power of the Council is to guarantee that the policies related to the Black community continue. He responded:

“All the power. The power is 100% because it is what I told you earlier. No one has to like [us], we aren’t looking for people to like us. The intention of the Black movement is not to construct projects or policies so that you think we are beautiful and fabulous. This is not our intention. What I want is the right to respect our history, the history that we constructed in this country. Because of this, the fact that we effectuate these proposals is to make the municipality respect us… The government can fight and say that they will not give us a budget and won’t invest. Sure, but they will create a problem with the movement in the municipality because the movement will react. It will go to the media and say that the government is this and that, that they don’t have respect for legitimate organs of the movement in the city” (Personal interview with Sergio, April 27, 2004).

The point made here is that the existence of the Council is a right of the citizenry, one that, at least at the point of formation, was backed by the municipal government. It is official and those that participate can use its position to exert their rights to participation and dialogue. The institutionalization of the Council is a condition for broadening the definition of citizenship, as it becomes a forum for the articulation of demands by Afro-Brazilians. Moreover, it is an institution which restructures and redefines governance through representation, bringing activists and organizations into the realm of policy deliberation and consultation, broadening their capabilities to influence and create policies and projects.
3.1.2 Bridging Government and Society and Creating Political Citizens

The CMCN functions as a bridge between the government and society, opening a forum for dialog between the two due to their composition. The Council and its members take “proposals from the movement to the government, and bring the response from the government to the movement.”¹ This particular council isn’t in the legislative branch of the government,² but it is an institutionalized forum where both society and the government participate to discuss policies and projects. In this forum, Afro-Brazilians can organize themselves and create the condition for dialoging with the government.³

The new citizenship involves creating a culture where individuals are more active in their role as citizens. The institutional nature of the Council molds people into politically engaged citizens by promoting a culture of active participation. In addition, individuals develop deliberative skills as councilors, helping them engage with members of their community as well as with the government. The CMCN demonstrates is that the Afro-Brazilian community has the political preparation and capability to create policies and projects:

“Now, when you form a council, you are politically prepared to approach and discuss, we always say bater de frente com o governo [confront the government head on]. Bater de frente means that you arrive, put in your proposal, and learn to concede at the right moment and insist at the right moment. So when you form this council that has this type of political preparation to have disputes with any mayor, governor, or president, then

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¹ Personal interview with Ciro, April 7, 2004.
² There are various types of councils, some of which have a more direct influence on policy making. See Tatagiba (2002) for a more detailed description of the types of councils created.
³ Ibid.
it is an interesting phenomenon that the entire movement sees with other eyes … this is why the movement in Campinas has the respect of other cities, even [the respect] of the government itself. [It is] because we organized ourselves to the point of approaching [the government] and … discuss [the projects] with the mayor of the city” (Personal interview with Ciro, April 7, 2004).

Ciro’s statements indicate that legitimacy is not only important on the level of creating an institutionalized forum, but also in creating a political citizen who values her/himself enough to participate in the dialogue with the municipality and even talk to the mayor directly. This type of political citizen takes participation beyond voting and inclusion in an already defined political system by redefining political engagement and citizen responsibility, establishing active citizenship as a right of the individual.

As in studies of the Participatory Budget (Abers 2000), the technical expertise and the ability to become this type of political citizen is not the same for all. This delves into the question of who is capable of having their voice represented in the Council, and in turn, in the dialogue with the government. These larger questions relate not only to the issue of the formation of community, but also to involving and training those that may not have the technical capacity or time to participate. Despite these issues, the Council is a forum where the community organizes jointly and has a dialogue with the municipal government.

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4 Abers (2000: 8-12) discusses the “problems of participation”: implementation problems, inequality problems, and co-optation problems. The issue of technical capacity falls under “inequality problems”, which involves lack of access due to location and time for individuals who are disadvantaged, as well as those who lack formal education may have limited capacity for understanding complex policy issues. Women, who have domestic responsibilities, also have less time to participate. Issues of self-confidence in these forums are also of concern.
3.1.3 Bringing the Community Together

The Council brings together various segments of the Black community in an institutional forum with the ultimate goal of the eradication of racial inequality and the valorization of Afro-Brazilian history and culture, be it through cultural, social, religious, or educational activities. As each organization continues to conduct its own work outside the Council, the Council provides a point for these various groups to discuss short-term and long-term goals in policy and projects within Campinas. The Council structure, with its various working groups, allows representatives to put their energy into policy initiatives that the Council constructs and advocates jointly for their implementation. This is linked to legitimacy and political institutionalization, as policy suggestions will not be coming from various groups at once who may not have the resources to advocate for their own proposal, but from one, unified forum that pools resources by prioritizing particular issues and policies:

“The Council ends up taking the initiatives of the participating organizations. Imagine if each organization decided to go to the municipal government and say that it would like a project [to be implemented] for something. It would be an immensity of entities going there and demanding and ending up not having much success… [in the Council] all the entities are more or less organized and united for one single fight: the struggle against racism” (Personal interview with Lajara Janaina, April 15, 2004).

Lajara indicates that isolating particular issues or attempting to approach fewer policies at a time unites the broader movement. All organizations can continue to do their own work outside the Council, but what policy consultations coming from the CMCN do is form a “united front” of pressure for particular policies. CMCN participants can negotiate and determine what is viable and important and learn what the government is willing to do and what will take more discussion and convincing.
The politics of identity in the Council involve negotiating prior ties between community groups and strategizing political interactions within the Council and with the government. The CMCN provides a structure for the formation of policy that guides efforts from the Black community. It does not automatically provide a definition of the community or a strategy to articulate demands, as notions of what can or should be defined as part of the Black community vary. What is significant in relation to the question of citizenship is that an effort must be made within the Council to construct a definition of the community, or of a main goal, that is useful for formulating and articulating policies. The structure of the Council, with its working groups, as well as the debates that take place over policy construction, brings the diverse segments of Black civil society organizations together, where they come face to face and attempt to define a set of priorities.

3.1.4 Dedication to the Process

The president of the Council is optimistic about the prospects for the Council because she feels that the people involved in the Council are hoping to progress on developing and implementing policies. The desire and determination of those wanting to move the Council forward make her feel that these people will continue to participate. Informants often mentioned how participating is a dedication of time above and beyond an individual’s particular job. Participation is voluntary and not remunerated in any way. The extra time that many people dedicate to the Council demonstrates their willingness to be there—they are dedicated to the idea that the Council can make a difference. The new citizenship is supported by dedication and active involvement insofar as the rights that result from Council activities need to be defined and constructed. These rights are not given, as in liberal notions of universal

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5 Personal interview, June 24, 2004.
rights, but created and demanded when these universal rights are not upheld or do not account for the particular experience and situation of certain citizens.

As Council participants construct citizenship in this way, they reach spaces that other institutions may not:

“The Council has performed an important role of reaching certain spaces that the Coordenadoria has not. The Council has been able to maintain this…During the past four years of the existence of the Council, the relationship with the Coordenadoria…in asking for support, creating projects in association with the Council, has been very positive…the Council has shown that it is an important organ, to help put pressure and make claims from the government. [It has been] efficient and effective in this public policy” (Personal interview with Sergio, April 27, 2004).

The diversity within the Council is a strength that may be one reason why it has been able to reach populations and organizations the Coordenadoria has not. Creating unity out of diversity is not an easy process, but the diversity does allow the Council to reach these particular places and people that may not be explicitly targeted by legislative organs created to address Afro-Brazilian issues that are run by government staff. The CMCN’s level of activity is another strength. The CMCN has even served as an example for other councils, as many people have sought it out to learn how to establish councils in their municipalities.\(^6\) Networking between councils is important for constructing the new citizenship as advice and positive experiences are communicated to other locations, assisting them in creating their own councils. This spreads the number of institutions and activities to other municipalities, as well as demonstrating that the right to organize this forum and participate in government institutions exists and can be used in a productive manner.

\(^6\) Personal interview with Sergio, April 27, 2004.
Overall, the institution of the CMCN as an organized, legitimate forum is seen as a victory for the Black movement and Afro-Brazilian community in Campinas:

“We have reached the conclusion that the Council is a strategic space. It is fundamental for monitoring and evaluating the public policies that are organized by the state” (Personal interview with Sandra, June 23, 2004).

Sandra, a Campinas activist now working at the federal level, frames the Council’s role as a “watchdog” for how policies and projects are moving along in the municipality. Members scrutinize what is being done in relation to their needs and exert pressure on lawmakers. This relates to the earlier point about legitimacy as an institution, as a council that involves representatives of both government and civil society to discuss issues of public interest.

Many members of the Council express that the battle against racial inequality will not be won overnight and that the institutionalization of the Council is important and it must be strengthened as a forum:

“We have a long journey ahead … but the strengthening of these instruments, of the councils and these first services for the implementation of state public policy is fundamental to construct the network of solidarity and accompaniment and monitoring, or else we will never promote equality in this country” (Personal interview with Sandra, June 23, 2004).

Sandra’s opinion demonstrates how citizenship is an active, continuing process. The right of the Council was fought for and won, but the continued activity, maintenance of legitimacy, and exertion of power depend on the participants. They must continue to make demands upon the local government and continue to work for a broader understanding of why the Afro-Brazilian situation deserves special attention. In the politics of the Black community Council, individuals define and redefine citizenship
rights by making particular claims and constructing rights that account for the
specificity of Afro-Brazilian history and the experience of what it means to be black in
Brazil.

3.2 Difficulties Working with the Government, Internal Issues, and Fears of Co-

3.2.1 Understanding the Purpose of the Council

There are many issues that affect the organizational functioning of the CMCN. One of these is the need to clarify the purpose or role of the CMCN. There needs to be a clear understanding of what the goals of the Council are, what the role of the entities are within the Council, both on the side of the government and of civil society, and how these goals are to be achieved. The president of the CMCN described this dilemma:

“It’s hard to speak about what the Council is presently. We have not been able to have discussions about policy because we have gone through many different things within the Council. The entities, they don’t believe [in the Council] anymore, because when you form a council, a person has a particular interest. She believes that the Council will deliberate and obtain funds for her to equip her entity. The Council is not that. The Council is supposed to discuss public policy and try to forward it to the executive in order to have the dialogue and discuss what needs to be done in the city with relation to the Black community” (Personal interview with Juliana Nicomedes, June 24, 2004).

The result of this thinking is that some representatives end up becoming frustrated with the meetings and the fact that they don’t see the results they imagine should be happening, for example, they come searching for funds but do not receive any. The behavior of advocating for one’s own entity causes disunity in the Council. As the
president’s quote illustrates, the Council is about promoting and formulating policy for the whole community, not advocating for one’s own entity. Diversity can be divisive in these cases where there is a need for prioritizing public spending.

Council members such as João, are adamant about unity in the Council. The unity of the Council is important because the primary function is to bring together a variety of interests, issues, and points of view from the Black community to come to a consensus for that community and decide how certain issues should be approached:

“The Council is an important channel to formulate policy for the Black community, extremely important, as long as the people who are in the Council work together. I can’t think of the Council as for the benefit of my particular organization…I have to think of things for the community as a whole, for everyone, for the Black community” (Interview with João, June 25, 2004).

João is not advocating for the suppression of particular interests and needs, he is commenting on how self-interest often supercedes thinking more broadly about what issues affect the community the most. He is advocating for individuals to consider issues that are broader than, and beyond, the particular areas they work in. This is where a consensus on issues would be important, to make strategic decisions about what needs to and can be addressed.

In the Council, no particular organization or government secretariat should have more power than others. The Council is a forum for open discussion. One Council member, a representative of a government office on the Council, explains how their position in the municipal structure caused people to treat them as though they could get things done better than others:

“People demanded a lot from me…I was from [a government] office. People said I had to get things done. This happened so much so that I couldn’t go to the Council. [The Council] is a group of people, it’s not
one person...I am one Black [person] on the Council just like the others” (Personal interview June, 2004).

According to some of the Council members, in order to improve the process, people need to stop thinking in the narrow manner discussed above when they come to the Council. For the Council to function, the organizations need to think of the Black community as a whole: “The Council for the Black community must think like the Black community.” This again raises questions about defining the community and its interests. Is it possible to account for all interests, and, if not, then how does the Council proceed? This is always a question for organizations that involve individuals with a variety of experiences, ideas, and abilities. When dealing with the topic of racial inequality, a topic that many people feel in their daily lives, debates may become sensitive and the lack of quick, tangible results may lead to consternation. Many of those participating in the Council know that the goals are long term, but nonetheless they become frustrated when their suggestions get delayed or ignored. The process of constructing citizenship is complicated and ongoing. Moreover, when the politics of identity is involved, incorporating the variety of interests and conceptions of community can be a difficult task. How does a space like the Council account for the diversity of the Black community while defining and advocating for the “broader community”?

In her short time in the Council, the representative of the secretariat of judicial issues has observed some disunity caused by particular expectations of Council politics. In her opinion, the Council must be able to interact with the community it represents so that it can verify its needs. Verifying these needs would help unify the Council members around particular issues.

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“There are various groups [in the Council], such as hip hop, there is capoeira, there are various segments of Afro-Brazilian culture, and each one has their own ideas, their own convictions, and sometimes they don’t agree with the other segments. This ends up creating a fissure. They have to understand that this forum is a forum for assembly to bring not the Afro-Brazilian participant in a specific culture [or organization], but the Afro-Brazilian as a whole” (Personal interview with Claudia Paioli, June 23, 2004).

In this respect, people cannot view the Council from a self-interested perspective and must be open to having their ideas critiqued or modified. Coming together is “a moment of confluence so that the Council can have power,” and this moment of confluence must be taken advantage of.

The frustration that some of the members in the Council experience stems from the necessity they see for policies assisting Afro-Brazilians. Every meeting that does not produce policies, or discussions that realize policies, is a meeting that many feel is wasted. The Council’s role is to formulate policies and proposals to help those that need it most. This role, as well as the struggle against racial inequality, is much broader than the individual organizations that make up the Council. Thinking individualistically, or in a manner that views one’s own organization or method of addressing issues as more important than others, contributes to power disputes within the Council. According to one Council member, there is a fight for power within the Council, a dispute signifying that “people still do not understand what a council is…the Council has to have eyes for the city, it can’t have eyes for a specific group or a specific action…This is a problem for everyone because to this day we have been unable to get past this dispute.” Under these circumstances, the councilor said, it is difficult to construct policy for the Black community.

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8 Personal interview with Claudia Paioli, June 23, 2004.
9 Personal interview June 2004.
This same Council member believes that part of the problem with unity may stem from the vision that each member has of the Council itself: different visions of means and ends make it extremely hard to come to a consensus. This makes it difficult to demonstrate to the government that the Council is truly able to construct public policies if the Council itself cannot reach a consensus. “For us to make demands to the government, we must be strengthened.”

Several Council members see more unity and a set vision as things that would strengthen the Council. Thinking like the “whole community” is not such an easy task, as the community is made up of diverse individuals who may approach issues from different perspectives and have different conceptions of how to address them. The key for the Council may be to formulate a political identity with the purpose of improving the conditions for Afro-Brazilians in general in the various areas in which the Council seeks to establish policies and projects. The community is constituted by a variety of interests and needs based on their prior experience in politics, their access to government forums and officials, their class and gender, and their freetime. In addition, there are variations in the ability of community members to express these interests and needs, raising the question that some voices may be privileged over others through particular leanings of those within the Council or through the capability to articulate ones voice. These aspects have the potential to be dealt with within the Council through both participation and awareness on the part of the representatives that these imbalances can be issues. Some council members are aware of the question of full participation of all representatives, as well as respect for the various voices present. As they expressed in interviews, this is something that can be worked on and must be pointed out to participants.

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10 Personal interview June 2004.
11 Personal interviews April and June 2004.
The Internal Rules of the Council, elaborated, discussed, and approved by the members in September and October, 2004, are a document with comprehensive guidelines on the role of the Council, the designation of representatives in the Council, and the creation of the various working groups. The careful review and dissemination of the Internal Rules by all members of the Council could serve to channel disagreement and the pursuit of individual interests described above towards a more effective outcome.\textsuperscript{12} Disagreement is part of deliberative processes and indicates a diversity of perceptions and recommendations. Disagreement can make debates more robust by expressing all views, but at the same time, disagreements that stall the process for too long may affect legitimacy. If the Council never creates proposals, the municipal government, as well as the participants and Black community more broadly, may see it as an ineffective institution. The structural guidelines provided by the Internal Rules are one step towards a “moment of confluence.”

In examining the Council as a political institution with a set goal in mind, an understanding of local governance and how the Council can be most effective should base itself on the past 4 years of experience as well as what occurs in the near future. The above opinions and perceptions of Council members draw out several possibilities for making the Council purpose and process more clear. For example, educating all members on local political processes and how the Council can be most effective may stem some of the disagreements that are related to organizational issues and the role of the Council. If the Council develops and asserts itself as a solid local forum for engaging with the municipal administration and continues to maintain the structure and train its members in this regard, then the possibility for a smoother process may present itself.

\textsuperscript{12} The idea of having a set of rules that all members of the council ascribe to was indicated as a good thing by several council members in interviews.
3.2.2 Working with the Government

There are several difficulties in working with the municipal government on issues related to race. One particular concern for the Council is the change of political parties. Currently, the Council works really well with the Coordenadoria and the Workers’ Party (PT) government. The Coordenadoria is unique to the PT, which poses interesting questions of continuity upon the transition to a municipal government run by another political party. The PT has a specific focus on certain citizenship issues, putting questions of race on its list of target policy areas. Other political parties have different foci. Nicea Amauro, the Council representative for the Casa Laudelina de Campos Mello (a Women’s organization), expressed this transiency in the following manner:

“Working with the government fluctuates a lot. The city of Campinas in the last 16 years, … has had four different political parties that have occupied power. At least, what we have noticed when we work with city hall, is that each party has its own directives and takes these directives to all the municipal organs. So when the party changes, the people with whom you have to speak also change, the focus that is the general question changes, and that’s the way that we have to interact with them. There are the governments that are a bit more accessible to popular intervention in its directives and others that are totally inaccessible (Personal interview with Nicea Amauro, April 14, 2004).

The autonomy of the CMCN provides advantages in relation to advocating in formulating policies, as it is independent of political parties and remains as a forum in the municipality regardless of the administration. Despite this, the change of political parties still remains an issue, because, as described by Nicea above, organizations that have a relationship with the government need to readjust to new personnel and administrative procedures that may be carried out in a different manner. Moreover, the
CMCN may have more or less links to the local government depending on the treatment of race issues by the particular administration, as well as general commitments to participatory democracy.

The PT government is accessible because it tries to foster a dialog with civil society. It is important to consider such a strong relationship with the PT in relation to the possibility of a change in which party is governing the municipality. João expressed annoyance that the people in the Black movement are not thinking enough about this possibility. If forums that are autonomous from political parties, such as the CMCN, are not strengthened as autonomous forums, the Black movement could find themselves in the position they were in before the PT—that of having little political clout in the municipality. These sentiments reflect both a history and fear of cooptation and its inverse, exclusion from policy processes. Corporatism and clientelism have a history in Brazil as strategies of political parties to gain support and votes. What João is describing is the need for autonomy from political administrations that allows the Council to build a partnership that is not based on cooptation or clientelist practices.

The Coordenadoria currently has power that goes beyond the deliberation and advocacy of the Council because it is a part of the PT administration. If another party enters the mayor’s office, the Coordenadoria will most likely be dismantled as it is a PT institution. This is why João complains about the unity of the Black movement and that the movement must be broad and consider and allow space for all interests, not just those that follow the line of the PT or particular organizations. If the CMCN is too close to the PT, then their ability to negotiate or interact with other parties may be eclipsed. Moreover, if only the PT party line is privileged by the Black movement, then the diversity of political affiliation that possibly exists in the Black community

more broadly in Campinas, may alienate people from supporting or participating in CMCN initiatives. According to João, the Black movement needs to expand its consideration of various points of view that stem from the Black community. With this expansion, the movement will capture the support of a broader range of individuals.

The sentiment about privileged positions of PT party members within the CMCN, or the Black community, once again raises the question of voice: who speaks for the community and what ideological or political positions and opinions are favored. The CMCN was created during the tenure of the PT by the Coordenadoria and many of the representatives in the Council are affiliated with the PT. In the Campinas context, the PT has had party officials that have been the most responsive to policies and projects to address racial inequality, so they receive support from many in the Black community. In addition, the history of the MNU’s affiliation with the PT also draws many of those that advocate for Afro-Brazilian issues towards the PT. This relationship puts many who are involved in the party in a better position to advocate their position as they have connections to representatives and local officials. As João clearly stated, this close affiliation may lead to problems of transition. Moreover, it can alienate many or even prevent outreach to those not affiliated with the PT. Many Afro-Brazilians are not necessarily affiliated with leftist parties, so too strong of a party line may inhibit bringing them into the process, or at least sparking interest in the Council activities. Creating a broader coalition of political support for initiatives created in the Council may sustain its ability to continue its work under other administrations.

15 Data regarding the political affiliations of those within the Black movement or the council was not collected, therefore an examination of the membership within the Black movement in Campinas was not carried out.
Despite the PT’s more open form of governance and some of the positive benefits of civil society’s interlocution and pressure on the government, several of those interviewed complained about the amount the administration is doing or the lack of truly enforcing the implementation of certain programs. One example is the screening of all newborns in Campinas for Sickle-cell Anemia. The law exists on the books, but, according to some, has not been adequately implemented.\textsuperscript{16} Moreover, the government has not done much to train the health professionals both that deal with the disease and within the health secretariat to treat the disease.\textsuperscript{17} This demand is one that the Black movement took to the legislative branch. The movement and civil society try to contribute to the articulation and resolution of these problems.\textsuperscript{18}

The Council is unable to effect change on its own because it is not a legislative organ, therefore it needs the municipal government to act as a partner. As one interviewee expressed, “if you don’t have a partner within the state, an organism that takes the demands and makes them a priority, you don’t move forward”.\textsuperscript{19} Partnership in this case means sympathy and responsiveness, as well as more commitment and conviction, towards what the Council is trying to do. The Council needs to cultivate the understanding of how racial inequality manifests itself in order to educate government officials about why race needs to be a specific target of policy.

The interviewees all allude to the inability of many party officials to see the complexity of race relations in Brazil and that racial inequality needs policy implementation to deal with it. They feel that change in relation to issues affecting the Black community is perceived by many of the members of the Council as occurring at too slow a pace. They often cite the difficulty of truly cracking the mask of racial

\textsuperscript{16} Personal Interviews, April-June 2004.
\textsuperscript{17} Personal interview with Nicea Quentino Amauro, April 14, 2004.
\textsuperscript{18} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{19} Personal interview with Sandra, June 23, 2004.
democracy and educating civil society and government officials about racial
discrimination. Moreover, dealing with the racial thematic officially through
legislation and government programs is something relatively new, making the
specificity of Afro-Brazilian issues still difficult to deal with. Even for a party like the
PT, truly tackling the racial thematic is slow coming. “With the PT today, Brazil, Lula,
we have achieved many things, many things…but it is still beneath the expectations
that we have of politics.”

An example that illustrates this lack of understanding is Juliana’s experience as
a representative of the Black community in the municipal Participatory Budget (OP).
She encountered a general ignorance on the part of those involved in the budget
Council (both government and societal) about why she would be requesting funds for
projects specific to the Black community:

“There have to be policies especially for various groups. This is a
difficult thing because people don’t understand … For example, when
we are going to organize [in the OP] a particular party, everyone one
will participate because everyone has clothes, transportation, etc.
People are incapable of understanding that it is not that way, that
everyone [does not have] the same rights … For you to convince
someone in the OP that these things are necessary for the Black
community is hard … even in the other councils, when you go to
discuss with the women’s council, they don’t understand that there is a
difference between white and black women. It’s the same thing with
homosexuals. Why does the black homosexual suffer more? Because
he is black. Because people think that a black person cannot be a
homosexual. People have this view” (Personal interview with Juliana
Nicomedes, June 24, 2004).

She indicated that because of this sort of sentiment, you cannot merely claim
that people need to implement policies to address Afro-Brazilian issues, you
also have to convince them that the policies are necessary. Convincing others

20 Personal interview with Lajara Correa, April 15, 2004.
that public money is necessary and needed for a particular population is part of making claims legitimate in the eye of the public through deliberative democracy. The difficulty in convincing seems to come from the lack of understanding of the specificity of race that stems from historical conceptions of race and inequality in Brazil. People in the OP even reiterate arguments akin to the concept of racial democracy where they tell her “if you [pursue a policy based on race], you are going to be discriminating against people.” She feels that if she tries to convince people, they are going to think that she is prejudiced.\textsuperscript{21}

The construction of the new citizenship entails the construction of what counts as a legitimate rights claim: what subjects and issues constitute the material of rights. In the case of Afro-Brazilians, they are struggling against a history that has not only limited the creation of policies to address inequality, but also limited the ability of people in society, particularly many government officials, to understand race as significant. The guarantee of rights and equality is being created through the struggle of the Black community to educate people and insert the racial theme into municipal politics. “There are whites that also need [to form a racial consciousness],”\textsuperscript{22} a consciousness about how and why race-based initiatives are important, Juliana expressed regarding whites in politics and in society more broadly.

\textbf{3.2.3 Stronger Institutions, Resources, and Educating Municipal Employees}

João, the former representative of the a government office in the Council who is active in labor, when asked about the contribution of the government in spaces such as the Council stated that “this [current] administration has made many advances on

\textsuperscript{21} Personal interview with Juliana Nicomedes, June 24, 2004.
\textsuperscript{22} Ibid.
the racial question in [Campinas]. I believe that this government is where we have had the most advancement on the racial question.”\textsuperscript{23} This perception of advancement does not eclipse his feeling of dissatisfaction with how little is being done. He feels that “[the Black Community] played an important role in the victory of the PT in Campinas and the [Black community] is not content with any of the secretariats” in relation to forming policy in favor of the Black community.\textsuperscript{24} He feels that the movement should have fought for a more powerful forum within the municipal government, like their own secretariat. A stronger forum would give Afro-Brazilians more power to implement policies, as well as provide them with a physical office space and a staff that would deal with questions of racial inequality as their primary job in the local government.

Augusto from the Coordenadoria also sees the need for something internal to the government structure that provides a more structured institution for addressing racial inequality:

“I have a proposal to resolve this, that we have within the actual government a working group to address racial inequality … It would be internal to the government. Within the government you have to have meetings at 8 am, the people are commissioned employees, they have positions [in the government], they have responsibilities … [The Council] doesn’t have the ability to do this. They only have one meeting per month. We have difficulties because the Council, depending on what is submitted [to the municipality], is not a government decision. It is one of the Council and, in all cases, [only] a dialogue, an interlocution” (Personal interview with Augusto, June 24, 2004).

This body located within an actual branch of the government would also exist regardless of which political party is in power. It would be, in a sense, a

\textsuperscript{23} Personal interview with João, June 25, 2004.
\textsuperscript{24} Ibid.
stronger, further institutionalized forum within the municipal government than
the CMCN.

Many CMCN members expressed that another difficulty in working with the
government involved the concern and feeling that issues affecting the Black
community are not of interest to those in power. Despite official records and statistics
showing racial disparities in education, health, income, and other areas, interviewees
felt that government officials are not convinced that their issues are a priority.
Moreover, despite some people believing in the cause and supporting the Black
community, many are against supporting race-specific policies or projects to address
issues, as they are seen as too contentious. “These are the people who still do not
understand the racial thematic. They don’t understand that the Black movement’s fight
is an important one and that we need more projects.”

The lack of attendance at CMCN meetings by representatives of some
government secretariats reflects this lack of prioritization regarding the Council and
issues of the Black community. Many Council members interviewed expressed
attendance as an issue demonstrating that government representatives are not
concerned with making time for the Council meetings or for engaging the issues the
Council discusses. There are several secretariats that have representatives in the
Council: education, health, culture, judicial issues. Many of these representatives are
not career politicians, they are commissioned or contracted to work in a particular
secretariat and become the representative in the Council. Some of the secretariats that
have projects with the Council have representatives that demonstrate interest and
attend the meetings. Lajara, an advisor to Tiãozinho, expressed that this signifies a
lack of a true approach by the government to combat racism because “if the

government had a [strong] policy [on race], these secretariats would be required to be represented at a Council meeting." Their presence would be mandatory.

Another difficulty in working with the government is the lack of resources provided to the Council, particularly a budget and a physical space (office). This plays into the perception of the lack of seriousness with which the government treats the CMCN and issues of the Black community. The Council does not have a proper location, and there are debates within the Council as to acquiring a space. Currently they utilize the space of the Coordenadoria or other Afro-Brazilian organizations.

In addition, there is no budget for the Council that comes from the municipal government:

“We have a lot of difficulty. We don’t have a budget for anything… Despite the government having opened this forum so that we can be creating [policies and projects], from the other side, they have not given us any weapons so that we can fight. (Personal interview with Toloji, June 24, 2004).

These resources would allow for more organization and the ability to formulate and carry out more projects and create more policies:

“[W]e need a basic infrastructure for this council to work, an office space that has an administrative aspect. We need to discuss the issue of funds, the question of adopting a budget because [this will provide] a particular amount of money to guarantee a minimal number of Council actions” (Personal interview with Maurilio Ferreira da Silva, June 25, 2004).

The budget and physical infrastructure would give the Council its own space as well as the capability to have more meetings and a continuity between policy initiatives and deliberations around projects.

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26 Personal interview with Lajara Correa, April 15, 2004.
Another aspect that reflects that lack of prioritization on the part of the government is the lack of grounding on the part of its representatives regarding issues of race. Many of the government representatives lack an understanding of the racial perspective, which is important for debating and creating policy recommendations. One member of the CMCN stated that,

“what happens in the councils [is that] the government ends up selecting people who are not prepared to discuss the [racial] question. For example, I need a lawyer, I need the secretariat for juridical issues inside the Council, but I need someone that understands the issues from the point of view of race. How will she help us in thinking of planning a project about what happens in the city [if she doesn’t understand race]” (Personal interview, June 2004).

Those working in the government must understand the social ramifications of race in order to create policies that work for the Afro-Brazilian population:

“There is a great difficulty for our partners in the popular democratic [governments, such as the PT], to understand exactly the questions of the black population. There is a generalization, as people think of democracy in the broad sense … [and] this way they won’t include the question of the Afro-Brazilian, and this doesn’t help, it hinders things because [the policies] are not specific” (Personal interview with Augusto, June 24, 2004).

Augusto’s quote points to the crux of the new citizenship in relation to racial equality. Democracy in the broad sense, a general notion of citizenship, equality, and participation does not account for the texture of race relations within democracies and how that affects individuals. Augusto indicates that the specificity of race must not only be insterted into the notion of democracy and citizenship, it must be followed with policies that incorporate this understanding. The CMCN’s work is moving towards this end in all the different ways it sees as necessary to achieve equality.
Pushing for educating Council members that may not understand the social ramifications of race, as well as other government officials beyond the Council, could be a new area of focus. Government officials who are educated about this issue may eventually understand it better and become more interested and involved in the Council process.

These last four issues raised by informants—a lack of interest/priority on the part of government officials, the lack of government officials’ grounding on the racial theme, the desire for a more powerful institution, and the need for more resources—also illustrate difficulties in constructing and claiming rights and citizenship. Constituting the new citizenship is not a one-sided project. Although its construction is premised on concrete actions and practices of social movements and excluded communities, the state also has a role in the fostering of a more dynamic democracy. By contributing more time, effort, and resources to claims made by Afro-Brazilians, the government would provide a more solid base for the Council. Afro-Brazilian claims have been inserted into the policy and institutional arenas, but resources are scarce for the CMCN and an understanding/interest on the part of those who have the capability to legislate policy is lacking.

### 3.2.4 Fears of Co-optation

Social authoritarianism and clientelism have historically coopted progressive politics and underlied inadequate guarantees of citizenship for much of the population. In addition, for Afro-Brazilians, the history of racial hegemony involved the cooptation and incorporation of Black identity and history into the dominant societal visions of the nation, visions that simultaneously privileged the European component of Brazilian history and denigrated signifiers of Africanness, particularly racial phenotypes and cultural practices. Historically, Afro-Brazilian culture and racial
harmony have been invoked by elites to portray positive images and dissuade discontent for Blacks, who make up a majority of the poor. This history makes many CMCN and Black community members skeptical of the intentions of the government in relation to defending their rights and promoting policies to address racial inequality.

Like the other councilors above, Ciro from the Casa de Hip Hop mentions a lack of priority on the part of the government in relation to issues affecting the Afro-Brazilian community. He also discusses the change in discourse as merely that, only a change in discourse. This is reminiscent of the past history of racial discourse, only in the present case race has made its way into policy debates. When asked about recent affirmative action policies in the media, in jobs, and in the government, he stated:

“I don’t think that it is changing anything. From [the point of view of real changes], nothing is happening…everything continues to be the same. The only thing that has changed is the discourse. One comes [into power] with a different discourse, but nothing changes in practice compared with those who came before. Years change, governments change, and [the situation] doesn’t change, it’s all the same, it’s all the same…who truly has the power to make something better, doesn’t. It doesn’t change” (Personal interview with Ciro, April 7, 2004).

Ciro’s statement exhibits doubt based on a continual government discourse that has always indicated that it will implement policies to assist the poor and improve the lot of citizens, yet often fails to live up to promises made and standards set. In relation to affirmative action and other policies, they are being implemented in some places and discussed in others. Moreover, the councils are relatively new structures. These factors must be considered, yet it is understandable that one would be wary of government efforts to address racial inequality.

Ciro does see some enthusiasm for issues of the Black community, but more in relation to consumption and the assumption of Black identity. He believes that people
are constructing Afro-Brazilians as specific consumer-citizens and this has made Black identity has become “cool”:

“It is the time to talk about us…they have seen that there are a bunch of neguinhos [blacks] in the corner, and they consume, so let’s make products for them to consume…hair products, clothes, everything that is imaginable to make them consume” (Personal interview with Ciro, April 7, 2004).

Many companies have created products and magazines that cater towards the Black community. Ciro sees this as a form of cooptation of, and division within, the Black community so that they believe that racism is actually diminishing and changing. If the media has Afro-Brazilians represented on television and companies have products for Afro-Brazilians, then they can declare that racism does not exist, that they are considering the needs and specificities of the Black community. “This does not cease from being racist because it is a form of appeasing and then they say that they are [no longer racist].”

Implicit in Ciro’s description is a rejection of inclusion in capitalist consumption as a means to citizenship. To him, this is a further exploitation of Afro-Brazilians.

This insight into perceived gains also illustrates the wariness on Ciro’s part in relation to discussions of race and policies being pursued in the media. Policies to include blacks by giving them “ethnic” products to consume or to include them in the media are viewed with skepticism. These efforts are seen as aims at bandaging the issue of racial inequality as opposed to addressing it at its roots through policies to punish racism, to provide better educational opportunities for Afro-Brazilians, and to portray them more positively in both the media and educational materials. Consumption and visibility may give an illusion of progress towards equality, but are

27 Personal interview with Ciro, April 7, 2004.
only small, if not misdirected, forms of inclusion. Citizenship cannot be defined in terms of the number of times Blacks appear on television or how many products they can be able to purchase (although positive visibility may result in more positive perceptions of Blacks and certain products may cater to unmet needs based on neglect). Ciro desires equality as a Black individual, or Black community, in a society that has historically valued the European heritage and appearance, not the right to consume more or see more people represented in the media.

Another Council member indicated that the Black movement and the activities of the Council, particularly those closely affiliated with political parties, must be careful because by involving themselves in a municipal political structure, they may end up “being the working masses of dominant interests in this city, the interests of the whites.”28 This Council member expressed that Black movement participants, and blacks in general, “have to give up a set of convictions because of what the majority of whites think, … that which society thinks is the proper way a Black has to act … because if you try to fight for too much, you are seen as a radical, among other things.”29 This member’s skepticism of government action regarding race echoes Ciro’s sentiment about discourse: “What the racist governments do are [provide] a tiny place that will be the participation space for Blacks” and leave out the infrastructure and support for this space.30 The basic sentiment is that the government will give enough to appease the movement and those that are advocating for equality, as well as enough to demonstrate that they are doing something. According to the skeptical, when you truly scrutinize the actions of the government, you see they are just co-opting the ability of the movement to truly get things done.

28 Personal interview, June 2004.
29 Personal interview, June 2004.
30 Ibid.
The nature of instruments such as the Council are ambiguous in terms of the actual power they have, and “it is in this ambiguity that we have to be careful because it is \textit{in the ambiguity} that racism instrumentalizes itself in order to dominate Blacks.”\textsuperscript{31}

In the case of the Council, the ambiguity can lead to a false notion of inclusion, participation, and power. The ambiguity that leads to racism and domination further maintains racial inequality through co-optation. This Council member believes that instruments such as the Council and other institutional political gains for Afro-Brazilians, as well as their inclusion in political positions, contributes to domination:

“\text{There is no understanding of racism as a system of domination … } [\text{Blacks}] \text{ don’t have a future in the form with which they are conducting politics, but it is necessary} [\text{for whites}] \text{ to utilize [giving political forums to blacks] as an instrument to mask racism in Brazil. Whatever forum that blacks enter to make a political claim, even the most limited claim, has this function}” (Personal interview, June 2004).

In order to prevent this, the Council member stated that:

“\text{We have to keep the whites in check. Are [whites] producing an action to diminish racism or merely for [them] to say that [they] are not racist? [The latter] is what the majority of whites are producing, and it is this that many blacks that are there [in these forums] are producing, a political action from the point of view of the dominator. What does racism do? It makes the black think that the actions that the system is producing here are better for him}” (Personal interview, June 2004).

This member does not see honesty in the discourse of the municipal administration in relation to race issues. The skepticism was reflected throughout the interview, particularly in relation to the history of the Brazilian left and its initial denial of race in favor of class as the main explanation for inequality was described.

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid.
The creation of the CMCN is seen as a victory for Afro-Brazilians because it gives them an institutional forum to unify diverse segments of the community and advocate for projects and policies to address racial inequality. Members are also optimistic about its capabilities in the future as it fully situates and defines itself in relation to its members, the government, and the broader community. However, some Council members also expressed reservations about the government’s dedication to Afro-Brazilian causes, the lack of diversity of voices within the Council, and the fear that as an institutional form there is the possibility for cooption of a more radical, oppositional Black politics.