



# Creating a College That Works: Audrey Cohen and Metropolitan College of New York

*Grace G. Roosevelt*

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*Examines the life of education activist Audrey Cohen and her founding of Metropolitan College of New York.*

In 1964 educational activist Audrey Cohen and her colleagues developed a unique curricular structure that enables urban college students to integrate their academic studies with meaningful work in community settings. *Creating a College That Works* chronicles Cohen's efforts to create an innovative educational model that began with the Women's Talent Corps, evolved into the College for Human Services, and finally became, in 2002, what is now Metropolitan College of New York (MCNY), a fully accredited institution of higher education that offers bachelor's and master's degrees.

Focusing her attention on the major players in the development of MCNY, Grace G. Roosevelt provides a ringside seat during the years of turbulence, hope, and innovation in the 1960s and '70s. She captures the life of a visionary educational leader while situating Cohen's ideas within the history of progressive education. Cohen and her colleagues, facing great opposition, petitioned and marched, and were harassed and rebuffed. But they persevered, and today the college they founded continues to graduate hundreds of students dedicated to improving their communities, workplaces, and schools in the New York metropolitan area. Woven throughout the narrative are the changing dynamics of the civil rights movement, questions about women's leadership roles, and stories of how adults have transformed their lives through Cohen's innovative educational model.

Grace G. Roosevelt is Associate Professor of Education at Metropolitan College of New York and the author of *Reading Rousseau in the Nuclear Age*.

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