

and shows close parallels to some of that writer's well-known workings in "savorings from piñones to loiza" (45) and "moreno puertorriqueño (a three-way warning poem)" (46).

Numerous examples of social criticism and some brief but quite to the point political statements add to the complex texture of the collection. Unfortunately, the beauty of his central idea in "the last song of neruda," (19) is marred by its uneven, verbose handling. In "against Muñoz pamphleteering," he writes "inside my ghetto i learned to understand / your short range visions of where you led us, / across the oceans where i talk about myself / in foreign languages... / your sense of / stars landed me in a / north temperate uprooted zone" (18).

The young Nuyorican's distance towards the island is evident in this book. He in no way figures Puerto Rico as a utopian tropical island paradise; and no escapist view of a Puerto Rican wholeness is found elsewhere. Instead, Laviera stays as a rule in his "territory," the Lower East Side (Loisaida) and less frequently Piñones, Puerto Rico, and preserves from the island culture those facets which he needs and can relate to. An excellent example of a contemporary use of folk traditions is found in his "canción para un parrandero" (52), his own version of a Christmas song, which along with a treacherous naiveté, reveals a powerful subversive undercurrent. The reader is spared a clean-cut ideological vision of the future.

In *La Carreta Made a U-Turn* there is a clear and refreshing note of affirmation, humaneness, joy and vigor in the face of poverty, alienation and oppression. Tato Laviera has produced a remarkably varied first book of poems and should be encouraged to go on.

#### Footnote

<sup>1</sup>There exists an English translation by Charles Pilditch: *The Occart*. New York: Charles Scribner, 1969, 155 pp.

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THOMAS A. CLARK, *BLACKS IN SUBURBS: A NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE*. New Brunswick, N.J.; Center for Urban Policy Research, Rutgers University, 1979. 126 pp., \$7.50 paper.

*Blacks in Suburbs* examines the process of black suburbanization on a national level. Although a book this short (111 pp., plus bibliography and index) necessarily provides a superficial treatment, it does explore some of the complexities of the suburbanization process among blacks. It not only looks at migration patterns of

blacks to and from suburbs, but also at how factors such as region, income, education, and occupational and housing markets affect the process of suburbanization.

*Blacks in Suburbs* is the first in a series of books on black migration to be published by the Center for Urban Policy Research at Rutgers University. The purpose of this volume, according to the Preface by George Sternlieb, is to provide a firm statistical foundation on black suburbanization. It is the failure of *Blacks in Suburbs* to provide a "firm statistical foundation" which leads this writer to conclude that the book does not provide an important contribution, despite the fact that it deals with an important topic and contains reasonably up-to-date information.

Most of the statistics cited in the book come from previously published sources. The most commonly cited source is *Current Population Reports*, which reports findings of surveys conducted by the U.S. Bureau of the Census. The other major source of information is the Annual Housing Survey conducted by the Bureau of the Census for the Department of Housing and Urban Development. From this survey, Clark draws upon both previously published data (from *Current Housing Reports*) and unpublished data (from the 1975 National Public Use Tape).

Clark does a service for the reader by pulling together recent information of various kinds that have a bearing on black suburbanization. As Clark would acknowledge, however, the data do have inherent limitations which sometimes make interpretation difficult. For example, it is difficult to assess the significance of the author's conclusion that the rate of black suburbanization is increasing, because the data used to support this conclusion do not take into account the racial composition of suburban neighborhoods. Consequently, it is impossible to determine from these data the extent to which the increasing rate of black suburbanization reflects the racial integration of the suburbs rather than the expansion of predominately black central city neighborhoods into the suburbs.

Inherent limitations of the data are not a major problem, however. This book could still be very useful were it not for the careless construction of tables by the author, which turns up all too often and makes interpretation for the author, let alone the reader, very difficult. Perhaps the best illustration of this is the table presented in "Exhibit 11" (pp. 64-65). I will discuss this table at some length in order to illustrate the sorts of problems that plague the book. The reader should keep in mind, however, that this is the most extreme example of poor table construction in the book.

Exhibit 11 presents the mean incomes of black families and unrelated individuals by geographic mobility status (nonmovers and movers living in or moving to central cities, suburbs, etc.) for the time periods 1970-74 and 1975-77. In addition to presenting incomes, it provides the number of people who fall into each cell of the table. One problem with Exhibit 11 is that the statistics

presented for families and unrelated individuals are based upon the time periods 1970-74 and 1975-77, while the statistics presented in the "total" column of the table are for the years 1970-75 and 1975-77, despite the fact that the totals for the 1970-74 period are available in Clark's original source. A much more disturbing error is that, while the number of nonmovers is presented in thousands, the unit used for movers, although never stated in the table, is apparently millions of persons. Figures for movers are rounded to the nearest tenth of a million, but many of them are rounded improperly. In addition, the population figures for movers are obviously wrong. In every case the sum of people living in families and as unrelated individuals far exceeds (usually by several times) the number of individuals in the "total" column. Finally, in numerous instances, data are not reported (blank cells in the table) or are reported as "not available" when, in fact, the data are available in the source from which Clark obtained the other information presented in Exhibit 11. All in all, Exhibit 11 is likely to leave the reader very confused.

Unfortunately, this is not the only example of shoddy table construction and data analysis. In a number of cases, mistakes were made in recording data from the original source, or errors were made in computations. An example is Exhibit 8, which is particularly important because it presents the most important data bearing on what is probably the most central conclusion of the book -- that the rate of black suburbanization is increasing.

Exhibit 8 examines migration rates for blacks among central cities, suburbs, and nonmetropolitan areas for the periods 1970-75 and 1975-78 for the United States as a whole and by region. Clark concludes that the rate of suburbanization is higher in the latter period for the nation as a whole. However, correcting a subtraction error in the 1970-75 data makes the annual rate of suburbanization the same in the two time periods. Fortunately for Clark, there is a second error in the opposite direction that more than compensates for the first. While Clark's source of information for Exhibit 8 (*Current Population Reports*) provides information on migration from abroad to central cities, suburbs and nonmetropolitan areas for the 1975-78 period, it does not provide this information for 1970-75. In its place, Clark uses figures for the earlier period which combine migrants from abroad with persons whose migration status is unknown, thus vastly overstating the rate of migration from abroad during this period. Correcting for this error would show that the rate of black suburbanization is indeed increasing, as Clark concludes.

While this overall evaluation of *Blacks in Suburbs* is negative, some of the chapters do provide useful information. The first three chapters do a good job of introducing the topic of black suburbanization. Chapter 4 provides an overview of regional differences, showing that blacks in the West are the most suburban and that the rate of increase in the suburban population is greatest in the South and least in the Northeast.

Chapters 5 and 6 are the weakest in the book. Chapter 5 examines suburbanization in 12 metropolitan areas. Substantial differences are shown to exist among metropolitan areas, but Clark's attempts to explain these differences are both ineffective and inconclusive. Chapter 6 takes a detailed look at migration of blacks to and from suburbs, regional and temporal variations in migration patterns, and the relationship between income and migration. Potentially, this could have been a very valuable chapter, but flaws in the presentation and analysis of data detract greatly from its value. (Exhibits 8 and 11, discussed earlier, both appear in this chapter.)

Chapter 7 is probably the strongest in the book. It examines the relationships between black suburbanization and poverty, education, occupation, and commuting distance to work. These data show an increasing gap between suburban and central city blacks along economic, educational, and occupational lines, but they also show that racial differences are greater than city/suburban differences for each of these variables. Clark concludes that limited occupational opportunities for lower-skilled black workers in the suburbs will probably further decrease the rate of migration of low-income blacks to the suburbs in the future.

Although Clark states that the main objective of Chapter 8 is to examine "the interaction between the markets for housing and labor within the joint search for space of the individual household," (p. 4) the data presented in Chapter 8 focus almost exclusively on the housing market. Comparisons are made between central city and suburban housing for blacks in terms of characteristics of dwelling units, rate of ownership, length of residence, property value, and subjective ratings of housing and neighborhood quality.

The discerning reader may find some useful information in *Blacks in Suburbs*. However, the serious problems in the presentation of data lead me to conclude that the scholar in search of factual information on black suburbanization would be better off consulting the sources of published information upon which *Blacks in Suburbs* is largely based.

I look forward to reading the forthcoming books in the series on black migration patterns to be published by the Center for Urban Policy Research. I hope that the standard of quality will be higher than that exhibited in this first volume.

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