

reservations or in urban centers. What unites these women are their experiences as Indian women.

Despite the variety of women, forms, styles, and topics, there are certain themes that emerge in the collection. All these women tell the reader what it is like to be a Native American and a woman in a society that shuns diversity and has abandoned its spiritual values. They talk about the difficulty of trying to fit together two different world views and the problems that arise from a failure to do so: alcoholism, drug abuse, violence, spiritual emptiness. The pain is real in this collection.

But *A Gathering of Spirit* is not just a book about pain; it is also a book about courage, pride, and survival. These women have come to a realization of their worth as Native Americans--and as women. They have a strong link to their past, the values and traditions of their ancestors. They have the power of the spirit. This book is a powerful statement on behalf of the Native American peoples. The Indians are *not* vanishing. On the contrary, they are just beginning to come forth as organizers, freedom fighters, feminists, and healers.

A Gathering of Spirit challenges non-Indian attitudes and images of Native American women--and it does so with an unprecedented power. The quality of the material included in the book is very uneven, but the sincerity and personalities that emerge from all the writings make up for artistic imperfection. Beth Brant has also included short notes on each of the contributors, helping the reader's orientation to the material. This is a commendable book for anyone interested in Native Americans and in women.

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Robert D. Bullard, ed. *In Search of the New South: The Black Urban Experience in the 1970s and the 1980s.* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 1989) 203 pp., \$28.50.

This book is part of a growing list of published materials on the prospect and dilemma of black urban life in America. Drawing from the experiences of blacks in six Southern cities, *In Search of the New South* is essentially concerned with the status of blacks in the South between 1970 and 1980. While some qualitative changes have been noted, the book, as a whole, paints a bleak picture about the condition of blacks in the South. In fact, if one were to use the time-worn argument of the glass half-filled with water, it is clear that the authors have followed the half-empty glass approach.

Although the stated objective of the book is the examination of black life in six major cities in the South, what emerges are the author's

descriptions of inequality. Census data is used to support the argument that blacks are invariably behind their white counterparts. While racism has been suggested as the most important factor, it is clear that the causes, consequences, and manifestations of inequality are dominantly structural. To be sure, the phenomena involved are complex, operating together as mutually reinforcing variables, the origins and effect of which are seen, as this book shows, in social, economic and political terms. But the authors have been content to merely describe and not to analyze. Herein lies the major weakness of the book.

That blacks have not attained, both in absolute and relative terms, the level of progress they expect is clear. But what part of this condition is due to racism as opposed to what Myrdal called the process of cumulative causation in which new increments of activity and growth are concentrated disproportionately in and among already-expanding areas and groups is not clear. The economic development literature is filled with analogous circumstances, and similar cyclical arguments have been applied at another scale: international inequality.

The compelling factor that prompted the authors to examine black life in the urban South appears to be the new found prosperity and reputation the region has acquired. The cities selected to represent this region are Houston, New Orleans, Atlanta, Memphis, Birmingham, and Tampa. Although the inclusion of other cities, particularly Little Rock and Miami, would have made the survey more complete, the effort is commendable. The authors have followed a consistent topical format which makes comparison easy. It does, however, make the book somewhat repetitious.

The presentation of the census data could have been more effective if graphs and maps had been used. The book would be a useful addition to college and university libraries.

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