

is generally identified as emphasizing equality and solidarity while avoiding confrontation, Goodwin states this attitude may reinforce the idea that females are powerless as speakers. But, her findings demonstrate that female speech can both emphasize equality and solidarity and display differences or asymmetry, depending on the type of activity involved. Her findings indicate that the girls in this particular Philadelphia neighborhood acted both in cooperation and competition depending on the activity. This data reflects a multidimensional view of female social organization which is generally not disclosed in many other studies. The tendency in anthropological studies of the sexes is to emphasize the differences between genders rather than the similarities.

Goodwin defends the study of the ordinary conversation of black children which has been attacked by Chomsky as deficient and too degenerate for systematic analysis by stating that "the speech of children at play, in particular talk taken to be aimless activity, constitutes a powerful manifestation . . . of linguistic competence, . . . social and cultural competence as well."

The author has presented a very thorough and challenging text which is both interesting and important to students of the social sciences. At times, the direct quotes of children's conversations are difficult to decipher and seem ambiguous to the reader. Perhaps they would have been less confusing if the text had been expanded on by the author directly following some of the more obscure speech events. However, this book is a rigorous work which demands rethinking of the attitude of the importance of the speech event itself in terms of social organization.

— Maryln Zupicich
Arizona State University

Charles Green and Basil Wilson. *The Struggle for Black Empowerment in New York City* (New York: Praeger, 1989) 175 pp., \$39.95.

This book by Charles Green and Basil Wilson is most informative. The authors, a sociologist and a political scientist respectively, draw upon the research and reporting methods of their disciplines in bringing forth a comprehensive interdisciplinary social science examination of the melodrama that is politics in New York City.

Each of the seven chapters provides an up close and historical accounting of the attempts by African Americans to gain empowerment in New York City politics. The initial chapter, "Black Politics in New York City: An Overview," sets an appropriate background for an understanding of the development and progress of black political activity in New York City. This chapter, for example, establishes that African American political empowerment emerged through three distinct periods: 1) Irish hegemony, 1880-1932; 2) white ethnic symmetry, 1933-76; and 3) the white backlash

movement, 1977 to present. African American politics, according to Green and Wilson, is shaped by the long experiences of black people challenging the forces of exclusion in order to gain a modicum of involvement in New York City decision making.

Each of the chapters provides not only an examination of the forces, names, and events which have long shaped the hustle and bustle of New York City politics; each chapter is set within the larger national framework of African American political behavior. Each chapter details how African Americans have had to respond to the persistence of race discrimination in America's institutional formations and processes. The chapter "The Black Church in the Struggle for Black Empowerment in New York City" is especially informative. Green and Wilson persuasively argue that the black church in New York City has amassed considerable experience and sources in community empowerment activities. Church based community organizations, Green and Wilson contend, are new loci of power and, if combined with an ideology which details a prescription for change and which appeals to those outside the church, have much potential for developing considerable political empowerment. Most of the chapters, excluding the final one, appropriately titled "Conclusion," contain a conclusion which neatly ties together the discourse. This is not the case for two of the seven chapters. Chapter 1, "Overview of Black Politics," and chapter 4, "Contemporary Black Politics in New York City," do not have a concluding section. These are strong chapters which could have benefitted from a wrap-up overview.

Overall, this work is valuable. It makes an important contribution to an understanding of the dynamics shaping urban-based African American politics. The work also illuminates the context and mission of black politics. That is, African Americans have remained persistent in their claims for power sharing in American society. This is necessary for black survival in what remains a hostile land. This book is a reminder that race is an important construct in American life and deserves further analysis by political scientists. As valuable as this work is, its discourse would have been stronger had the authors linked their discussion to a theoretical framework which probed, for example, the quest for black political empowerment. Also, an assessment of electoral strategies and recurring nationalist sentiments and praxis within a linking ideological framework would have been an invaluable dimension to the work. Nonetheless, this study sheds additional light on the subject of black urban politics and should be read.

—Otis Scott
California State University, Sacramento