

Richard P. McCormick. *The Black Student Protest Movement at Rutgers.* (Newark, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1990) 155 pp., \$8.95.

The decade of the 1960s was pitched and rolled by the winds of social change. American society was being brought slowly, painfully, but severely face-to-face with its dark side. Both individual and systemic racism were being exposed and challenged.

This was especially the case in the South. The efforts by the valiant men and women, most of whom had taproots extending deeply in the soil and life of the South, have been recorded and celebrated. The integrationist wing of the civil rights movement headed by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., epitomized the intensity and determination with which African Americans and their allies approached the difficult task of creating social change.

The civil rights movement was in many respects like a great stone thrown into an even greater body of water. The ripples touched upon the lives of most African Americans and many other Americans. Little in America's institutional life touched by the movement to include African Americans into the body politic of this nation was ever the same after; this was as intended.

The book, *The Black Student Protest Movement at Rutgers*, by Richard P. McCormick, is situated within the context of the 1960s social change dynamic. The author presents a concise and informative accounting of how the three New Jersey campuses of Rutgers University responded to the winds of change. This is in its essence the story of how a major university was caught unprepared for the controversy and protest which reshaped its life in the late 1960s. The key to McCormick's story is the role played by African American students as change agents during the controversy. Fueled by the spirit of the civil rights movement and steered by the militancy of Black Nationalism, these students nudged Rutgers University into the swift waters of social change.

McCormick provides a context for our understanding the multiple factors making Rutgers ripe for the protestations for change organized and led by African American students. Chapters two, "Stirrings of Change," and three, "A New Urgency," are valuable for the background information offered.

Rutgers, according to McCormick, was ready-made for student protest and in much need of change. The historical enrollment of African American students in Rutgers (chartered in 1776; land grant status obtained in 1864) was abysmally low. The author notes that no more than twenty African American students graduated from Rutgers in the fifty years following the first African American to do so, James Dickson Carr, in 1892. On the eve of the 1969 protest movement, McCormick believes that African Americans were approximately one percent of the student body.

In reading this book I was struck with the familiar sounding concerns of the students then as measured against student complaints now. Although nearly three decades have passed since the protest at Rutgers, African American students at predominantly white colleges and universities still contend with racist learning environments. These environments are hostile to the interests of

students presumed to be ill prepared for the rigors of the academy.

It seems that while nationally the numbers of African Americans attending predominantly white institutions have increased since 1969, matters relating to how African American students are received, perceived, and treated on these campuses are still at issue. And as such, as McCormick notes in his postscript, there remains much work to be accomplished before the institutional culture of American predominantly white colleges and universities reflects a genuine openness to students of color.

This brief book is a worthwhile primer for African American students—especially student organizations. Much can be gained from the study and analysis of the tactics and strategies employed by black student organizations in the Rutgers's project. I would recommend this book to students as a case study in how a university is likely to respond to student demands. Of course, responses by college administrators and faculty will vary according to specific circumstances, yet there are predictable patterns of responses about which student organizations and leaders should be mindful.

This book also reminds me that while universities are often likely to attempt a response to student demands deemed to be legitimate, the academy's culture is resistant to claims by students. The academy typically views students as disenfranchised and marginalized members of the community. As such, students are presumed not to have a significant political presence in the polity of the academy. Changes in the culture of the academy come as a result of persistent efforts by faculty, administrators, and students towards this end. Students have a key role to play in the process.

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Rosalio Moisés, Jane Holden Kelley, and William Curry Holden. *A Yaqui Life: The Personal Chronicle of a Yaqui Indian*. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1977) 254 pp., \$10.95.

The search for an “untouched” Native voice in American Indian autobiography, both experientially and stylistically, has proven as elusive as the search for the “untouched” Native. In the case of *A Yaqui Life*, it is precisely the ofthenative author's interaction—personal, literary, military, economic, religious, and familial—that makes the work both fascinating and significant. So, too, the text as a product of the interactions between the various authors enhances its ethnographic and historic significance. In 1954, at the suggestion of the anthropologist W. C. Holden, the core of the work was penned by Rosalio Moisés, a Yaqui who lived from 1896 until 1969. Holden's daughter, Jane Holden Kelley, later edited the text and amplified the material through interviews with Moisés concerning his written text. This personal chronicle thus bridges the gap between autobiography and ethnography.