

FALL 1978

civil rights digest

Ethnicity
Made in the U.S.

APPENDIX
COUNCIL
ON
LINOSS



IN THIS ISSUE . . . we focus on ethnicity, specifically the ethnicity of those groups defined as white who appear to have “made it,” but who still suffer from prejudice and stereotyping. As our writers point out, ethnicity has its uses and its misuses, but most observers readily agree that a healthy respect for diversity can form the basis of a sounder coalition for social justice for all Americans.

The peculiar condescension of too many “Anglos”—usually stemming from bias and mistaken assumptions about Americans of Southern and Eastern European background—is the subject of the lead article by Ralph Peratta. Peratta debunks some myths and examines some of the hard problems of urban conflict, while arguing that the real challenge for Americans is to respect each other for what they are.

Kathleen McCourt has written a description of the urban ethnic neighborhood—its “roots,” its invasion by the middle class, and its self-conscious struggle for survival. She draws some useful conclusions about the importance of ethnicity and class to the study of American history and current American problems.

The role of American schools, involved as it is with people’s most precious possession—their children—has always been the subject of great debate and struggle. Whether the schools would teach children to respect their own backgrounds as well as to learn about conventional U.S. history has been a controversial subject for much longer than we tend to realize, according to author Marvin Lazerson.

The treatment of ethnic Americans in film is an indication of how they are regarded by one of society’s major cultural institutions. Films are particularly important because they so often wind up on television. Another major example of the depiction of ethnics is found in television advertising, which typically includes caricatures of all kinds. Christine Noschese, community activist and filmmaker, examines both phenomena.

All in all, we hope this collection will stimulate discussion of the “new ethnic movement,” as it has been labeled, and will form the basis for examining how such an “ethnic awakening” relates to existing minority group movements for equality under the law.

Finally, a unique ethnic group—gypsies, or Rom—is the subject of Albert W. Vogel’s article. Perhaps the most stereotyped and least-understood minority in the U.S. (as well as elsewhere), Rom problems parallel those of other minority groups. The extreme alienation of Rom from the larger society calls for special measures, Vogel claims.

For more copies of the *Digest* or inclusion on our free mailing list, please write to the Editor, *Civil Rights Digest*, U. S. Commission on Civil Rights, Washington, D.C. 20425.

The *Civil Rights Digest* is published quarterly by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights as part of its clearinghouse responsibilities. Funds for printing the *Digest* were approved by the Director of Bureau of the Budget on January 29, 1963. Correspondence related to the *Digest* should be addressed to Editor, *Civil Rights Digest*, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, Washington, D.C. 20425.

The articles in the *Digest* do not necessarily represent Commission policy but are offered to stimulate ideas and interest on various issues concerning civil rights.

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CREDITS: 2, 6—National Park Service; Front Cover, 5, 8, 11, 13, 16, Inside Back Cover—Robin Tooker;
15—Jeff Blue; 18, 22, 25—Harrod; 28, 31, 33—William J. Kircher & Associates, Inc.

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Study and collect information concerning legal developments constituting a denial of equal protection of the laws under the Constitution because of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, or in the administration of justice;

Appraise Federal laws and policies with respect to the denial of equal protection of the laws because of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, or in the administration of justice;

Serve as a national clearinghouse for information concerning denials of equal protection of the laws because of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin; and

Submit reports, findings, and recommendations to the President and Congress.

ELLIS ISLAND



The island nearest you was the gateway through which some 12 million persons entered the United States between 1892 and 1954. In 1907 alone more than one million people from many nations landed there. The towered building was the Immigrant Station where all newcomers reported. Ellis Island was made part of Statue of Liberty National Monument by Presidential Proclamation in May 1965. It is being developed as an immigration memorial.

AMERICANS OF EASTERN AND SOUTHERN EUROPEAN
BACKGROUND REBEL AGAINST PREJUDICE

By Ralph Peratta

DON GIAMATTI AND THE POLISH JOKE

"There was certainly something different about Angelo Bartlett Giamatti.

"He was flip, funny, iconoclastic . . . And he was, well, ethnic.

"Not exactly what you'd have in mind for the president of Yale University.

"But then suddenly he was actually president of Yale. He didn't look like one or act or talk like one. But he wasn't fazed.

"With the assumption of his new mantle of power and with the passing into his 41st year, Giamatti has taken on the air of a don, a man of respect.

"And with his dedicated public relations man, Stanley Flink, at his side, briefcase in hand, the perfect consigliere, one could almost close one's eyes and hear him being addressed as Don Giamatti."

(From an article in the Washington Post, May 1, 1978).

Americans of Eastern and Southern European stock—mostly Polish Americans and Italian Americans—came to the U.S. around the turn of the century from a Europe that had no room for them. They were poor peasants whom the land could no longer support, and they came here seeking an opportunity, in a country that still had a frontier, to own and work some land of their own.

Most of them ended up instead in urban ghettos and worked in factories instead of fields. They were as despised and exploited in America for their poverty as they had been in Europe. But in addition, they were hated for their "foreignness." They were viewed as socially "disorganized" (sound familiar?), lacking in any

tradition of freedom and responsibility, and poor prospects to become good Americans. Efforts were quickly mounted to keep them out. The McCarran Act, stringently limiting immigration from Eastern and Southern Europe, was the culmination of those efforts, turning the tide of immigrants into a trickle. For those who remained, it was hoped the public schools might salvage their children and grandchildren, if their worst tendencies could be educated out of them.

The depression of the thirties, following hard on the heels of the virulent nativism of the twenties, kept the white ethnics poor and in their ghettos until the Second World War. Then—economically—they took off. According to data compiled by Andrew Greeley of the

National Opinion Research Center, Italians are now the third richest religio-ethnic group in America, behind Jews and Irish Catholics. Poles earn almost \$1,000 a year more than the average white American in metropolitan areas of the North.

Contrary to the notions of many reformers, economic gains came *before* educational gains, and certainly before "Americanization," which was seen as the primary function of the public schools vis-a-vis the immigrants. For one thing, again according to Greeley's data, the most successful of the ethnics in the early years went to parochial schools, and white ethnics generally did not achieve educational parity with other whites until the 1960s.

As far as "Americanization" is concerned, if Americanization means losing the distinct cultural characteristics of one's group and

Ralph Peratta is a consultant in ethnic affairs and the former director of the Italian American Foundation.

“melting” into the American mainstream, the evidence is fairly strong that this has not happened. For example:

- While divorce rates climb, divorce among Italian Americans remains at a very low 3 percent. Among Italian American Catholics, the rate is 2 percent.
- At a time when male heads of households are becoming fewer and fewer, 87 percent of Italian American families have both husband and wife at home. Only 10 percent of Italian American families are headed by women alone, the smallest percentage of any ethnic group.
- Italian Americans show a grudging unwillingness to send their elderly to institutions of any kind. A recent Syracuse study, for example, revealed that almost 40 percent of Italian American families had at least one parent live with them sometime during their marriage.
- The same Syracuse study revealed that 70 percent of the Italian American families lived either in the neighborhood where their parents and grandparents settled or in nearby Italian American neighborhoods.

Although I do not have comparable data for Americans of Eastern European stock, there is every reason to believe in the persistence of similar cultural traits among them as among Italian Americans.

Happily ever after

The bright side of the ethnic story is easily told and reassuring to hear: poor, ignorant, landless peasants when they came, the immigrants, by dint of hard work and with the support of closely-knit families and communities, learned how to make it in America.

They saved their hard earned money, sent their children to college, moved to nearby suburbs . . . and lived happily ever after? Not quite.

• White ethnic groups are perhaps the only remaining peoples that can be humiliated and defamed with impunity in the circles of the cultural and educational elite as well as in the media. Slurs against minority groups are considered bad form, swiftly and effectively responded to and apologized for, but Polish jokes, for example, have become a genre unto themselves. (Although situation comedies continue to caricature and stereotype minorities as well as white ethnics, of course.)

• The Mafia myth continues to cast a shadow over all Italian Americans. The media scrupulously avoid identifying ethnic connections among criminals of most groups, but Italian Americans suspected of criminal activity are invariably identified as participants in a criminal conspiracy held together by family and ethnic ties. For example, according to Author Dwight Smith, Jr., the *New York Times* in 1971 alone printed 246 news stories referring believingly to the “Mafia”; only three anti-Mafia pieces, on the op-ed pages, were printed during the years 1971–77. Two government documents legitimize the myth by stating and reiterating the obviously nonsensical view that organized crime is the *exclusive* province of Italian Americans. One was a 1967 report by the President’s Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice; the other, a 1976 report by the Commission on the Review of National Policy Toward Gambling.

- Only a handful of Polish







Americans and Italian Americans have been appointed to high level government posts, and with few exceptions those appointed have appeared to be the most assimilated, retaining little or no observable connection or identification with their ethnic group. In our entire history, only three Italian Americans have been cabinet members, none were members of the Supreme Court, and only two were members of the Court of Appeals. These statistics show Italian Americans worse off, in terms of high level appointments, than blacks, with whom they are roughly comparable in

population. There are fewer Polish Americans than Italian Americans in the population, and infinitely few Polish American appointees. The pattern persists in secondary high level positions as well.

- An "Executive Suite" study done in Chicago in 1974 showed that 84 of the 106 largest Chicago corporations had no Italian American directors, and 75 had no officers who were Italian American. The comparable figures for Polish Americans were almost identical to those for blacks: 102 and 101, respectively, had no

Polish American or black directors; 97 and 105, respectively, had no officers from either group.

- A study of the faculty of the City University of New York showed an enormous discrepancy between the percentage of Italian Americans in the student body (about 25 percent) and the faculty (about 5 percent). Of the 17 colleges in the City University system, only one has ever had an Italian American president, even though almost one-quarter of New York's population is Italian American. The proportionate representation of Polish Americans

on faculties is just as dismal.

Although these facts make clear that white ethnic Americans have not achieved status and prestige commensurate with their economic and educational achievements, they do not explain why. Part of the answer, not surprisingly, is inherent in the very same white ethnic characteristics that have been a source of such strength; the obverse side of strong, closely-knit family and community life is less emphasis on individual fulfillment, less mobility. By the same token, peasants who understood implicitly the value of hard work may not have fully appreciated the importance of education.

The hardhat myth

But, as we have seen, the latter explanation is no longer valid; white ethnics now enroll in institutions of higher education in greater percentages than whites generally, and healthy family and community life has become an important goal of national domestic policy. The remaining explanation—there's no avoiding it—is bigotry. White ethnics are largely excluded from leadership positions in value-setting institutions in the society because of bigotry at the highest levels of power and influence.

It is simple bigotry that ridicules Polish Americans as stupid, bumbling, dirty, and authoritarian. It is anti-Catholic bigotry, a subject that fills a book of its own, that persists from Puritan days and tars Eastern and Southern European Americans, most of whom are Catholic, with the brush of superstition, anti-intellectualism, subservience to authority, racism, reactionary politics, and the rest. (See *An Ugly Little Secret: Anti-Catholicism in North America*, by

Andrew Greeley.)

It shouldn't be necessary to dispel such myths, but the myth of the racist, hardhat, reactionary, anti-intellectual Catholic ethnic is so widely believed and promulgated that it has become perhaps the most significant single factor behind the exclusion of white ethnics from leadership positions in our important universities, foundations, government agencies, and other "establishment" institutions.

Let's look at some findings taken from several Gallup polls of the late sixties comparing the attitudes of Catholic and Protestant blue-collar workers outside the South (few ethnics live in the South) on four issues:

- 1) 47 percent of Catholics, compared to 29 percent of Protestants, favored a guaranteed annual wage.
- 2) 78 percent of the Catholics and 72 percent of the Protestants stated they would vote for a black for president.
- 3) 42 percent of Catholic workers, compared to 57 percent of Protestant workers, thought school integration was moving too rapidly.

In short, Catholic ethnic working people in the North were significantly more "liberal" than Protestants on these three issues.

If we examine the attitudes of white Catholics, Protestants, and Jews earning more than \$9,000, rather than of blue-collar workers (again outside the South), we find the following:

- 1) Questions designed to elicit percentages of people holding pro-black attitudes produced almost identical figures for native Protestants (63 percent), Catholic ethnics (63 percent), and Jews (64 percent).

2) On the issue of whether the government ought to be actively working to solve the problem of poverty, the percentages were 49 percent in favor for native Protestants, 57 percent in favor for Catholic ethnics, and 64 percent for Jews.

3) The Vietnam War elicited dovish responses from 40 percent of native Protestants, 63 percent of Catholic ethnics, and 94 percent of Jews.

Surveys on issues ranging from abortion to civil liberties, sexual permissiveness, pornography, marijuana, and other indices of "liberal" versus "conservative" ideology show white ethnics sometimes more liberal, sometimes less so, when compared to native Protestants, blacks, and Jews. The data certainly do *not* support the racist, reactionary stereotype. Paradoxically, the one factor that might change white ethnic attitudes in the direction of the stereotype is the very projection of the stereotype upon them as an explanation of behavior that demands careful, perceptive, and empathetic analysis instead.

If white ethnic attitudes on race and other social and political issues are so different from the public perception of these attitudes, how do we account for the difference? As we have seen, some of the gap is attributable to bias against ethnics. It is an easy jump, if one perceives white ethnics to be ignorant, dirty, criminal, and un-American, to also conclude that they are racist and reactionary. America, after all, was the land of liberty, freedom, democracy, and enlightenment, overrun in the early part of this century by the "huddled masses" of a benighted Europe. One can't expect the offspring of these poor, despised foreigners to put their past behind

them completely in just a generation or two.

The worst of the lot, obviously, if one pursues this line of "reasoning," are those white ethnics who insist on maintaining their European heritage—who live in urban neighborhoods with "their own kind," go to Catholic churches and sometimes to parochial schools, eat pasta or piroghi, wore ducktail haircuts when "Americans" were wearing crewcuts, and switched to doubleknit slacks when Americans began wearing jeans.

The race factor

Which leads to the second reason why white ethnics are misperceived to be peculiarly racist and reactionary: They appear to have more conflicts with blacks. Many still live in urban neighborhoods where they are much more likely to come into contact with blacks and other minorities than are native Protestants. Just as the white ethnics succeeded native Protestants in the cities of the North, blacks, Hispanics, and other minorities are succeeding the white ethnics, and rubbing up against them in the process. From 10 to 28 percent of white ethnics, depending on the specific group, live in racially mixed neighborhoods, compared to 2 percent of native Protestants. Such transitions are bound to be difficult, no matter who is involved, because of *real* conflicts in the interests of the competing groups. It would be "easier," although not conducive to integrated cities, if white ethnics were more eager and able to move out as their predecessors did. The conflicts





may manifest themselves, especially when voiced by the most volatile members of the competing groups, either white or minority, in racist tones, and certainly these manifestations are likely to receive the most attention. Consequently, even if, as survey data show, white ethnics are less racist than native Protestants, since they are 5 to 15 times as likely to live—and want to live—in the cities with minorities, it is not surprising that they are perceived as *more* racist.

In addition, of course, white ethnics and minorities are in competition for jobs, education, status, and services, as well as neighborhoods. In spite of their economic success as groups, most white ethnics are still lower middle class. They are struggling to achieve the American dream—to send their children to college, own their own homes and take care of their sick and elderly. Lower middle class Americans, whatever their race, religion or color, do not enjoy much of a margin. Any financial reversal, whether caused by a drop in property values, loss of a job, or serious illness, can be disastrous. Expressions of fear and anxiety about the possibility of disastrous economic reversals again can be manifested or perceived as racism.

The inclination to focus on racism as the key to solving the problems between white ethnics and minorities is not only unhelpful but counterproductive. To the extent that racism exists—and as we have seen, the data show it is less prevalent among white ethnics than among other Americans—it is probably the least tractable and the most inflammatory of the problems that divide us. We obviously must continue to work

at eradicating racism, but we should not delude ourselves into thinking we can deal with the conflicts that crop up between us by forcibly enlightening the bigots that these conflicts sometimes thrust into the spotlight.

Nor should we make the mistake, as some otherwise well-informed Americans have done, of equating the resurgence of ethnic awareness among white ethnics with racism. White ethnics have always been “ethnic”—which is not to say we always will be—but the pressure to assimilate, combined with the relative ease with which we could assimilate, has made it more difficult for us to figure out who we are, in some ways, than it has for America’s racial minorities. Black Americans, especially, helped us to come out of the closet; we owe the black community an enormous debt of gratitude for legitimizing diversity in America, at great cost to black people in blood and tears.

But we still have a long way to go; a half-Italian American president of Yale is still an oddity to be marvelled at and not immune to the slur of the Mafia myth, albeit communicated as a joke in deference to his exalted position.

Some of us will be striving to blend ourselves in, so we won’t be noticed and subjected to such slurs; but most of us will realize, I think, as blacks understandably recognized before the rest of us, that the real challenge is to be accepted as you are, at all levels and places in American society. When an A. Bartlett Giamatti who calls *himself* “Angelo” can be chosen president of Yale and a newspaper reporter doesn’t think it odd, perhaps we’ll be there.

The Self-Conscious Neighborhood

URBAN, ETHNIC, WORKING CLASS
COMMUNITIES STRUGGLE TO MASTER
CHANGE

By Kathleen McCourt

The struggle to maintain, and in some cases create, viable urban communities has become a concern in the last half of the 20th century to academics, public officials, community organizers, and most especially, the men and women living in cities. Despite the nostalgia for a "gemeinschaft" of the past, urban communities of the 1970s are not like those of 100 or 50 years ago, and in many respects that's for the better. Although neighborhoods of the past are frequently romanticized as havens of warmth and security, the harsh realities of daily life must have left limited space for nurturing the spirit.

Even some of the apparent strengths of those earlier communities were not without their dark side. The communal code of expectations for behavior and adult roles spared residents some of the post-industrial anguish of life decisionmaking. Yet at what cost to the freedom of individuals, especially females? How many young people of the second or third generations had to leave the narrow confines of the home community in order to pursue a way of life more suited to their individual needs and wishes?

The new urban communities of high rises and condominiums, although characterized as alienating

and anomic anti-neighborhoods, appear to be precisely the kind of environment in which many individuals feel most able to pursue their own lives in their own ways.

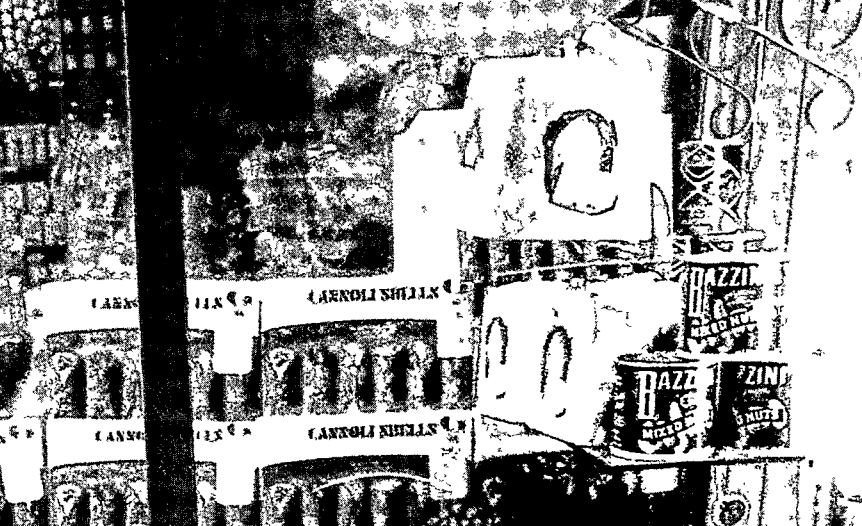
But the increasing attractiveness of working-class neighborhoods in many of today's big cities suggests that large numbers of people, working class and middle class, are finding the old ethnic neighborhoods to be just what they want. Some of the attractiveness, of course, derives from the possibility of obtaining solid housing at prices not yet inflated by wild speculation. But these communities may well be desirable to some today for another reason as well; they represent the romance and the reality of "a neighborhood."

In the first decades of the 20th century, sociologists from the University of Chicago designated ethnic enclaves, along with slums, red light districts, and upper-class neighborhoods, as "natural areas." They used this label to designate the final products of the uncontrolled ecological processes of expansion, competition, invasion, and succession. The inability of the poor to compete for the choicest land relegated them to the oldest, least desirable areas of the city; people of similar class, race, and ethnicity gravitated toward one another, eventually creating homogeneous communities. These neighborhoods were often separated from adjacent natural areas by such boundaries as rivers, railroad tracks, and major thoroughfares.

Kathleen McCourt teaches sociology at Loyola University of Chicago. This article is excerpted from a paper prepared for the National Institute of Education Conference on the "Educational and Occupational Concerns of White Ethnic Women," held in October 1978.

JUMBO CASHEWS

EXTRA FANCY APRICOTS



Today, of course, it is generally acknowledged that there was nothing "natural" about the development of such areas in the past. Neighborhoods segregated by race and class were formed then as they are now, as the result of discrimination, government policies, and decisions made by the private sector with respect to home construction, real estate speculation, and money-lending practices.

As a result of just such decisions made by government officials and capitalists of the 19th and early 20th centuries, today's urban neighborhoods with some stability and resources are struggling to survive. The movement of the white middle class either to the suburbs or to the bank for funds to convert old dwellings into expensive townhouses hurts the tax base of the city in the first instance, as it lays claim to scarce solid housing in the second. At the same time, racially closed housing markets persist in the suburbs; deteriorating, aged housing persists in the central city, and construction of moderate income replacement housing lags far behind need.

We have, then, the by now familiar pattern of white working-class neighborhoods forced to respond to the pressures exerted upon them by both the actions of the upper middle class and the desperation of the poor and working-class blacks. In some cases, that response has become politically and tactically sophisticated, targeting the institutions that are the true culprits in urban decay. In too many other cases, the response has been short-sighted and, motivated by racial fears and the panic of potential loss, has resulted in attacks on those who are also victims and should be allies.

White ethnic neighborhoods, like black neighborhoods, are being hurt by high unemployment, air pollution, dwindling city services, and skyrocketing increases in the rate of taxes and the cost of necessities. The crises in the American economic system that have produced these strains on the community are also producing strains on the family at the personal level: wife beatings, child abuse, and rising incidences of teenage drug abuse and suicide are only a few of the more disturbing manifestations of feelings of outrage and helplessness turned violently inward.

Saving neighborhoods

Despite the fact that ethnic communities and urban slums did not spontaneously generate themselves, there was an element of naturalness about those earlier communities that is absent from many urban

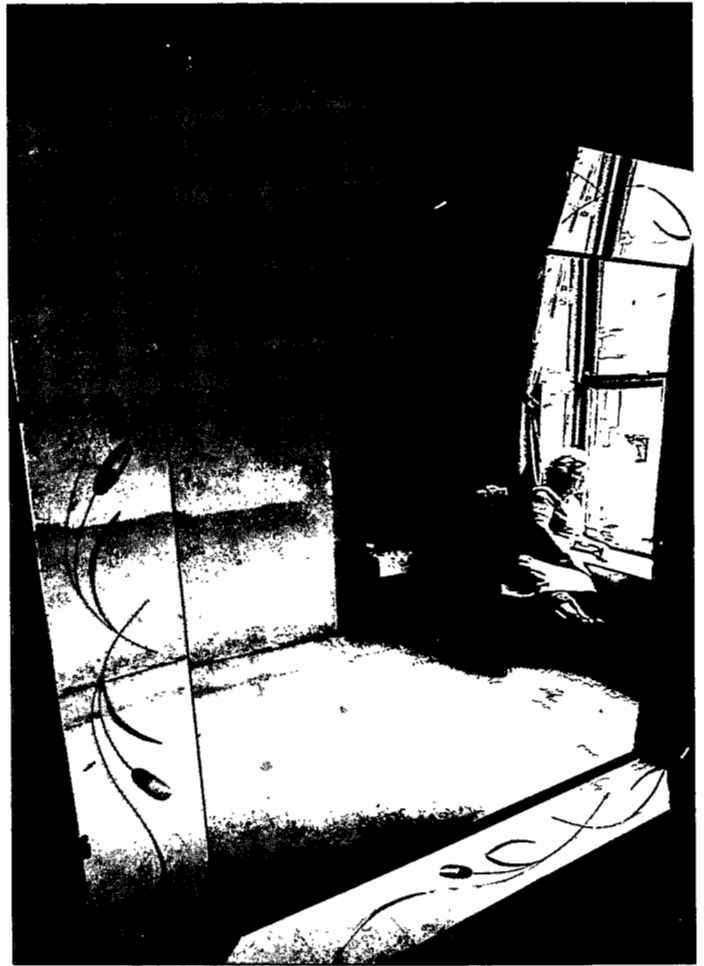
neighborhoods today. Residents in earlier times in all probability were not terribly self-conscious about their neighborhoods. They lived where they had to or where others like them lived. The neighborhood had its good and its bad qualities. True, some families aspired to move out, but for most, the neighborhood was just home, the place where they lived out their lives.

In contrast, many, many people in urban communities today are quite self-conscious about their neighborhoods. The real estate and banking institutions have made residents painfully aware of "trendy" neighborhoods, appreciating housing areas, and poor investment locales. In addition, urban residents themselves are aware of the very fragile social constructions that neighborhoods often are; increasingly they realize the active and defensive postures they must maintain to ensure the continued viability of their neighborhoods.

Nothing is "natural" about either neighborhood survival or neighborhood demise. The fate of the community is in the hands of relevant actors. The vast amounts of citizen effort that go into the organizing of block clubs, neighborhood councils, safety campaigns, and housing rehabilitation efforts as well as block parties, garden walks, and neighborhood clean-up days attest the extent to which the urban neighborhood today is a self-conscious social construct.

One aftermath of Watergate and Vietnam was the plummeting rate of citizen trust in the government's willingness to do good or ability to do well. As trust declined, people sensed more and more that if they wanted something done they would have to mobilize their own resources and collective will to do it. It was once the expression of the political right that people were better off doing for themselves. But the political center and its left have also moved away from a trust in government programs as a panacea, both because the national government in recent years has not been perceived as one where the interests of ordinary people are top priority and because, regardless of the party in power, community control and a level of local accountability began to seem preferable to the workings of distant, frequently cumbersome, and narrowly rational bureaucracies.

In any case, the movement for neighborhood action, like so much on the political scene today, defies simple political labels. It must not be overlooked that both real and potential dangers exist when a community moves toward an emphasis on local control and self-interest. Among the possibilities are



vigilante tactics, tax campaigns that promise simple solutions, restrictive housing covenants, and behavior on the part of non-elected individuals who are accountable to no one. One of the major tasks confronting community organizers and leaders today is the yoking of the activist politics of grassroots people with a vision that transcends a narrowly defined self-interest and looks to the good of the wider political collectivity.

With these reservations in mind, the neighborhood or community action movement is an important and fundamentally positive development. As members of community groups, some citizens have at least had the experience of being a voice in political decision-making—an experience many thought was no longer possible in a system they feared was no longer democratic.

In Chicago, for example, community groups have been instrumental in getting utility companies to act more responsibly, in keeping urban renewal projects from destroying neighborhoods of solid housing, in exposing some of the more flagrant abuses by insurance companies, and in reversing the process of urban disinvestment by lending institutions. Similar efforts are being waged by community groups in other cities. In them all, women are central and crucial actors. As Tillie Tarentino of the National Congress of Neighborhood Women says, women are the fighters, the ones who really care about the community. Barbara Mikulski refers to these citizen action groups as “one of the bright hopes of this country.”

The role of community

Not only are today's urban residents far more conscious of the efforts that must go into ensuring the survival of their urban neighborhoods, but they also realize the limitations of their communities and what they offer. Urban communities of today have been characterized as “communities of limited liability,” residential centers that fill certain limited needs. For many people, the attachment to the community is not so strong that they are not willing to pick up and move when other needs—career, education, a bigger house—become more pressing.

Much of what we know about neighborhoods and their residents, however, suggests that the “community of limited liability” is more typical of the middle class than of the working class and probably more accepted by men than by women. Several sociological studies point to the severe emotional trauma

working-class women have experienced when they left neighborhoods that had for many years been home.

Marc Fried, studying a group of Italians in Boston who were forced to relocate when urban renewal destroyed their homes, finds their reactions comparable to the kind of grief attendant upon the death of a loved one. Many women, as well as men, experienced feelings of helplessness, anger, depression, and a range of somatic disorders. The strength of the grief reaction was found to be a function of prior commitment to the area; women who liked the area very much, knew the area well, and whose closest friends lived in the community experienced the most severe reactions. And the feelings lasted; 2 years after leaving, over one-quarter of the women still felt very sad or depressed.

Irving Tallman found similar distress signals among working-class urban women who moved from the city to the suburbs. Feelings of isolation, a sense that there was no one to turn to in time of crisis, and tension with their husbands all increased after the move. In another study, women expressed the wish that they might die before having to move from the neighborhood in which they had lived for so long.

Working-class women, especially those who are employed, have been found to have more problems and to get less help with those problems than working-class men or middle-class women. What help they do get comes from relatives or neighbors; they seldom seek help from professionals such as doctors or counselors. Little wonder the loss of community is a source of distress.

Of course, not all women are so attached to their neighborhoods. As in the old days, some families aspire to move out and “better” themselves. But, often surprising to middle-class observers, there are families who, though they have the usual desire to increase their income, have no wish to leave their neighborhoods.

Urban ethnicity in the 1970s

This discussion of working-class communities today omits reference to the ethnicity of those who live in those communities. With the exception of certain prominent individuals whose ethnicity is obvious by virtue of their names—and, given the rates of intermarriage these days, even that is often misleading—such information on the ethnic makeup



JEWELRY

10.49



of individuals in communities is not easy to come by. Census data are available only to the second generation; beyond that, information on ethnicity is omitted. Information on religious affiliation is completely absent. Perhaps information on such ascriptive criteria is no longer relevant. Its absence, however, makes it difficult to either disprove its relevance or suggest its importance.

Urban community history has often been synonymous with the history of ethnic groups, but today such parallels are questionable. Most large urban centers, reflecting a dual housing market, have neighborhoods that are solidly black or Hispanic. For the residents of these neighborhoods, to be sure, their urban experience remains an ethnic one. Their families live out most of their daily lives with those

who share their race and cultural background, and they are most often treated by the wider society not as individuals but as members of an "inferior" ethnic group.

This is no longer the case in white neighborhoods. Historians tell us that urban neighborhoods were seldom homogeneous; they certainly are not today. Descendants of Irish, Italian, Lithuanian, Polish, and German settlers share neighborhoods with each other and with more recently arrived Greeks, Koreans, and Russians. Indeed, statistics show that a sizable number of white urban dwellers share neighborhoods with black families as well. And, of course, the wider society does not usually respond to white Anglos in terms of their ethnicity. In such circumstances, how important is ethnicity for white Americans who live

in cities?

In one sense, it is not very important at all. There is no evidence that a majority of the white, non-Hispanic individuals beyond the second generation interpret much of their daily experience in ethnic terms. (Although they do sometimes employ racial terms in interpreting those experiences.) Although at times deep ethnic traditions may emerge—for marriage, birth, and death, perhaps—most people's own experiences would likely lead to the rejection of any suggestion that ethnicity persists as the cultural prism through which reality is interpreted for white Americans. However, in other ways the ethnic experience has been and continues to be both real and important.

First of all, Americans are products of particular ethnic histories, and there is a good deal of evidence suggesting that residuals of those histories continue to shape individual behavior today. Why, for example, do the Irish get involved in electoral politics more than other groups? Why have Jews maintained a special emphasis on the intellectual development of their young? Why do Irish, Italians, and Jews respond differently to illness and pain? Why do Eastern Europeans seem most reluctant to leave a neighborhood when it goes through racial change? Why do family ties appear to be more important to Catholics and Jews than to Protestants? Much, if not most, of this residual ethnic impact is not operative at the conscious level as an ethnic phenomenon. Nonetheless, ethnic influences persist.

Secondly, ethnicity is a salient group characteristic in some situations for some groups. As several sociologists have noted, people sharing an ethnic identity are able to come together as a concrete special interest group under certain conditions and make demands on the political collectivity. When Jews throughout the country organized to stop the march of the Nazis through Skokie, Illinois, or when Italians formed their own anti-defamation league to protest the number of negative stereotypes of Italians appearing in the media, they were acting in such a way. These are also examples of the mobilization of ethnic communities that are not residential communities. Individuals who share an ethnic background share a set of concerns despite the fact that they do not share a neighborhood. Peoples' interpretations of selected events in ethnic terms is a persisting reality, a part of the American experience.

Third, the ethnic experience is being reproduced today for other, more recent immigrants. Not just

for Mexicans and Puerto Rican migrants to the mainland, but also Greeks, Syrians, Pakistanis, Vietnamese, and West Indians. Ethnicity as a variable that orders the American experience, then, has not disappeared, although it has become far less important for many of European heritage.

The parallels between the experiences of earlier immigrant groups and those of today's immigrants are often striking, despite the passing of a century. One example: a Korean friend of mine tells me that young Korean women working in factories in Chicago are subject to sexual abuse and exploitation, of which they seldom complain for fear of losing their jobs. The diaries and letters of young immigrant women working in the factories of newly industrialized 19th century America are filled with similar tales.

Another example: in the garment district of Los Angeles, illegal home work and sweatshops proliferate, and over 90 percent of the labor force—largely Mexican women—is unorganized. The ethnic, class, and sexual exploitation is comparable to that experienced almost 100 years ago by Jewish and Italian women on New York's Lower East Side.

Finally, the ethnic experience is this country's working-class history. It is the history of the struggles of today's grandparents and great-grandparents as they survived the transition from the old country to the new, built labor unions, and established communities. Ethnic history remains working-class history, although some from those ethnic groups have moved into the class of professionals and corporate executives.

A view that focuses on the relationships between the dominant racial or ethnic groups and the subordinate must examine relationships of class and power. Such a perspective combined with more empirical and historical work should make clear which experiences have been peculiar to one cultural group and which have been the shared experiences of people who together occupy a subordinate social status.

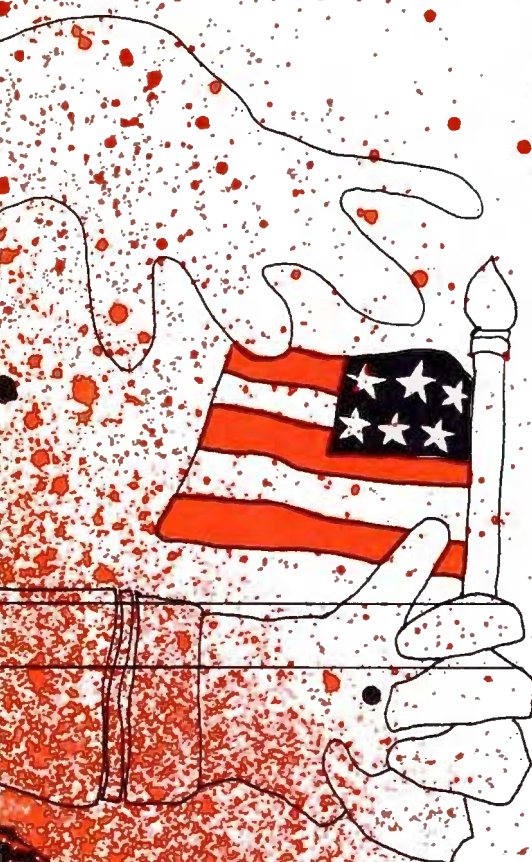
An understanding of that ethnic history can serve to shed light on the traditional meaning and importance of a community to its inhabitants; at the same time, a full realization of the qualified relevance of ethnicity to white working-class urbanites today may aid in removing the restraints from the potentiality of urban dwellers of diverse backgrounds to act together to build the new communities of the cities' future.



The School as Melting Pot

PLURALISM AND AMERICANIZATION VIE FOR DOMINANCE

By Marvin Lazerson

A stylized line drawing of a hand holding a paintbrush and an American flag. The hand is positioned on the left side of the page, with the index finger pointing towards the text. The paintbrush is held in the palm, and the American flag is draped over the hand. The background is filled with a dense pattern of small red and black dots, creating a textured, splattered effect.

Americans have long equated popular education with social cohesion and social mobility. Since the last decades of the 18th century, they have assumed that expanding educational opportunity would strengthen the fiber of democratic life, would teach individuals the essentials of citizenship, and would forge a common value system out of the heterogeneous environment that was America. Instability and change, the seeming failures of traditional institutions like the family and church, and changes in the system of production and distribution of services have been responded to with calls for more schooling, appeals to bring more individuals into the classroom for longer periods of time. Where morality seemed in decline, where class or ethnic conflict was developing, the school was seen as the primary agent for political socialization, the agency most directly involved in instilling commonality and harmony.

American schools have also been viewed as mechanisms of social mobility. Especially after the mid-19th century, expanding educational opportunity and economic advancement were conceived of as synonymous. What was learned in school—behavioral and attitudinal traits, the specific skills of literacy and vocation—would further economic progress for both the individual and society. Upon these assumptions, Americans have pressed for mass public schooling, and indeed, since the early 20th century, have required that all youth spend a substantial part of their time in the classroom. Schools are thus supported because they are believed crucial to political socialization and

Marvin Lazerson is associate professor of education at the University of British Columbia. This essay originally appeared in Roots of America, © National Education Association of the United States 1975, as "Ethnicity and Education: Cultural Homogeneity and Ethnic Conflict." Reprinted with permission.

economic advancement; they preserve the social order by converting questions of social reform and the distribution of economic rewards into educational problems. Reforming the schools and providing greater opportunities to attend school have become the dominant American response to social instability.

While this faith in schooling has been widespread, it occurred only after numerous conflicts. Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries there were frequent debates over the best means to achieve a politically homogeneous citizenry. Ethnic groups have been at odds with governmental and educational authorities over the teaching of alternative cultural values. Social classes have divided over the types of education to be offered and over the benefits to be derived from expanding educational opportunity. Questions have been raised over who should control the schools, what curriculum and pedagogy best teaches citizenship and assures economic advancement. And, while the ideology of the melting pot required all children to attend, America's blacks were excluded from the common system. These conflicts touched fundamental assumptions about the United States as a melting pot, about the role of formal education in the assimilation process, and about opportunity in American society.

Schooling and citizenship

The relationship between schooling and American identity received its most explicit formulation following the American Revolution, when concerns for the uniqueness and tenuousness of the American experiment, fear of Old World corruptions, and the desire to establish a unified nation

and a national character fostered numerous proposals for institutions to assure the creation of patriotic citizens. This concern was neither unique to America nor a unique function of schooling. European countries in the process of nationalization showed similar concerns, and calls for a uniquely American literature, art, and architecture were common. But increasingly the school became a focus for patriotism, the institution where individuals learned how to become citizens. Throughout the 19th century, the belief that schooling was necessary for political and cultural socialization heightened the pressure to get more children into the classroom.

By the mid-19th century, the definition of citizenship and national identity in America had also become inextricably intertwined with Protestantism. Although Americans had no formal state religion—the heterogeneity and competitiveness of religious denominations had forced them to reject a state-supported church—they nonetheless expected their society to be religious. The absence of an established church, however, raised serious problems about how to inculcate religious values. In terms of schooling, the question was simply put: How could religious values be assured in the schools when the state was committed to nonsectarianism? The answer led Americans to distinguish between denominational affiliation and general moral values applicable to society as a whole. This distinction allowed for the adoption of a common-denominator Protestantism that stood above doctrinal conflicts. In the process, public education became America's established church. One did not have to be Protestant to be American—

although it helped—but one did have to pay psychological deference to Protestantism. Under these conditions, the possibilities of a culturally plural society were severely circumscribed.

These and related assumptions were made explicit in the 19th century classroom through school textbooks. Often the sole curriculum and pedagogical guides available to the inexperienced and transient individuals who comprised the 19th century teaching force, the textbooks were memorized and recited; they were to be learned, and they revealed the school's expectations about cultural values.

The most constant theme of the textbooks was national unity. Despite moments of dissent, the United States, students were told, had achieved a consensus on all moral, political, and economic issues. To substantiate this, schoolbooks discussed and, indeed, created folk heroes, men who stood above the disputes of their time: the Revolutionary heroes, the self-made Franklin, the tolerant folk hero Lincoln, and above all, Washington—resembling Christ—were the models for America's youth.

The textbooks placed America's national destiny on a divine level. Americans were the chosen people, with God actively at work in forging the Nation. As one history of the United States concluded, "We cannot but feel that God has worked in a mysterious way to bring good out of evil. It was He, and not man, who saw and directed the end from the beginning."

The imperatives that a divine national identity placed upon education were apparent in the treatment of racial, religious, and nationality groups. Humankind was divided into separate immuta-

ble races with inherent characteristics. In the hierarchy of races, Negroes were the most degraded: gay, thoughtless, unintelligent, and subject to violent passions. While slavery was usually regarded as an evil, especially after the Civil War, Negroes continued to be seen as inferior and lacking in those qualities necessary for full citizenship. American Indians were also inferior to whites, though because they were the original inhabitants of America, they were superior to other non-whites. Those First Americans who were peaceful and accepted the whites' march of progress were depicted as "noble savages." Those who tried to prevent the westward movement were simply savages. In either case, the extinction of the Indian was viewed as inevitable, all in the interest of civilization.

In the textbooks, Catholicism was condemned as a false religion. Subversive of the state, inimical to morality, the Church fostered tyranny, superstition, and greed. The image of Jews changed during the 19th century from a distinctly religious to a racial group. By the century's end, Jews were seen as incapable of full assimilation into the American melting pot. Their quest for material goods had taken on sinister overtones, identified with urban vices and contrasted to rural morality. The national identity of countries outside the United States was similarly seen as a product of racial characteristics. The Irish were impulsive, quick tempered, violent, fond of drink, and impoverished. The French were more complicated: frivolous and Catholic, they had nonetheless produced Lafayette and Napoleon. Worst of all were the Southern Europeans: racially homogeneous, indolent, and Catholic. Italy was a vast ruin

ruled by superstition and the papacy; Spain and Portugal, bigoted. While other nations, especially England and Germany, received more generous treatment, 19th century textbooks taught American children harsh stereotypes of the newcomers populating their land with increasing frequency. The lesson was clear: while individuals could become Americans by identifying with white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant values, they could only approximate true Americanness. A hierarchy of Americanism had been created.

The best Americans were not simply those who equated Protestant values with patriotism and rejected distinctive nationality and ethnic traits. They were also economically successful. To assure economic success, the school was to integrate Protestant morality with secular advancement. In the classroom the Christian religion was converted into a moral code conducive to a burgeoning capitalist economy. Nothing reveals this more effectively than *McGuffey's Readers*, America's most popular school books. The works of William Holmes McGuffey and his successors sold more than 120 million copies from their first appearance in 1836 to 1920, and most copies received more than one reading.

The *Readers* were handbooks of good conduct. They encompassed the themes of an emerging middle-class morality. Hard work and frugality brought prosperity. Responsibility for success or failure lay with the individual. The affluent should use their wealth in socially responsible ways. A commonality of interests existed among social classes; there was thus no reason for class conflict. Poverty was cleansing,

disobedience unconscionable. Persistence, punctuality, honesty, self-denial, and temperance defined the moral man. But while work was essential to success, individuals should accept the fact that they live in a hierarchical society.

Work, work, my boy,
be not afraid;
Look labor boldly in the face;
Take up the hammer or the
spade,
And blush not for your humble
place.

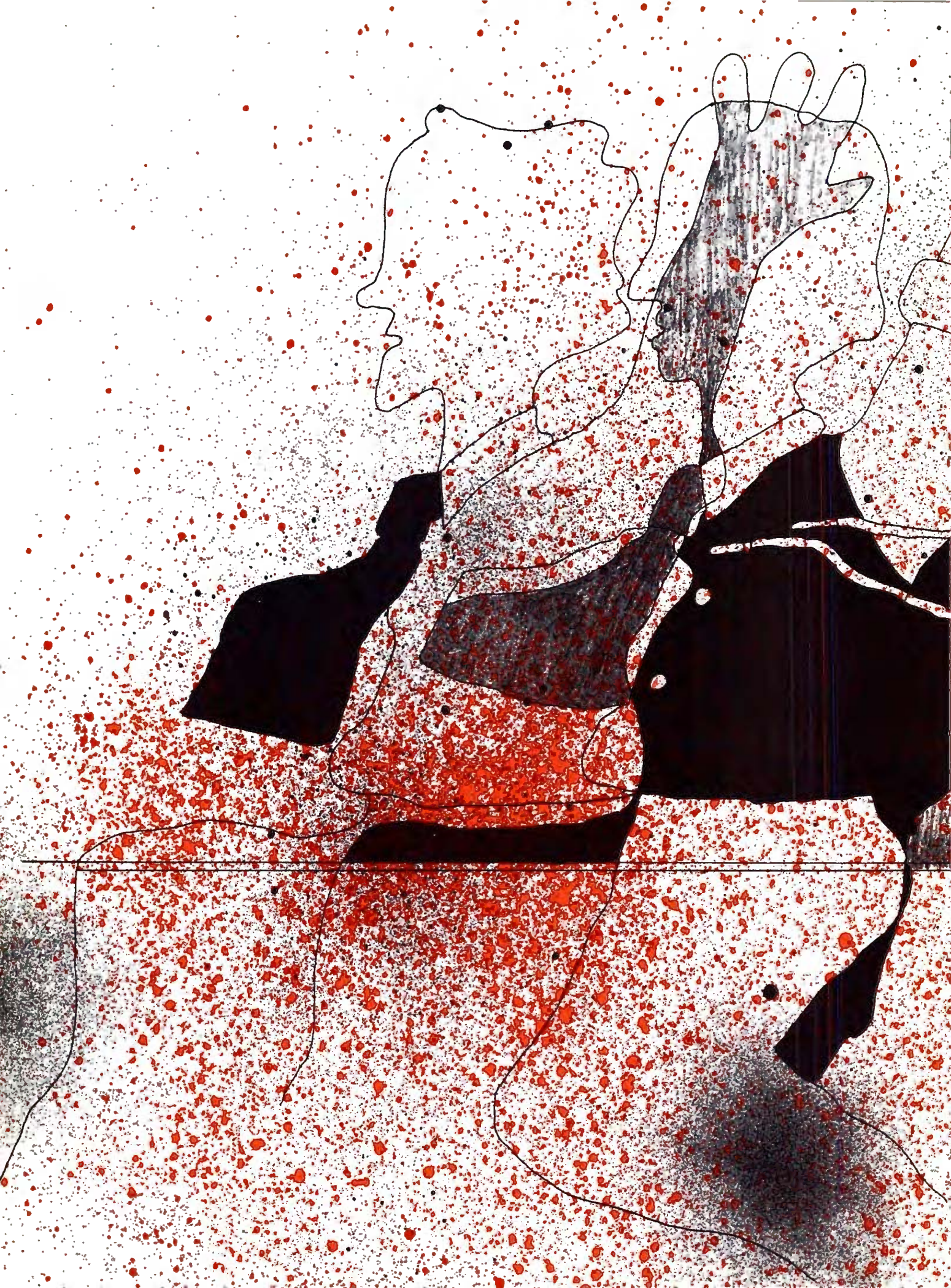
Getting ahead, the *McGuffey Readers* told American youth, involved allegiance to a work ethic in an Anglo-Protestant, white society.

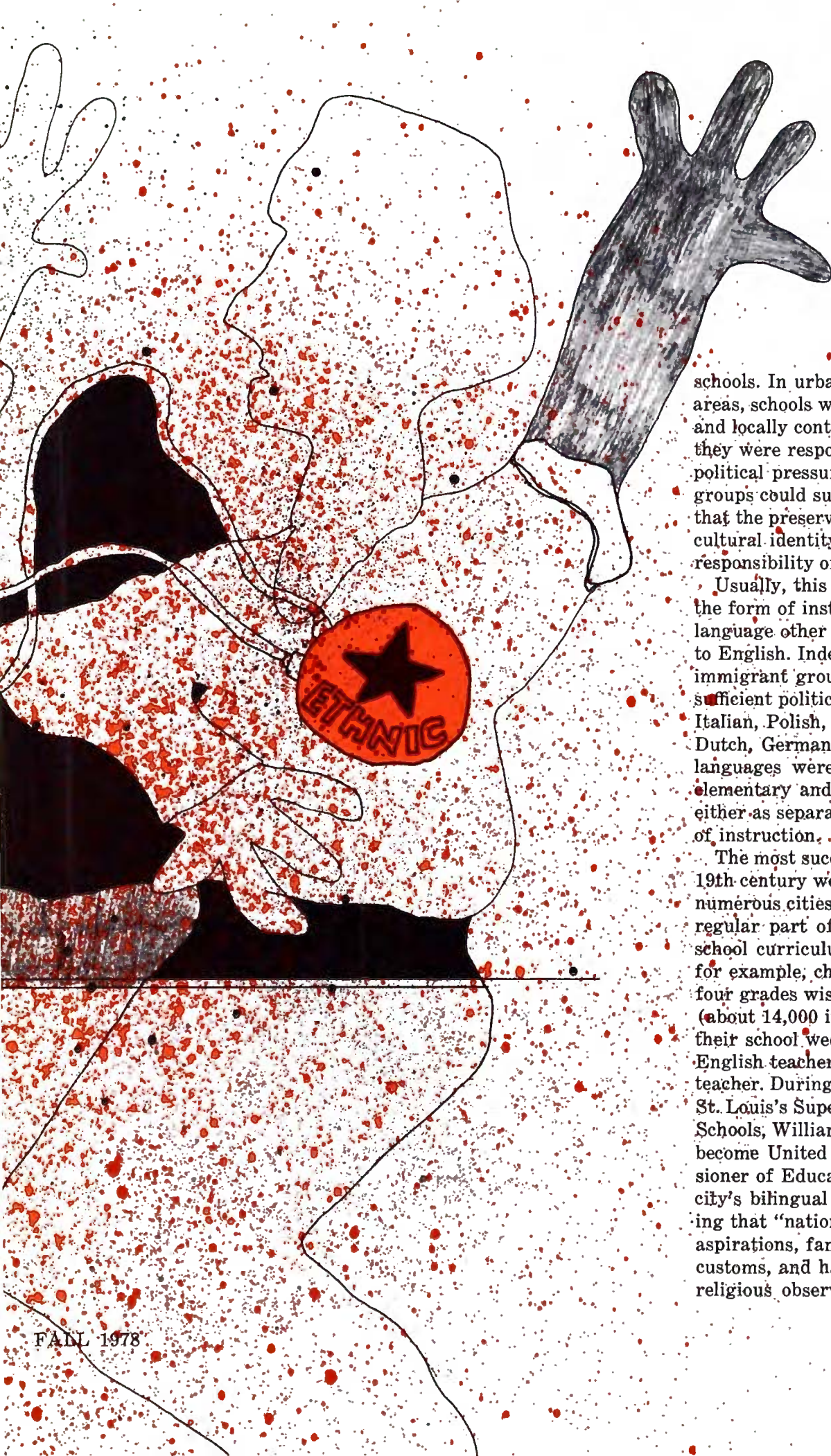
While the values of cultural homogeneity have dominated American education since the mid-19th century, they have never been implemented without conflict. Four of these conflicts are particularly suggestive of both the extent to which ethnic alternatives were available in education and of the limited tolerance for cultural variety in the schools.

Biculturalism and bilingualism

There is no doubt that most immigrants to America wanted to become Americans. But it is also clear that many wanted some continuity between their ethnic cultures and the dominant culture of their new environment. They did not wish to see their children's American citizenship gained at the expense of deep and open hostility toward the culture and language of their former homeland.

For much of the 19th century, certainly before the 1880s, the structure of American public education allowed immigrant groups to incorporate linguistic and cultural traditions into the





schools. In urban as well as rural areas, schools were decentralized and locally controlled. As such, they were responsive to ethnic and political pressures, and immigrant groups could successfully assert that the preservation of their cultural identity was a legitimate responsibility of public education.

Usually, this preservation took the form of instruction in a language other than or in addition to English. Indeed, wherever immigrant groups possessed sufficient political power—be they Italian, Polish, Czech, French, Dutch, German—foreign languages were introduced into elementary and secondary schools, either as separate or as languages of instruction.

The most successful group in the 19th century were the Germans. In numerous cities, German became a regular part of the elementary school curriculum. In Cincinnati, for example, children in the first four grades wishing to do so (about 14,000 in 1899) could split their school week between an English teacher and a German teacher. During the mid-1870s, St. Louis's Superintendent of Schools, William T. Harris, soon to become United States Commissioner of Education, defended his city's bilingual program by claiming that "national memories and aspirations, family traditions, customs, and habits, moral and religious observances—cannot be

suddenly removed or changed without disastrously weakening the personality."

Yet despite these successes in ethnic pluralism, pressure to convert to a culturally homogeneous value system proved too great. At the end of the 19th century and during the first decades of the 20th century, bilingualism and biculturalism in the public schools were rapidly disappearing. The conflict over foreign languages and foreign customs, what one historian has called "a symbolic battle between those who wanted to impose one standard of belief and those who welcomed pluralistic forms of education," was being resolved, and pluralism was in full retreat.

The Catholic alternative

When one turns to the Catholic response to the cultural homogenization of the public schools, one finds a more complicated story.

Before 1870, there was no mass movement toward Catholic parochial schools. This does not mean that there were no parochial schools or no conflict between Catholics and non-Catholics before 1870. There were. In New York City during the 1850s Bishop John Hughes inveighed against the "Socialism, Red Republicanism, Universalism, Deism, Atheism [and] Pantheism" of the public schools. Church councils called for schools to provide Catholic children with a Catholic education. And, religious orders brought with them from Europe commitments to traditional values that appealed to Catholic immigrants and a willingness to maintain school at subsistence wages. But while important as a basis for future growth, these efforts were never part of a consolidated drive toward parochial schooling, and most Catholics found the informal

options of a decentralized public system open to group pressures sufficient to their needs.

In the four decades after 1870, however, that situation dramatically altered. As the informal, decentralized public schools changed to a centralized, bureaucratic system, the influence of local interest groups waned. Simultaneously, schooling itself took on new importance; high rates of voluntary attendance were reinforced by the passage of compulsory attendance legislation. Going to school had become important. By the 1890s three out of five parishes had established parochial schools as alternatives to the public system, many of the schools maintained only with great economic difficulty. More important, an increasing number of Catholics had concluded that support for the local parochial school was an excellent, perhaps the best, way of expressing their religious convictions.

From the perspective of ethnic pluralism, two aspects of the origins and subsequent development of parochial schooling are particularly relevant. First, the system was born of conflicts. Second, once the commitment to an alternative system was made, certainly by 1920, Catholics tended to minimize differences between parochial and public schooling.

The conflicts over parochial education can be broadly categorized as conflict between Protestants and Catholics and conflict within the church among nationality groups. Anti-Catholicism was frequently tied to anti-foreignism in the 19th century, and the public schoolmen often assumed that one could not be a good American and a good Catholic. Of special importance at the end of the 19th century was

the collapse of a number of attempted detentes between Catholic authorities and public school officials; plans to allow nuns and priests to teach in public schools, transfers of property that would give public school authorities use of the parochial school buildings in return for a continued Catholic atmosphere, and released-time experiments were the most common proposals. While such compromises were opposed by Catholics distrustful of public institutions, the more extreme objections came from non-Catholics and public school educators unwilling to accommodate to minority group sentiments.

Conflict within the church among different nationality groups was also of major importance in the proliferation of parochial schools. The arrival of large numbers of Polish, Southern Slav, and Italian Catholics after 1880, when added to the nationalist-oriented German Catholic population, forced the largely Irish church hierarchy into a de facto acceptance of parishes along national lines. While the situation varied throughout the country, these groups were often unwilling to attend either the public schools or the parochial schools of another Catholic nationality and proceeded to set up their own alternative to both.

Conflict was not the only reason for the establishment of parochial schools. Many Catholics arrived in America with the belief that education should be an extension of family life, and Catholics thus supported the idea that the school should be under church auspices. Yet, in historical retrospect, conflict—between Catholics and Protestants and among nationalities within Catholicism—appears as the crucial determinant in the

origins of the parochial school system in America.

While the parochial system thus originated as a religious and ethnic alternative to public education, equally striking has been the pressure on that system to conform as closely as possible to the public schools. From World War I on, Catholic educators have emphasized the Americanness of their parochial schools, and that the values taught there are ones held in common by most Americans, save for distinctions of religious preference. This is not to suggest that parochial schools and public schools have been and are exactly the same. But while there are differences, parochial schools and public schools in the same localities do share striking resemblances to one another. What began as an explicitly different system has wound up considerably less different than Catholics and non-Catholics would have predicted 75 years ago.

Blacks and the melting pot

In the conflict between white and black Americans over socialization into a common mold, one finds the supreme irony. The ideology of conformity required that as many as possible be brought into the public schools, the only sure way to achieve a common socialization process. But from the beginning black Americans were told they could not get in. Race was the line that could not be crossed in the melting pot of the common school.

Through most of the 19th century, white techniques of exclusion were blatant—even where free, blacks were considered inferior, and their inferiority was assumed to be contagious. They thus had no place in white classrooms. After 1890, however,



northern educators were less direct in their exclusion of blacks. Their rhetoric centered less on distinctions of race than upon the need for schools to be realistic and relevant, to concentrate, in short, upon fitting the student to the realities of the economic and social marketplace and to the realities of scientific measures of intelligence.

This took a variety of forms:

Educational tests showed that black children had low mental levels and therefore black children were unfit for rigorous academic learning. Since discrimination in the economy was such that blacks could not get good jobs, schools should, therefore, train black children for the jobs they could get; girls would receive training for domestic service; boys for unskilled menial labor. Blacks, it was argued, grew up in immoral atmospheres. The schooling of black children, therefore, should emphasize basic moral values absent from their home life and neighborhoods.

None of this was exclusively limited to America's blacks. Similar comments and expectations were made about other ethnic groups and the poor generally. But for blacks, exclusion from the expectations of the melting pot was more total, more systematic, more discriminatory. If the goal of American educators was to adjust the individual to the realities of the society, it was America's blacks for whom the realities were most oppressive.

The black response to the process of exclusion varied by community and by the exigencies of the political moment. Before the advent of mass public education,

blacks who received schooling did so through voluntary associations and through philanthropic and religious agencies. As public schooling came increasingly to dominate the formal agencies of education in the latter half of the 19th century, black communities often split over the goals of integration versus segregation. Sometimes the goal was for entry into white schools, the participation of black children on an equal basis with whites. In some cases, the demand was for separate but equal schools, places where black children could be taught by blacks and where they would be free from the hostility and prejudices of white children and white teachers.

Whatever the politics of any particular situation, blacks showed a willingness to use a multiplicity of techniques to win their case: court action against school boards, public pleas and lobbying, school boycotts, all attempts to force the white power structure to respond.

Through it all, one theme had become clear: for blacks, the burden of educational justice lay upon themselves. It was the black community that had to justify, seek, and indeed seize quality schooling for its children. The goals of cultural uniformity did not include America's blacks.

Culture and achievement

The cultural values of American ethnic groups and the demands of school achievement have frequently been in conflict. While there are many reasons why some groups achieved more highly in the public schools than others—economic status, previous cultural background, the availability of rewards through schooling, levels of discrimination, and the attitudes and climates of individual

schools and teachers—at least part of the difference should be attributed to the discrepancies between what was expected and rewarded by ethnic and family cultures and what was demanded by school authorities. A striking example of this is the case of children of southern Italian immigrants.

Most of the available evidence suggests that southern Italian children did not do well in school. School authorities complained of their unruliness and truancy, drop-out levels were high, and there seemed to be little enthusiasm among southern Italian parents for advancing their children's academic careers. There were undoubtedly many reasons for this, ranging from hostility to southern Italians by school people to the economic pressures that required leaving school early. But it is also clear that southern Italian cultural values conflicted with the demands of formal schooling in America, and in that conflict, the Italian child either had to change or was dropped by the wayside.

Italians of the *contadino* or the peasant class of southern Italy arrived in America with cultural patterns conditioned by chronic poverty, a rigid social structure, and by exploitation of frequently absent landlords. In a world heavily stacked against them, the *contadini* found in their families the sole refuge within which trust and loyalty could be cultivated. The word was "us," the family, versus "them," the official institutions, the state, the outsiders. To survive required complete loyalty to "us" with as little contact as possible with "them."

Schools, in this context, were alien institutions maintained by the upper classes at the *contadini's* expense. Few peasant children went beyond the third grade, and

they received little incentive from their teachers to achieve further. Nor was formal education supported by the Church. Catholicism in southern Italy was marked by mysticism, the supernatural, and emotional identification with the patron saints. Rarely was the Italian peasant expected to be able to read the prayer book. Knowledge—religious and secular—was based on community folklore, not on written texts, to be learned, not debated or analyzed.

This background ill disposed southern Italian immigrants to respond favorably to American schools. Schooling was seen as a direct challenge to family values and parental control. The dominant concern of many southern Italian parents seems to have been that the school would indoctrinate their children with ideas antagonistic to the traditional codes of family life. Reporting on the dilemma of being Italian in New York's public schools, a sociologist wrote that "it is in the school that the one institution which is an integral part of his nature and devotion—his home—is constantly subjected to objections." In addition, schooling, especially for adolescents, conflicted with the economic needs and expectations of southern Italian families. Once old enough to contribute, Italian youth were expected to work.

Southern Italians did change in America as they grasped the opportunities to become middle class. But for at least a generation, the strong familial culture of southern Italian children, in conflict with the values of public schooling, was met by disinterest or hostility on the part of American educators. The conflict was not unique to Italians; variations on the theme affected most ethnic groups. But southern Italians clearly suffered from

American education's inability to respond sensitively to familial and communal values or to provide secure learning environments for children caught in the conflict of cultures.

Lessons of the past

Extrapolating themes from the past and offering them as lessons for the present is always a tricky business. Certain developments in American educational history, however, seem sufficiently clear to allow their use in current debates over ethnicity and the schools. Appeals for ethnic pluralism have a long history in American education and, especially before the late 19th century, have sometimes been successful. But more striking has been the ideological commitment to cultural homogeneity. Partially out of this commitment, a bureaucratic administrative structure was established that has made public education highly resistant to ethnic pluralism. Most ethnic groups were thus forced to choose their cultural identities from a narrow spectrum of acceptable responses or were forced to become "less American." The school viewed strong identification with one's ethnic heritage as a drawback to success in America. For some groups, there were no choices. At best, blacks, Indians, and other nonwhites were defined as second-class citizens, at worst as noncitizens. The historical evidence also suggests that without explicit commitments to multiculturalism as essential to American life *and* without a bureaucratic reorganization that allows for considerably more decentralized decisionmaking, it is very unlikely that varied cultural values and styles will be acceptable in the public schools.

If this seems clear, it is also im-

portant to be wary about what remains unsaid. Ethnicity is a more legitimate form of self-identification in America than social class, and what is labeled ethnic conflict is as often conflict between social classes. We should thus recognize that some of the current furor over ethnicity may separate and divide groups who should be tied together by class allegiances. If all that ethnicity today turns out to be is a grab for a larger hunk of a pie that is already too small for the working class and the poor, then the hopes for a more ethnically plural society will be sorely disappointed.

We should also recognize that calls for ethnic pluralism may be symbolic, demands not so much for the acceptance of substantially different values in the schools, but pleas for recognition: "Show us you are not against us, for we want to be good citizens." Such pleas are real, in the sense that they may be necessary for every group that feels itself outside the mainstream or neglected by those in power. But pleas to be recognized are not the same as a movement toward an acceptance of and support for multicultural behavior.

Finally, in the quest for a more pluralist society, it is important to ask the question of how much cultural pluralism can be tolerated if Americans are to retain political unity. For the time being, that question may well be a red herring. The kind of political unity obtained by ignoring cultural differences has not been the kind of politics any American can be proud of. It is probably wiser to assume that the issue of political unity should await a fuller acceptance of multiculturalism. But ultimately the relationship between cultural pluralism and political unity will have to be faced.

The Ethnic Image in the Media



ETHNIC MEN AND, PARTICULARLY, WOMEN SUFFER FROM
TYPECASTING, WHEN CAST AT ALL

By Christine Noschese

*"... Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breath free,
the wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door."*

—Emma Lazarus (*inscription on the Statue of Liberty*)

If my grandmother had been able to read English when she arrived in this country and had seen these as the first words that described her, she probably, if she had the money, would have taken the next boat back to Italy. I don't exactly know where I first heard this sentiment, but it has been around in my own head for years. To me it signifies the way ethnic experience has been portrayed in the American media, even by people we should know better.

The media have dealt with ethnicity as if it did not exist, as if the country were, indeed, one big melting pot. In the United States, there are 70 million descendants of immigrants from Ireland, Italy, Spain, Greece, Armenia, and the Slavic nations. That means approximately 35 percent of our Nation's 203 million population is of white ethnic immigrant descent, and according to the 1970 U.S. Census, at least half of these are first and second generation. According to census data, New York City has more Jews than Tel Aviv, more Irish than Dublin, and more Italians than Rome; Chicago has more Poles than any other city in the world, including Warsaw. Despite these facts, until recently we were lucky to see anyone at all ethnic in film or on television.

Our values, concerns, and lifestyles have been completely distorted, romanticized, and stereotyped. Our families have been portrayed as psychopathic. Our successful people have been gangsters of one kind or another. Ethnic women have been cast as

victims, passive, dependent, narrow-minded, sick, or invisible as part of the ethnic world.

Ethnicity and class in film

Over 50 percent of all ethnics in this country are blue collar workers. Ethnicity must be studied in the context of social class; the lack of ethnic characters and themes in film is accompanied by a lack of working class, blue collar people as well.

In *Movies on T.V.*, Steven Scheur lists 7,000 movies. I reviewed the listing and was struck by the insignificant number of films dealing with ethnics. Did the producers and directors in the past, many of whom were ethnic themselves, forget about their backgrounds? Did they feel there was no market, or did they themselves become victims of the melting pot ideology?

Movies are a moneymaking business, but many famous and successful producers say that they are never sure what is marketable. It is well known in the film industry that *Star Wars* was refused by eight studios before it was picked up by 20th Century Fox, and it is grossing over \$200 million. The studios also thought that *Easy Rider* and *American Graffiti* had no market, but the box office proved differently.

There is no great answer for success, Hollywood-style. Producers who started off with nothing, like Sam Goldwyn, George Zukor, and the Warner brothers all were ethnics. Directors like Frank Capra, whose films were political and who wrote about his own ethnicity in his autobiography, used WASP characters to make their points. These men chose to deal with the American Dream and the WASP world in their films, because of the market or their own self-denial. They did this while they themselves, along

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with 50 percent of other Americans at practically every stage of our history, were immigrants or had mothers or grandmothers who were.

When I interviewed ethnic women for my study of the impact of media on them, the first question was, "Is there any character who you remember in an American film that portrayed a woman from your ethnic group?"

Most of the women I interviewed thought of someone, no matter how insignificant her role was, but they all hesitated and said, "I have to think about this one for a while." The Irish thought about what was broadcast on St. Patrick's Day. Of all the Poles and Slavs I interviewed, only one could think of a film she remembered about her ethnic group but she couldn't remember the name of the film. Most Italians at first only could remember Mafia movies or foreign films.

Movies and television of the past depicted the American family as "The Hardy Boys" or "Father Knows Best," where everyone worked problems out reasonably; everyone was jovial, mentally and physically healthy, and moral. The ethnic American family looked quite different. As the WASP American family was honest, the ethnic family was corrupt. For the few films where the Irish were portrayed as hard-working, jovial people, many more featured a James Cagney hoodlum, with a mother wringing her hands as her son was led away after killing a number of people, saying, "But officer, he was always good to me. He was a good boy."

Italians were almost synonymous with crime, and crime was a family affair. The women in the family supposedly were sheltered from the dirty stuff. They were unaware of or said nothing about their sons murdering each other.

(Most of us remember the strong moral traditions that our mothers and grandmothers upheld. I cannot see either James Cagney's Irish mother nor "killer" Pacino's Italian mother in *The Godfather* saying their sons were good boys because they gave them money while they were killing people. According to Hollywood, Mrs. Corleone remains disinterested, as long as she can sit by the fire and make pasta. Only ethnic mothers are endowed with such a capacity for unconditional love.)

The new ethnic hero

In the last 5 years a new sense of ethnicity has emerged. Hortense Powdermaker states throughout her book *Hollywood the Dream Factory* that movies





are a reflection of what is happening culturally to the people who make them. Directors with names like Cassavetes, Coppola, and Scorsese started to produce films with lead characters who were definitely ethnic. Because of their own experience, the emotional tone of the movies they made was true to life. The camera came to the streets. Working class life was a theme.

Many ethnic Americans, myself included, were so happy to see anyone resembling our life experience on the big silver screen that we clapped and cried. But after the first ten "ethnic" films, my stomach started turning. Something was missing; a new stereotype was emerging. The characters now were more complex and sensitive. Their problems often had to do with society and class. But they were still stereotypes.

The themes surrounding the family all involved violence, pathology, and sexuality. The relationships between men and woman are often portrayed as sexually repressive. The religious aspect of the ethnic family is distorted.

In *The Godfather*, all religious rituals were cover-ups for crime. The family baptism at the church was an alibi for the murder of seven people. The lead character in *Mean Streets* goes to church to pray to God about what to do with his life. His decisions lead to violence and destruction.

In *Looking for Mr. Goodbar*, Diane Keaton's character leads a life of sexual promiscuity stemming directly from her Irish Catholic parents. They are seen as fanatics, the mother stuffing bibles in her daughter's pocketbooks while the repressed father would drink himself to death rather than face the fact that his daughter might be sexually active.

In *Saturday Night Fever*, the mother's only satisfaction in life was to have her oldest son become a priest. She could conceive of nothing else occupationally worthwhile. Her expectations clearly resulted in his and the lead character's unhappiness with life.

The Exorcist, although not about ethnicity, does deal with Catholicism. In it, a young ethnic priest is the victim of his own guilt towards his mother. When the little girl starts speaking in his mother's voice, in her native tongue, the priest dies. The clear message is that if you grew up a Catholic, you have a cross to bear that has no redeeming qualities.

Film plots revolve mostly around men's lives and fantasized macho rituals that from my experience, no matter what the stereotype, are completely exaggerated. Most ethnic men I know don't hang out in bars, have never been involved in organized crime, haven't had a fist fight since they were 14, and work hard at some regular job. Most ethnic men devote a lot of

their time to their family and work, as do ethnic women. However, the themes of happy family life are only portrayed in the WASP family.

Besides being religious, the new stereotype shows our families as basically pathological, however sympathetic. Ethnic working class men, it seems, beat their women, gamble, have fist fights, and despise their wives' sexuality.

In *Bloodbrothers*, one of the biggest offenders, the father beats his wife so badly that she is hospitalized—all because he thinks that she is sleeping with a neighbor. He never even asks her; he just starts swinging. He is clearly seen as sick, like the men in *The Godfather*, *Mean Streets*, *Women Under the Influence*, and *Looking for Mr. Goodbar*.

While the new ethnic man is sexist and irresponsible, the women in the new films are worse. They are generally crazier, if they are visible at all. The wife/mother in *Bloodbrothers* epitomizes the distorted image of the ethnic woman. In one scene she is screaming at the top of her lungs, knees on the floor, hysterical, praying to God holding a crucifix, because her son won't eat. Her actions, of course, frighten the little boy and make him so sick that he lands in the hospital. The fact that she and her husband have no sex is blamed on her repression.

Within all the melodrama, the director covers himself by trying to make the mother a sympathetic character; she loves her son, etc. Regardless, she is not the Italian mother holding together the family with strength and perseverance, but a woman who destroys everything she loves.

In *Women Under the Influence*, considered one of the "best" films about a working class ethnic family, we again see more pathology. The woman/mother/wife in the film is too different; she is confused and unhappy with her role. Her confusion and inability to speak up land her in a mental hospital. Her extended family looks and acts like something out of a psychiatric case book—unsupportive, hostile to change and difference, and cold.

What makes these films so upsetting is that they do have redeeming qualities and, in part, accurately describe aspects of working class life. But women never seem to control their own lives in these movies. At best they are victims, passive, and dependent on male approval. The strong, lively, warm backbone of the family is no more. At worst, ethnic women are invisible. My favorite is the mother in *Mean Streets*. She is not seen throughout the whole movie. The only sign of her presence is a tray of food she leaves in her son's bedroom.



Invisible or caricature

About 10 years ago, Raymond League, a black commercial and television producer at J. Walter Thompson and one of the first blacks to be hired in an executive capacity on television, conducted a private survey with the aid of his friends to document the underrepresentation of blacks on television commercials. Their research confirmed what they had suspected: when it came to television, blacks were indeed invisible.

League initiated a campaign to remedy that situation, as did other black individuals and civil rights groups. And over the years, they achieved a fair degree of success—if the fact that blacks are portrayed no more inane than whites can be termed a success.

At first, the only blacks allowed to sell products were light-skinned, with Caucasian features. Today, this is no longer the case. Blacks can be dark-skinned and do not have to resemble Lena Horne or Harry Belafonte to be acceptable. Even Melba Tolliver, the black newscaster, is allowed to wear her hair afro style—although it caused an outcry at first among network brass.

Television commercials scrupulously present blacks in wholesome nuclear family structures, advertising products like cold remedies, toilet tissue, soap suds—never Cadillacs or hard liquor or any product that could be connected with a negative stereotype. Naturally, black performers who wish to do television commercials are bound by the same limitations facing white actors—inane materials, intense competition for jobs. Nevertheless, commercials have become a possible source of income for them.

While providing income for aspiring actors is not of the highest priority, I would like to point out that this source of income is *not* generally available to those who are clearly white ethnics—particularly Mediterraneans.

Sacraments, an award-winning play by Jo An Tedesco, chronicles the life of a family of Italian-American sisters. The actresses who appeared in it all had extensive stage credits. Yet, when interviewed, all expressed their frustration at being unable to audition for television commercials. They were repeatedly told they were too exotic, too off-beat looking—“to ethnic” to be viable spokeswomen for soap suds and floor wax. To be young, gifted, and Italian may be great if you’re Robert DeNiro, but to be Robert DeNiro’s kid sister is to be unusable in advertising.

It is true, of course, that Mediterranean and Jewish women are used in commercials—but generally only to sell products whose specific appeal is their ethnicity—spaghetti sauce, frozen pizza, macaroni, and chicken soup. The actresses’ function is to vouch for the product’s authenticity and thereby convince middle Americans they are buying the real thing.

The typical image presented in these commercials is of an excessively protective mother hovering over her embarrassed son, urging him to eat. If it’s spaghetti sauce they’re plugging, the woman will be middle-aged, plump, and flamboyantly emotional as she shouts, “Mangia!” to her indulged but obedient son. If chicken soup is the product, the woman will be middle-aged, plump, and relentlessly nagging as she shouts, “Eat already!” to her indulged but docile son.

A variation on this theme features the possessive mother-in-law’s wary relationship with her son’s bride. The mother-in-law has been invited to dinner, and her distrust of her son’s wife is evident until she tastes the spaghetti sauce the young woman has cooked. She is then reassured her son will not starve to death, expresses her beaming approval that the sauce is as good as homemade, and the daughter-in-law is accepted into the fold. The ethnic woman is repeatedly presented as a nurturing person who respects family traditions, but is also possessive and narrow-minded.

Don’t call us

So, if you are Italian or Jewish but not middle-aged, plump, or particularly motherly-looking, you are too young to be a mother of a grown son, too thin to advertise food, and commercial agents will not know where to place you.

While ethnic women rarely sell soap suds, they never sell beauty products. Either their sexuality is considered too overt or they are perceived as lacking a sexual dimension—although the women actually selling these products might be of Polish or Italian extraction, this ethnic identity has been blurred to make them acceptable. In a society that values upward mobility, using expensive glamour products is one sign of success, and the traditional WASP sex object is the medium to convey that message.

It seems that in television commercials as well as in the film medium, ethnicity is something to be used or not used—not to depict who the real American is, but to portray one perception of what the real American wants to be.

By Albert W. Vogel

PROBLEMS OF ROM (GYPSIES) IN THE U.S.
AND ITS SCHOOLS

THE LEAST KNOWN MINORITY

Upwards of 250,000 Rom live in the United States, with millions more found world-wide. They live in almost every Western country, and evidence exists of their appearance in Japan, Southeast Asia, and perhaps China. Exact census figures are difficult to obtain because most countries pretend that Rom do not exist.

The U.S. census prefers to list Rom by their country of national origin. Rom from Germany are listed as Germans. In 1972, however, Rom were declared a nonwhite minority by the U.S. government. There is still much confusion at the Federal level about who the Rom are and how they should be defined. The general public still thinks of "Gypsies" as anyone who is nomadic, dishonest, or both.

The term Rom is preferred to "Gypsy" just as black is preferred

to "Negro." Technically *Rom* is the name of one historical group of people and, in common usage today, means *man*.

Most authorities now agree that Rom came originally from India, and appeared in Europe at the end of the 14th century. Their language, *Romanés*, is an Indo-European language, and traces of it can be found in India today. Early records indicate that there were three main groups; the Rom, the Senti, and the Cali.

But these simple definitions have become exceedingly complicated during the past 600 years. World-wide Rom do not look alike—in spite of the stereotypes in the media. Blond Rom can be found in Sweden and Germany and British Rom are said to look "English."

Most "traditional" Rom speak the language, *Romanés*, although

dialects differ from place to place. *Romanés* is not a written language. "Non-trationals" may or may not speak the language, although they usually have some memory of the culture and values of Rom society.

The Rom group most frequently observed and written about in the United States is the Kalderash, the descendents of the Cali, mentioned above. The Kalderash are one of the more traditional groups and have resisted "Americanization" more rigorously than, say, the Senti.

This social phenomenon has not been examined by workers in Rom studies, but one suspects that the Senti—who came mostly from Germany—brought with them specific skills which made them more easily employable in the United States, accelerating their upward social mobility. The Kalderash did not have such a wide range

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of skills and have resisted the acculturation process.

Rom live in most of the large cities in the United States and many of the smaller ones as well. Anne Sutherland studied Rom living in the small town of Barvale, California. Some large cities have Gypsy experts in their police departments, and Gypsy files documenting the complexities of Rom family relationships. The amount of money spent in this country by police departments watching Rom has never been calculated.

Admittedly, Rom have been involved in petty crime. This frequently occurs because traditional occupations such as fortune telling are declared illegal, leaving the practitioners unemployed and on the wrong side of the law.

Studying Rom in the United States is an especially difficult task. First, one must put out of one's mind the enormous "Romantic" literature that has been produced during the past 600 years. One must also ignore the stereotypes that have been reinforced by films, television, popular songs, and the press.

There is no such thing as a Gypsy king, for example; Rom men do not wear earrings and very few of them play the guitar. As will be shown later, Rom do not travel much in America, and Rom tend to be self-consciously clean.

The Romantic literature can be of use as historical documentation by the advanced student. But one must be a very sophisticated scholar, indeed, to separate the myth from the reality.

Additional problems stem from the fact that most traditional Rom are illiterate. Therefore, any research that requires Rom to fill out a form,

complete a questionnaire, or read instructions is out of the question. (Studies of intelligence conducted in Europe have frequently led to the conclusion that Rom are mentally defective as a group—a finding applauded by the Nazis, who sent 500,000 Rom to their graves.)

Another problem is the Rom's extreme secretiveness. "Being invisible" is a highly desired value in Rom culture. The historical reasons have been documented by scholars and are easy to understand. Rom have been a persecuted minority since their emergence in the 14th century. They have always lived as a persecuted minority surrounded by a hostile majority. Their survival—almost a miracle itself—has depended upon their ability to handle their own affairs and to remain invisible.

I have found in my own work that any kind of structured investigation arouses extreme suspicions. The Rom I have talked to have a highly refined ability to distinguish between informal conversation and formal or structured questioning. Entry into the culture is extremely difficult for *Gajé* (non-Rom). It is even difficult for nontraditional Rom. Some knowledge of the language and a demonstrated willingness to help Rom solve some immediate problems are helpful.

But, invariably, efforts to "do research" are received negatively. Usually this means silence, deliberate lying, or distortion. The women will sometimes demonstrate forms of aggressive behavior such as face scratching, spitting, or loud hostile language. The Rom do not care what the *Gajé* think of them, and they do not believe that research will benefit them.

Statistics concerning Rom are all too often faulty. The last U.S. census listed about 5,000 speakers of *Romanés* in the United States. There are probably that many *Romanés* speakers in New York City alone. As noted above, if Rom respond to the census taker at all, the responses are likely to be deliberately inaccurate.

Members of agencies that deal directly with Rom (the police, medical facilities, welfare agencies) are likely to be prejudiced or unconsciously racist. Reports and observations from teachers, policemen, or physicians have to be evaluated with special care. An observed behavior such as the reluctance of Rom children to eat cafeteria food may suggest ignorance of nutrition to teachers, whereas it is a violation of the rules of cleanliness (*merimé*) to the child.

The Rom studied for this article lived in Albuquerque, Los Angeles, San Francisco, several other cities in California, Portland, Oregon, Spokane, Washington, and Vancouver, Canada. As indicated by Sutherland, Rom in one community frequently do not know Rom in another community and have no way of communicating with them. This dismisses the popular notion that Rom have a secret or mysterious way of keeping in touch. Actually, communication with *vitsá* members (an extended family grouping) in another city is carried on by telephone—much more effective than leaving piles of sticks at the crossroads.

There is some reason to doubt that American Rom are particularly nomadic. Records in the Toledo, Ohio, newspapers indicate that one family (*vista*) has lived in that city for over 40 years. Another well-known

Rom family has lived in Spokane for about the same length of time.

Many Rom identify a city that they call home. The time span of 40 years is mentioned again and again and suggests the span of memory rather than a precise record. Rom have few if any written records. Rom do travel in search of work, and since families do not like to be separated, the entire family may leave together. This suggests to *Gajé* that an exodus is taking place. Rom also travel on family business such as weddings and funerals. In large extended families, weddings and funerals are frequent occurrences.

Another inducement to travel is trouble with the police or non-Rom neighbors. A rehabilitation project in Salem, Oregon, was brought to a standstill after a Rom man was robbed and shot; every Rom family left town, some for as long as 6 months. During that period they did not live on the road, but went to other towns and moved in with relatives. But eventually they all returned "home." Older Rom have a strong attachment—or memory—for the traveling life, as pointed out by Sutherland, but it's a nostalgic feeling and an admission that the days of the open road are over.

In discussing this question with school officials, they frequently justify their lack of interest in Rom children with the response: "Gypsies are here today and gone tomorrow." The field evidence would suggest that Rom children drop out of school for a number of reasons that are usually unknown to school personnel, and that "traveling around" is among the least important.

I have touched on the question of *merimé*. This is a very important issue—perhaps the most important—

involving Rom and the schools. Both Sutherland and C. J. Miller have studied it, but not in relation to education. The *Romanés* word *merimé* can be used in two ways. A Rom who has committed some indiscretion against the *vitsá* may be cast *merimé* by the *Kris* (a hearing of elders). This is an extreme form of ostracism and punishment. The person so punished is literally "unclean."

The second meaning of the word involves a very complex series of rules covering cleanliness and morality. Different families vary, of course, as to the extent to which they observe the rules. One sees young girls and women in pants or blue-jeans from time to time (definitely *merimé* a few years ago) and Rom children eating a hot dog from a street vendor (still considered *merimé* by most adults).

One *vitsá* visited by me consisted of four families living in four contiguous houses with a fifth house left vacant, except that all four families used the toilet in the vacant house. Most Rom grow up with very deep feelings associated with toilet behavior and cleanliness—even the flushing of a toilet can be embarrassing.

The literary evidence would suggest that the rules of *merimé* can be traced back to the days when Rom did live in caravans and did travel the open road. Campsite discipline and cleanliness are very important under traveling conditions. It should also be pointed out that unlike the Jewish laws of Kosher, *merimé* does not have a religious basis, but rather is the key to the cultural values of Rom everywhere.

One finds that even nontraditional Rom who have entered the middle

class and forgotten the language will sometimes have a memory of certain rules of *merimé* which have been passed on to them by their parents, in the same way that some non-Orthodox Jews will feel guilty or be amused by eating pork.

It may be that the conflict between the laws of *merimé* and the ordinary practices of the schools (eating in cafeterias, going to the restroom in groups, boys and girls holding hands and playing certain games together, even some of the programs in sex education) are the main reasons that Rom parents do not want their children to attend school.

Rom parents do not articulate it that way, of course. Rather they say: "I don't want my child to be an American," or, "You Americans do dirty things." When young Rom do attend school, it is not unusual for their mothers to walk by the school several times during the day, as if to reassure themselves that the children are safe.

Many of the prohibitions of *merimé* wouldn't make sense to a modern realist. However, it is up to the Rom themselves to decide what from their culture should be preserved and what should be discarded.

One area where change has occurred is in health practice. Traditionally, the *drabana* (f.s.), or healer, looked after the health needs of the *vitsá*. Some folk-healthways are still practiced, but study has shown that Rom have adjusted very easily and rather fully to modern health practice. Rom seem to utilize the health delivery systems of the country better than most other minorities.

A budding awareness exists among Rom that they need some of the skills offered in the schools:

reading, writing, and some ability to calculate. The project at Spokane, Washington, has received attention in the popular press. Historically, however, Rom have avoided school and denied that reading and writing had any value. Getting Rom to send their children to school is not easy for the reasons already mentioned. Additionally, mothers find it difficult to overcome the short-term satisfaction of having children in the home in favor of having children who can read and write—especially since tradition supports the former and not the latter.

Once in school, however, there are other impediments to learning. Because Rom children learn by watching their parents, instruction in a deliberate or structured way is never offered. The American school is based on structured teaching. A West Coast principal when asked about this basic difference agreed that it might have contributed to his school's failure to retain Rom children who had been enrolled.

"Looking back on it," he said, "I can see that the children became very uneasy when instructed or told what to do; but they did like to follow the teacher around and copy her."

He also indicated that the teacher did not like to be followed around or copied. This appears to be a good indication of cultural conflict. (This same principal asked that his identity be concealed because he wasn't sure his superiors wanted him talking about the "Gypsies.") I have not been able to identify or locate the children who dropped out of that school, but I have heard it said by Rom parents and children that American teachers "talk too much."

All in all, Rom want to preserve their culture just as Chicanos and Native Americans do. Yet, some members of the community are suggesting that perhaps some of the skills of middle-class America might be helpful—at least in making a living. But Rom sense that the schools are levellers and homogenizers and that they tend to destroy culture. They do not understand the educational system as well as they seem to understand the health delivery system.

For their part, school officials are really not interested in taking on another minority problem unless funds are made available. Some don't even know that Rom exist. One school official told me, "We have enough minorities already." He himself was a member of a minority.

More problems arise because of the enormous amount of stereotypical information that has passed into the conventional domain, to say nothing of the equally enormous amount of stereotypical information that is contained in children's literature, newspapers, films, television, music, and theater.

Rom are anxious that their language should be preserved, and they fear that schools will take it away from their children. While the concept of bilingual education is relatively unknown in the Rom community, Rom parents would like some assurance that schools will not destroy their language. A useful technique might be to hire Rom as assistant teachers or classroom aides (Spokane has done this).

But before anything can be done, teachers and school officials should become aware of the Rom's existence and begin to understand their aspirations and their problems.

READING & VIEWING

BOOKS RECEIVED

The Lingering Crisis of Youth Unemployment by Arvil V. Adams and Garth L. Mangum (Kalamazoo, Michigan, Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, 1978). Two findings of this study link early employment difficulties to persistent unemployment and low earnings, and link education and training to employment success regardless of race and sex. It forecasts continuing unemployment for black youth as a group and urges job creation and training. *152 pp.*

Justice and Reform by Earl Johnson, Jr. (New Brunswick, N.J., Transaction Books, 1978). Subtitled "the formative years of the American Legal Services Program," this book chronicles the development of the OEO legal services program and assesses the effectiveness of the legal services movement. A foreword describes the replacement program—the Federal Legal Services Corporation. *416 pp.*

Housing the Poor by Alexander Polikoff (Cambridge, Massachusetts, Ballinger Publishing Company, 1978). Recounts how law and public policy are responsible for much of today's residential segregation and argues for heroic measures—the dispersal of the poor in middle class neighborhoods. *216 pp.*

Protest at Selma by David J. Garrow (New Haven, Connecticut, Yale University Press, 1978).

Garrow, an admirer of Dr. Martin Luther King, analyzes the latter's political strategy during the struggle to achieve voting rights and concludes King was a skillful tactician—a quality often overlooked by admirers of King's moral leadership. *346 pp.*

Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity by Nijole V. Benokraitis and Joe R. Feagin (Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1978). An examination of empirical grounds for assertions about affirmative action, this book attempts to answer two questions: Is affirmative action producing equal employment opportunities? Has it resulted in greater and unmerited inequality for white males? Buttressed by considerable data. *255 pp.*

American Indians and the Law, ed. by Lawrence Rosen (New Brunswick, New Jersey, Transaction Books, 1978). Nine essays concerning such topics as The Indian Policy Review Commission, the BIA, tribal courts, water rights, Alaskan Native claims, and Indian education are grouped under two headings: the historical and administrative context of American Indian policy, and control of Indian resources and tribal self-determination. *223 pp.*

Bakke, DeFunis, and Minority Admissions, by Allan P. Sindler (New York, Longman Inc. 1978). A review of the two famous affirmative action cases—the strategy pursued by parties to the cases and by those filing amicus briefs, as well as issues and politics involved. This book is one of the first post-Bakke treatises on affirmative action. *358 pp.*

PAMPHLETS RECEIVED

Work and Family Issues ed. by Hilda Kahne and Judith Hybels (Wellesley, Massachusetts, Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, 1978). A bibliography of nearly 300 items on women's economic roles, focusing on the work of economists with related work from other social sciences.

Sources of Assistance in Recruiting Women for Apprenticeship and Skilled Nontraditional Blue Collar Work (Washington, D.C., Department of Labor, 1978). Available from the Women's Bureau, Office of the Secretary, U.S. Dept. of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20210. Single copies free.

COMMISSION REPORTS

Social Indicators of Equality for Minorities and Women. Contains statistical data comparing the

social condition of women and minority males to that of white males; includes data on suicide, unemployment, crime, poverty, health, etc. *136 pp.*

ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORTS

Behind the Scenes: Equal Employment Opportunity in the Motion Picture Industry (California Advisory Committee). Examines employment of minorities and women in Southern California film industry, especially in decisionmaking jobs. *48 pp.*

Native American Justice Issues in North Dakota (North Dakota Advisory Committee). Assesses the quality of justice available to Native Americans in Burleigh County, N. D., from State, county, and municipal law agencies and courts. *26 pp.*

Civic Crisis—Civic Challenge: Police-Community Relations in Memphis (Tennessee Advisory Committee). Reviews allegations of police harassment, intimidation, and brutality and the response thereto of police, city, and local officials. *129 pp.*

A Paper Commitment: Equal Employment Opportunity in the Kentucky Bureau of State Police (Kentucky Advisory Committee). Investigates employment practices of the Kentucky State Police regarding minorities and women and the Federal government's role in ensuring equal opportunity. *19 pp.*

Working With Your Schools (Louisiana Advisory Committee). Handbook on the role of various government agencies, the rights of students and parents, influencing school decisions, and evaluating schools, with a special section on Louisiana. *108 pp.*

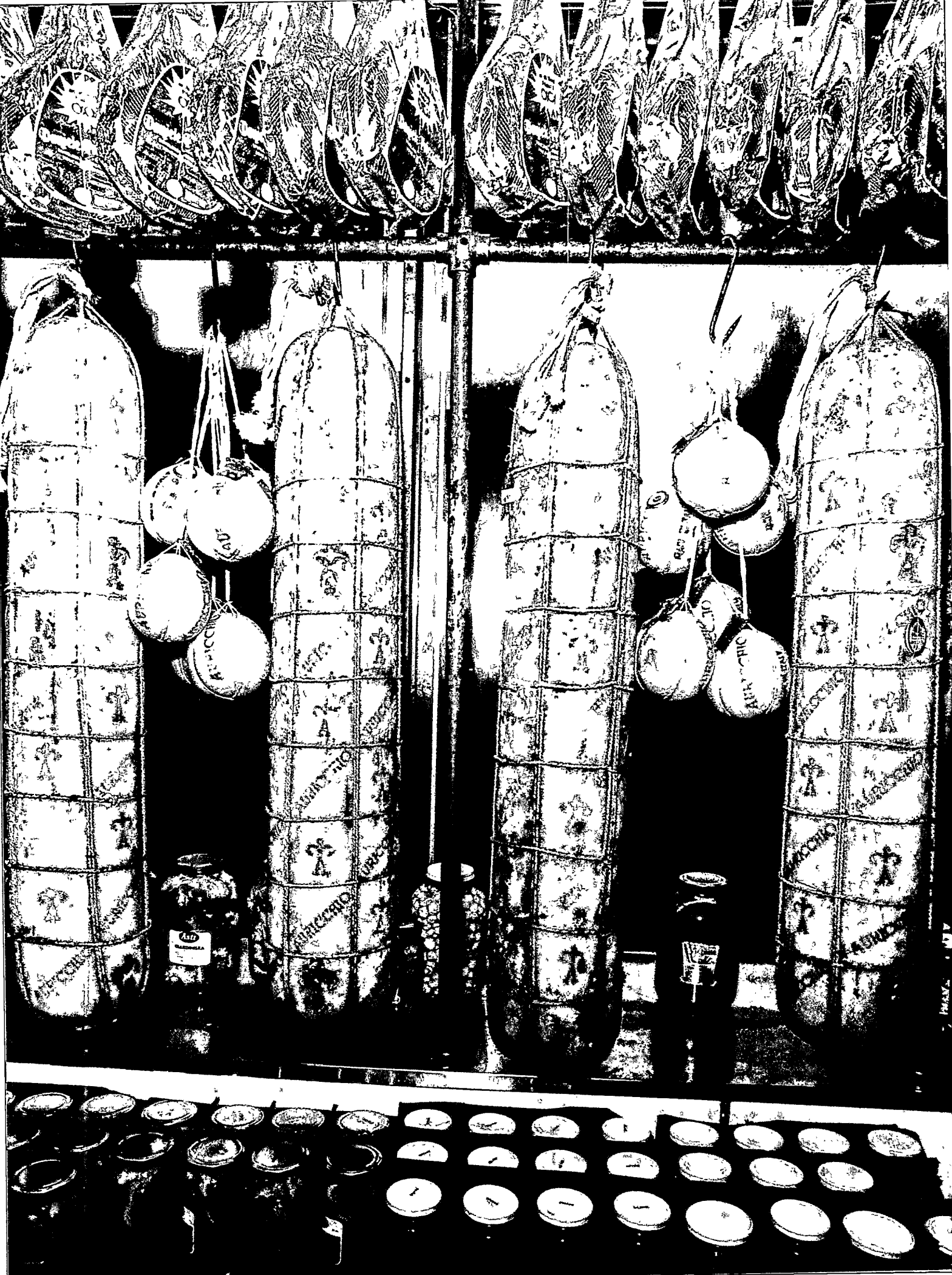
Working With Your Schools (Arkansas Advisory Committee). As above, with special section on Arkansas. *108 pp.*

Trabajando Con Su Escuela (Texas and New Mexico Advisory Committees). As above, in Spanish, with special sections on Texas and New Mexico. *142 pp.*

HEARINGS

Hearing Before the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights: Seattle, Washington Vol. I: Testimony October 19–20, 1977 American Indian issues in Washington State. *330 pp.*

Recent Developments, New Opportunities in Civil Rights and Women's Rights. A report of the proceedings of Western regional conference on civil rights and women's rights.



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