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Health in the Mexican-American Culture: A Community Study. by Margaret Clark

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treatment, or a very marked improvement in the educational process, occurs.

In the second place, Albee attempts to give some perspective as to why the crisis exists, at least on the premises of present programs. Here he shows considerable imagination, and one has the feeling that he has warmed to his subject and is expressing some very deep concerns of an academic man. Much of this material is in a long (72 page) introduction and some of it is in the next to the last chapter, "The Crisis in Education," with the more conventional analyses of manpower in between.

Some of the inspiration for this second job is taken from John K. Galbraith (*The Affluent Society*), who has made an incisive analysis of the "inordinate respect for production," and the enjoyment of an "unbelievable variety of goods in the midst of strikingly inadequate social conditions" which characterize modern American culture. Albee's overview of the problem of manpower shortage is that "our society has grown so used to such a great variety of goods and services, to such a high level of technical productivity, and to the expectation of ready satisfaction of many of our health and welfare needs, that we have taken all of these blessings for granted. The time has now come for our discovery that such achievements do not occur by themselves, but are largely based on the effectively trained intelligence of our nation's brainpower" (page 12). He takes a particularly strong position on the importance of theory in the professions.

He also draws inspiration from Toynbee's analysis of Assyria (*War and Civilization*), which leads to a rather frightening picture: "It is as though two centuries hence an army should march up the east coast of North America and find the ruins of Philadelphia and New York and be astonished by their size and complexity and yet not know the names of these cities nor have ever heard of the people who built them or the nation in which they were located" (page 55). The prospects are made even more startling by facts concerning the "Soviet race for knowledge" (page 51), which Albee stresses at a number of points. In short, he believes and marshals considerable evidence to show that

the quality of our educational system has been on the downgrade for a number of years (pages 191 ff). We overemphasize such "easier" subjects as "personal adjustment" and "vocational skills" and underemphasize the hardheaded subjects required of scientists. Basically, our value system is heading us for serious trouble and we seem unwilling to invest enough of our gross national product in education, at all levels (and including especially teachers' salaries) to avoid such trouble. These thoughts have been expressed by others, many of whom Albee cites, but they are presented here in sharp focus on a particular problem, the nature of which cannot be understood without reflection on the deeper problems.

This book should be of interest to all persons professionally interested in health and human behavior, and many others besides. It is not a systematic treatise in sociology or related disciplines, but it does provide good background as a source book for manpower data together with some challenging ideas.

Richard H. Williams

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*Health in the Mexican-American Culture: A Community Study.* By Margaret Clark. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1959. xii, 253 pp. \$5.00.

For the individual professionals, (be they social workers, health personnel, or teachers) who seek aid in understanding as well as rendering better service to certain clients, this is an excellent book. The original study on which the book is based "was designed to secure sociocultural information that would be helpful to professional persons in the United States working with people of Mexican background who have not yet been fully assimilated into American Culture," (vii). Dr. Clark exhibits considerable skill in interpreting anthropological and sociological data into terms which are meaningful to those who would apply them.

The locus of the study is an unincorporated, low-income community called *Sal si Puedes*, (meaning: "Get out if you can!") whose adult population is composed of first- and second-generation Mexican-Americans.

The material is presented in eight chapters, the first six of which are an ethno-

graphic account using the following titles: the valley, the town, and the people; the pattern of community life; language, literacy, and education; making a living; the pattern of religious life; and the pattern of family life. Besides the descriptive presentation, each chapter contains a number of insights and suggestions for application of the research results by health professionals. The seventh chapter focuses on the health-disease complex of Mexican-Americans, and the last chapter, "Changing Medical Ways," contains the summary, conclusions, and recommendations. A useful glossary is also included, as well as a bibliography and a subject index. The writing is simple and straight forward and highly sympathetic to the people and the culture it portrays.

Few social scientists would quarrel with the basic presentation, since it is admittedly in the "applied" field and intended for a non-social scientist audience. This reviewer, however, would have appreciated a more rigorous analysis of the data.

The treatment of social classes, for example, appears to be superficial. It is admitted that "social classes are poorly defined," yet the usual upper, middle, and lower classes appear. *La alta sociedad*, *los medianos*, and *los de abajo* are literal translations of the Anglo terms high society, middle class, and lower class respectively. One would like to see more evidence in terms of the proportion of the population in the various classes and the characteristics of each class.

The Anglo-Mexican conflict, the intraethnic conflict, and the leadership phenomenon (so crucial to cultural change) seem to this reviewer to have been treated cursorily. In the analysis of the data one wonders, also, what phenomena are explainable in cultural terms and which should perhaps be explained in social class terms. This distinction is not made.

Although the book offers very little that is new with respect to what is known about the culture of this particular population, this reviewer is most favorably impressed with the author's ability to present research data in terms which are meaningful to other professionals.

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*Class in American Society.* By Leonard Reissman. Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1959. xii, 436 pp. \$6.75.

The author of this most recent social stratification text had two major objectives in writing the book: (1) to present a systematic view of the theories and methodology of stratification, and (2) to describe the consequences of class in American society. In this reviewer's opinion, his treatment of the first objective is highly satisfactory. Moreover, the presentation of materials is logical and the style is clear and refreshing. Reissman's handling of his second objective, however, is less adequate.

The first chapter contains an excellent discussion of why Americans have historically refused to recognize the existence of classes and how this has in turn affected the study of social stratification. Reissman's thesis is that certain American values (anti-aristocracy, anti-radicalism, frontier psychology, and a secularized protestant ethic) and the facts of American social development (especially urbanization and industrialism) delayed the recognition of class from the time of Marx until recently. Furthermore, when the class notion was accepted, the emphasis by both the public and social scientists alike was upon the status and prestige dimensions rather than upon economic classes and power because the former were more acceptable to a democratic ethos.

Two comprehensive and insightful chapters on theories and methodology of class follow. The theories of Marx, Weber, the functionalists, and Warner are examined and evaluated carefully in terms of four central questions: What are the causes and the basis for stratification in society? Is stratification a necessary and inevitable feature of society? What is the future trend of stratification in society? And what are the limits of applicability of a stratification system across time and across different cultures?

The chapter on methodology contains a valuable critique of the indices used to measure class. Not only are the technical problems of an adequate index considered, but the relationship between a particular methodology and theory are analyzed. The author