its sparkling beaches, sunny weather, and friendly natives. The governments of these islands, living off tourist dollars, wish to preserve that view. "Jamaica, no problem," announces a Kingston-sponsored TV commercial that airs frequently in the United States.

But "no problem" includes poverty, AIDS, racism, unemployment, emigration, pollution, deforestation, and economic dependence on the United States. Half of Puerto Rico's sewage-contaminated coastline has been declared unfit for swimming by the Environmental Protection Agency. Haiti is virtually a desert, where, thanks to decades-long deforestation, rain has washed almost all of the topsoil into the sea. Unable to find work, 10 percent of Jamaica's population emigrated during the 1980s; in St. Kitts and Nevis, that figure was 26.4 percent. Even the tourists, whose spending helps support the island economies, are a problem. Countries such as the Bahamas, where tourists outnumber natives 14 to one, have difficulty developing a sense of nationhood.

Kurlansky, who writes on the Caribbean for the *New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune*, here combines travelogue, social history, and political analysis to depict a region living in three centuries at once. Not so long ago the Caribbean islands were practically the last outpost of a 19th-century colonial world. Before 1962, only three islands—Cuba, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic—had their independence. (Even today 11 islands still remain colonies.) Today, all of these islands, with a combined population of 35 million, face the challenge of becoming, simultaneously, 20th-century nations and a 21st-century postnation-state community.

Regional integration seems the obvious answer to many of the Caribbean's problems. A sharing of resources would help solve the budgetary problems of small islands such as Grenada, which spends four percent of its government revenues simply to maintain its United Nations delegation; it would also solve the problem of international investors who hop from one island to the next in search of lower wages and looser environmental regulations. Yet the idea of regional integration enjoys little popular appeal. French-language islands don't identify with English-speaking ones, nor Caribbean Spanish-speakers with the Dutch. Nevertheless, as the Caribbean moves further into the 1990s, the idea of a federation appears to be gaining ground. At a Caribbean Community meeting in 1990, 13 English-speaking nations tentatively agreed to support a common external tariff system and to merge their stock exchanges. Jamaican President Michael Manley mixed doubt and hope in his cautious observation: "I am struck by how far we have come in what we think we can do." The Jamaican Reggae star Bunny Waller perhaps said it better: "Yea, mon, the Caribbean try to make countries. It's kind of magic. Making something from nothing."

TWO NATIONS: Black and White, Separate, Hostile, Unequal. *By Andrew Hacker. Scribner's. 257 pp. $24.95*

Now largely submerged under the surface of American life, the remnants of racism often seem like those underwater plants that give sudden, rude shocks to swimmers at the seashore. To Hacker, a political scientist at Queens College, racism in America is neither so occasional nor so surprising: For him it is the barnacle-covered jetty thrusting through the waters

of our national life. "America's version of *apartheid*," he writes, "while lacking overt legal sanction, comes closest to the system even now being reformed in the land of its invention." Since the mid-1970s, he argues, American whites have increasingly opposed efforts to bring blacks into the mainstream, even while they have become more protective of their privileges and open in their racism.

Sifting reams of statistics, Hacker highlights troubling white-black differences in income, education, and other areas, intent upon refuting any explanation for such inequalities other than white racism. Many analysts cite *cultural* causes as well, observing, for example, that the number of black households headed by women has risen in the past 40 years from 17 percent to 56 percent. Hacker simply dismisses this staggering increase by noting that the ratio of black households to white households headed by women has remained a constant 3:1 ratio over these years.

To show that race is everything, Hacker must also argue that all blacks share essentially the same plight. Income data from 1970 to '90 documents the growth of the black middle class. Hacker, however, suggests that newly affluent blacks are still not really middle class. A "typical" black family with a $60,000 income, he imagines, would be headed by a bus driver and a nurse, but in a comparable white family the husband would be an executive, his spouse a homemaker. For all his statistics, Hacker indulges in considerable speculation about the lives and feelings of whites and blacks, apparently without the benefit of personal interviews. In the process he creates his own condescending stereotypes: Whites are invariably unwitting racists; blacks are perpetual victims who owe their meager gains only to the sufferance of whites.

The verdict in the Rodney King case might appear to lend some plausibility to Hacker's vision of a racist America (although whites joined blacks in a nearly unanimous condemnation of the outcome). Yet Hacker seems to have doubts about his own thesis. After the first reviews of *Two Nations* pointed out flaws in its arguments, Hacker reversed the "spin" of his book by publishing an essay in the *New Republic*, entitled "The *Myths* of Racial Division." But that, too, does not quite get it right.

Science & Technology

MAPPING THE NEXT MILLENNIUM: The Discovery of the New Geographies. *By Stephen S. Hall. Random House. 477 pp. $30*

Each month a single NASA satellite generates enough data to fill the present Library of Congress. A new "Library of Congress" every month? The human mind reels before so much information. Supercomputers must transform this data into visual patterns readable at a glance, or else it would remain a chaos of interminable detail.

Hall, author of *Invisible Frontiers: The Race to Synthesize a Human Gene* (1987), presents an arresting argument: The frontiers of the various sciences are best understood as efforts to organize mountains of information into maps. Just as the maps of Vespucci and Magellan once changed people's notion of the Earth, so today contemporary scientists creating maps of the ocean floor, areas of the brain, the interior of a fertilized egg, the Milky Way, and the location of electrons in atoms are changing our understanding of what the universe is like. Hall escorts us on a tour of 18 scientific disciplines by showing us their maps.

In 1978, for example, the satellite Seasat—in the three months before it ceased to function—fired off continued pulses of radar at the ocean's surface, producing 25 to 30 million measurements. No one knew quite what to do with them. Then William Haxby of the Lamont-Doherty Geological Observatory produced a computerized map of the ocean's gravity field mimicking the topography of the ocean floor. Haxby's map confirmed for the first time the old hypothesis that much of the Earth's land mass had once formed one large continent.

From the bottom of the ocean Hall propels us to the high heavens. When Margaret Geller, John Huchra, and Valérie de Lapparent plotted the galaxies in the northern celestial hemisphere, they were confident that these galaxies reflected a predicted random distribution. Only after measuring 1,100 galaxies, Hall writes, "in a kind of push-button epiphany unique to our computer age, did they produce a picture of their data in the form of a map, and saw, with surprise bordering on stupefaction, that contrary to theory galaxies bunched up in bubbles