

## SOCIETY



*In 16th-century England, poverty and high death rates forced the breakup of many peasant households and the creation of extended families.*

households. But the parish does not represent the "exception which proves the rule" of nuclear families. Instead, maintains Chaytor, Ryton demonstrates that family structure is a function not only of biology but of economics as well.

### *Black Power's Uncertain Victory*

"Black Power and White Reactions: The Revitalization of Race-Thinking in the United States" by Lewis M. Killian, in *Annals of the American Academy* (Mar. 1981), American Academy of Political and Social Sciences, 3937 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19104.

Dashikis are out, Stokely Carmichael lives in self-imposed exile in Africa, and the Black Panthers are moribund. But Killian, a University of Massachusetts sociologist, argues that the demands of Black Power activists in the late 1960s form the basis of affirmative action's pre-eminence on the civil-rights agenda.

From its inception in the early 20th century, the civil-rights movement worked to assimilate blacks into the mainstream of white society. Preaching nonviolence and brotherhood, leaders such as Martin Luther King, Jr., Roy Wilkins, and A. Phillip Randolph pressed for a "color-blind" democracy. But by the late 1960s, Carmichael and other frustrated militants urged black racial solidarity as the road to political power. More important, writes Killian, they spoke of blacks not as a category of individuals but as a separate community with group rights. Some, such as James Forman, called for "reparations" for past injustices under slavery.

These claims were dismissed not only by most whites but also by major civil-rights groups such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Killian, however, contends that when the broad task of achieving integration fell to the judiciary (in-

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stead of more "compromise-prone" legislatures), even "moderate" civil-rights activists eventually underwent a philosophical conversion. Judges set quotas and numerical guidelines to measure progress. In 1974, the NAACP firmly endorsed reparations when it backed the University of Washington Law School's admissions quota for blacks, saying it served "remedial objectives." Today, Killian observes, "race thinking" pervades American life.

Affirmative action's defenders deny charges of "racism" by pointing to their benign intentions. But Killian contends that the policy has already produced angry rivalries over "group rights." (Have Korean immigrants of the 1960s and '70s, for instance, suffered more in America than white ethnics not eligible for federal preferences?). Moreover, as sociologist William J. Wilson has argued, affirmative action has mostly helped those skilled black individuals who need it least. It has not changed the lives of the black urban "underclass."

### *The Long Road North*

"Chicanos in the United States: A History of Exploitation and Resistance" by Leobardo F. Estrada et al., in *Daedalus* (Spring 1981), American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 165 Allandale St., Jamaica Plain Station, Boston, Mass. 02130.

Throughout America's history, Mexican immigration has frequently been encouraged—not only by labor-hungry U.S. businessmen and farmers but by the federal government, as well. So note the authors, a team of Mexican-American scholars.

Economic troubles in Mexico and the tremendous growth of agriculture in the Southwest touched off the first great waves of Mexican immigration to the United States. This occurred just when World War I created both enormous European demand for American produce and a labor shortage in the United States. All told, from 1900 to 1930, an estimated 250,000 Mexicans sought their fortunes north of the Rio Grande. Their labors were a boon to U.S. railroad tycoons, food processing magnates, and farmers. And, since the overwhelming majority never left the Southwest, their presence was not viewed as a threat by increasingly nativist Midwesterners and Northerners. Thus, when Congress slapped immigration curbs on foreign ethnic groups in 1924, Mexicans were not included.

The Great Depression of the 1930s stirred popular resentment of Mexican workers. From 1929 to 1934, more than 400,000 were deported (including some 200,000 born here). But World War II brought another about-face. In 1942, the United States and Mexico launched the *bracero* program, through which Washington underwrote Mexican workers' travel costs and guaranteed a minimum wage. In force through 1964, the program brought nearly five million Mexicans north.

Today, 14.6 million Chicanos make up the second-largest U.S. minority group (behind blacks). Growing at between 2.2 and 3.5 percent an-