

Harevan, Tamara K., editor. *Family and Kin in Urban Communities, 1700-1930*. New York: New Viewpoints, 1977. Pp. vii, 214. \$5.95

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during the 1920s and 1930s, "transient labourers" provided somewhat less prominent difficulties.

Secondly, he introduces us quite candidly to the pitfalls in the relationship between citizens and police; to the places of graft and politics in a municipal police organization. There would seem to have been no absolute guarantee of civic purity in any of the municipal police structures devised since 1891, from original "license inspector" to modern complex of police force, Police Commission and Police Association. Chief Carpenter's faith appears, understandably, to be in the value of increased training and professionalism, that in itself an interesting urban topic.

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Harevan, Tamara K., editor. Family and Kin in Urban Communities, 1700-1930. New York: New Viewpoints, 1977. Pp. vii, 214. \$5.95.

This is an excellent collection of articles on family and kin in urban America. At its best, it goes beyond the often static presentation of family structure and household reconstruction that has marked much of the work in this field to insights into the family as a process, its changes over time, roles, and relationships to other institutions. Of especial interest are the articles on the economic roles of the family and kin. These break new ground in helping us understand how family and kin groupings aided in the accumulation of capital, continued to function as economic units during the transition from pre-industrial and rural settings to industrial urban ones, and acted as agents in procuring employment.

In a fascinating essay, Peter Dobkin Hall shows how between 1700 and 1850 Massachusetts merchant families altered the structure and functions of their families, especially through marriage patterns and the channeling of sons into professional rather than mercantile vocations, to move from traditional family-based firms toward modern incorporated enterprises. Using data drawn from mid-nineteenth century Poughkeepsie, N.Y., Clyde and Sally Griffen reveal how an unstable, competitive capitalist economy led individuals to depend upon families for support and sponsorship. The Griffens make clear, however, that the requirements of survival for small businesspeople greatly attenuated familial obligations. While families provided important sources of capital and kin were to be trusted more than outsiders, relationships were instrumental, to be sacrificed when they seemed to get in the way of individual success.

Tamara Harevan and John Modell point to more direct income production by urban families in a highly suggestive article on boarding in private homes (as opposed to lodging houses), a widespread phenomenon of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Harevan and Modell reveal how families took in extra persons, usually single employed men and women, primarily for economic reasons. Since boarders were often of the same ethnic group and of similar occupational and social class, host families suffered no sharp discontinuities in their social relationships. Boarding also realized income from work performed by women within the home, meant that families were able to balance the loss of an income producing child with a paying occupant, helped stabilize incomes for working class families in a highly unstable economy, and allowed widows and single women between ages forty and seventy to maintain their own households and remain self-sufficient.

In one of the most intriguing essays in the book, Harevan shows how French-Canadian working class families and kin groups in New England served as recruiting agents for the mills, organized migration routes, and acted as housing agents. French-Canadian families were often hired as groups in the mills rather than solely as individual

workers. In the initial phases of adjustment, working class families thus continued rural patterns of the family as a working economic unit. While the nature of these patterns was modified over time, Harevan stresses the continuing interplay between family behaviour and demography and patterns of employment: married women between ages 35 and 55 were a reserve army of labour, children (especially girls) contributed earnings to the family, and youth learned their jobs from relatives through an informal family apprenticeship system in the textile mills.

The broadly economic functions of family and kin emerge as the most striking findings of this book. But of interest too is the data on the interaction of the family with other social institutions. Harevan's essay on the French-Canadians in a New England mill town links family organization and traditions with industrial work experiences. In particular, she documents the relationship between 'industrial times', the work schedules and time discipline of the industrial system, and 'family time', the timing of behaviour over the family life cycle. In their study of the infant school movement in Massachusetts between 1826 and 1840, Dean May and Maris A. Vinovskis show that the movement was part of a broader social reform or, more accurately, moral reform effort that concentrated, in part, on the perceived failings of urban families. Infant schools were to be a means of eliminating poverty by educating and socializing children from poor families. They also suggest how the infant school idea of sending children to school at ages younger than had been true previously provided a basis for the expansion of public education in the 19th century and the increasing emphasis given to the school's role in overcoming what were thought of as deficiencies in family life.

Obviously in a collection like this the quality varies. There is still too much presentation of data with considerable uncertainty as to why it is being presented. But on the whole the information and insights - of which only some have been mentioned here -

make this an excellent way of entering into and expanding one's knowledge of a rapidly growing field.

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Young, Ken, ed., Essays on the Study of Urban Politics. Hamden, Conn.: Shoe String Press, Inc., 1975. Pp. xviii, 208. \$15.00.

In his foreword to Essays on the Study of Urban Politics, Edward Banfield notes the lack of progress during the past two decades in creating systematic and cumulative knowledge about urban political behavior. Indeed, he concludes, "there are not half a dozen general and non-trivial scientific propositions which an urban political scientist can offer to the waiting world." Unfortunately, Ken Young's collection of essays does little to relieve this dreary picture. It does not even satisfactorily fulfill its more modest purpose which is to both survey recent developments in the field and indicate new directions for useful research.

In short, Young's book is a hodge-podge of studies largely devoted to the intellectual hobby-horses of the various contributors. Most of the essays yield only a few lines of distilled wisdom, and to get to that wisdom the general reader must hack his way through a dense jungle of social scientific jargon. "Inputs", "throughputs", and "outputs" abound, especially in Janet Lewis' chapter entitled, "Variations in Service Provision: Politics at the Lay-Professional Interface". Inadvertently, the book provides excellent examples of some of the blind alleys of statistical research, and, in particular, it reveals the frustrations of trying to fit complex political phenomena into relatively simple theoretical formulations.