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ABSTRACT

This paper investigates family patterns and value orientations of rural blacks with regard to twelve categories of behavior, among which are education, health, recreation, occupation, housing patterns, and ethnic attitudes. Data presented are based on 100 interviews, and impressions from non-structured interviews with community leaders, public health nurses, social workers, and others. One rural community is described in some detail and preliminary attempts to contrast it with another community are set forth. Observations are of a descriptive nature and indicate satisfaction with housing; greater job satisfaction for women rather than men; economic, educational, and employment disadvantages; less ethnic perception than that espoused by urban blacks; a high percentage of membership in a religious organization; and perceived equality of sexual roles. (AM)

RURAL BLACKS IN SOUTHERN ARIZONA

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Abstract

"Rural Blacks in Southern Arizona"
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The paper is based on a study the purpose of which was to investigate family patterns and value orientations of rural Blacks in southern Arizona with regard to twelve categories of behavior--sex roles, household practices, housing patterns, occupation, education, ethnic attitudes, political behavior, religion, health, recreation, and organizations. Data from 100 interviews are presented. Also impressions from non-structured interviews with community leaders, public health nurses, social workers and others are presented.

Aside from the deep South relatively little research information has accured on the rural Black, particularly in the family area. This paper is an attempt to begin to fill this relative void. The significance of fortuitous leadership patterns is discussed, and several descriptive cases are presented portraying typical family situations. Both commonalities and idiosyncratic characteristics of rural Black communities are considered. One rural community, Rillito, Arizona, is described in some detail and contrasted in significant ways to another community, McNary, Arizona. Several observations are made concerning methodology, and implications of the findings are discussed.

INTRODUCTION

The long and complex history of the American civil rights movement has left a tangled web of cause and effect, fact and myth in its wake. From the occasion of the first pang of collective conscience over the slavery issue, the chickens have come home to roost many times. There was little indication of abatement as 1974 drew to a close. In spite of the Government programs to effect a more equitable distribution of economic resources, the number of "poor" people has increased even in the last several years. Increasing costs have outdistanced the indications of progress.

Often, national crises serve as unwitting catalysts of social change. World War II marked the beginning of a renaissance in civil rights struggles which has continued in momentum for thirty years. To some, it has seemed that some linear progress has been attained; to others, it has seemed that the longer the jump ahead, the farther back the movement has landed. Clark (1966:240) writes:

> "Since World War II, the Negro had succeeded in eliminating segregation in the armed forces, and, unsatisfied with less in peace than he had won in war, he gained a series of victories in the federal courts, culminating in the historic May 17, 1954 Brown vs. Board of Education decision of The United States Supreme Court. He developed and refined techniques for nonviolent direct action boycotts in the South, resulting in the elimination of the more flagrant forms and symbols of racial segregation. The massive legislative commitment to racial reform, codified by the passage of the 1964 and 1965 Civil Rights Acts had begun. The American press justified and validated the claims of its freedom and responsibility in its generally objective recording of racial injustices, while television brought into American living rooms the stark mob faces

> of primitive race hatred. The importance of television must eventually be evaluated by historians, but to this observer it appears to have played a most crucial role in intensifying the commitment of both Negroes and whites and increasing the momentum of the civil rights movement."

Lest it seem, however, that the civil rights struggles have achieved anything more than visibility and relative improvement, a typical sign of the times was the Congressional hearing on racial discrimination on military posts in general, and Fort Mead in particular, that was held the week of November 15, 1971. The hearing left little doubt in the listener's mind that a double standard of treatment and privilege is still prevalent on some military posts.

Clark (1966:240) alludes to the role of television, and by implication, mass media, in the civil rights movement. It may well be that the readily available stream of stimuli from the mass media has served to intensify the subjective as well as the objective reality of racial inequality. To the extent this is true, one would be hard put to categorize civil rights developments as unqualified progress. Television has been described as an eye to the world! If it is true that one does not miss what he has no knowledge of, it would seem equally true that one might keenly miss what he sees round about and is made acutely aware of the extent of his own deprivation.

The subjects of civil rights and poverty have had very close interplay. It is not surprising that with the nation's attention focussed on both issues, the social scientist has become very much involved--unfortunatley more at the research level than at the program level. Nevertheless, even if as a nation we, as Moynihan (1966:294) suggests, "...have a strong tendency to rush past problems toward solutions", the

day may come when programs to alleviate poverty and improve race relations, are based more upon research findings and less upon political expediency. In all fairness, however, to the extent that sound information based on research recently has become available, and there is still the problem of sifting out sound information which is generalizable from the particularistic data derived from a unique situation. As Staples (1971) suggests, one cannot always tell the difference from the way the research is reported. Concerning research in general dealing with the Black family, Staples (1971: 119) writes:

> "In the past ten years interest in the Black family has accelerated. The last decade has been the most productive period of research on the Black family in history (Somerville: 1970). The emphasis on the problems of poverty and race relations has made the Black family a central focus for dealing with these problems and their effects on lower income and Black families. Consequently, research on the Black family has transcended the boundaries of family sociology and has become a matter of interest to the public in general and minority groups in particular. Black family research has served as an instrument of public policy and official action in seeking to alleviate the causes of socioeconomic deprivation among Afro-American citizens. For that reason it is important that the findings of research on the black family be evaluated for their relevance in understanding the nature of the Black family life in contemporary America."

Often reference is made to the Negro or Black as if that single racial label resolves all the social, economic, regional, and other differences among them. There are, of course, many different characteristics among the Blacks. To include them all under a single label as a unitary group is as naive as grouping all the whites for characterizing purposes

under the single label "White". It might well be that the most meaningful descriptive dichotomy for Blacks is no longer northern or southern, but rather rural or urban. Admittedly there are still many differences to be taken into account. However rural Blacks, for the most part, have two things in common. They are almost all poor, and they have largely been passed by or forgotten by the stream of programs flowing from federal and state levels. The rural Black largely has escaped the eye of the researcher. In Staples (1971) review of a decade of research on Black families, of some eighty-five references, not one deals with the rural Black. Kuvlesky and Cannon (1971) cite Coleman (1965) to the effect that:

> "...rural sociologists have been delinquent in researching the Negro minority and their relations to others in rural areas. Little has been done in the meantime to invalidate this observation by Coleman. A case in point is the almost total lack of reported studies pertaining to the degree of prejudice exhibited toward rural Blacks, the amount of social discrimination they experience, and the effect these patterns have on the Blacks."

One of the obvious reasons for the apparent disinclination to study rural Black America--in other regions than the South--is simply the inconvenience in locating and contacting subjects. Another, is that most of the "action", civil rights and other kinds, takes place in urban areas. There are undoubtedly other reasons in addition which draw researchers to the urban areas.

In the effort to discover something of the life styles and patterns of living among rural Blacks in southern Ariona, a study was undertaken in 1971 and completed in 1973. Twelve categories of behavior and/or characteristics were included: family patterns, housing patterns,

occupation, education, ethnic perceptions, political perceptions, religion, health, recreation and leisure, organizations, interviewer observations on housing conditions, and non-structured interviews with community leaders.

Procedure:

Data were gathered by a Black interviewer in eight southern Arizona communities: Randolph, Coolidge, Rillito, Marana, Little Hollywood, Mobile, Allenville, and Yuma. These are the only rural communities in the southern part of the State which have substantial Black populations. The names of those to be interviewed were selected by random means from the water company rosters.[1] Fifteen interviews with the female heads of families were conducted in each of the eight communities. The twenty least complete interviews were discarded, leaving the sample number ,"n", 100. So little investigation has been made of rural Blacks in this area that it seemed more appropriate to describe relevant phenomena than to test hypotheses. Thus this study is of a descriptive nature, and no statistical testing procedures were employed.

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[1] The purpose of employing random procedures is ostensibly to justify generalizing the findings to the appropriate population. In the course of the investigation it became abundantly clear that differences among the communities existed of a magnitude sufficient to preclude generalization to a rural Black population per se. Some of the significant characteristics of the populations seemed much more a function of the particular history of the community than of the rural or the social factors.

Findings:

Family Patterns

TABLE I: SIZE OF THE RURAL BLACK FAMILY IN SOUTHERN ARIZONA

Number in the family*	Frequency
3 - 4 members	28
5 - 6	57
7 - 8	11
9 -10	4
	N=100**

* Family members include parents, children,other relatives, foster children, and all other household residents.
** Since the "N" is 100, percentage will not be reported.

Thirty-four families were incomplete due to divorce, death, or desertion. Sixty-one families were intact and indicated their marriage had been "legal" as opposed to common law. A good deal has been said about low-income Blacks tendency to avoid legal marriage whether through choice or necessity. In the families of this study only 5 were reported to be common law. The Black interviewer, however, estimated this figure to be low. She had been reared in one of the communities, and claimed that she had personal knowledge of a number of families which were of the common law category, but who declared their marriage to be of the legal variety.[2]

The question of what caused people to migrate from one community to another has been of perennial interest to demographers. The nature of the vehicle through which migrational messages are sent, the content of the messages, the critical circumstances which accrue to tip the scales, are all part of the migration issue.

The presence of Blacks in the small southern Arizona towns can

2 This problem may well be more general than this particular issue (Pettigrew. (1964). It is likely that the 61 "legal" intact families included more common law situations than were reported.

usually be accounted for by assuming that one or two families initially moved from their former communities and established a beachhead. Others followed as relatives, friends, or acquaintances. After some semblance of the new Black community acheived visibility, others came because things seemed better there than where they were at the time. The great majority of families were found to be from the same places in Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Louisiana. There was noticeable homogeneity from community to community with respect to the origin from which the majority of residents had come. Seventy-eight percent of all families had relatives living in the same community. With respect to the Black communities in Southern Arizona, the data suggest that primary contacts and sources of information were of considerably greater import than secondary or tertiary sources in migration decisions. There were, however, exceptions to this generalization.[3]

Fifty-nine female respondents indicated that the father's decision-making in the home was just as important as the mother's. Seventeen felt it was more important for the father to make decisions than the mother. Ten indicated that the mother's role in decision making was more important. The impression emerged that the low-income male in rural areas occupies a more significant place in family decision making than his urban counterpart, although it is an impression only. The responses also indicated that the man's role is increasing in importance when compared with parental families. Fourteen respondents could not decide.

When asked about a woman's role -- particularly with respect to remaining in the home as opposed to working outside, 39 percent thought the question was unrealistic since work outside the home for most women is a

[3] A Black population of several hundred created a community almost overnight in McNary, Arizona in 1923-4 as a result of a lumber operation moving from Louisana to McNary, Arizona.

simple fact of life. However, when pressed, more agreed than disagreed that the proper role for women was to remain in the home. The majority of the respondents favored married women having jobs, i.e., 61 percent.

There was no discernible preference as to the sex of the children. Children were universally valued, and served to enhance the status of the family. The couple who did not produce children were perceived as having fallen short of what they should be. There was no indication among any of the respondents of deliberated attempts to limit the size of the family due to economic considerations. A paraphrase of the many comments concerning the place of children in the home would be "none of them starves, and someone is always around to take care of them." Where the children of the community were and what they were doing was a subject of keen and universal interest among the respondents in the study. The interest, however, does not necessarily indicate a high level of supervision. Children were left pretty much on their own devices, and parents would interfere only when another parent or neighbor complained.[4]

Housing Patterns

Most of the houses were single units and by middle-class standards, would probably be described as run-down shacks. There seemed little relation between income and appearance of the house. Junk of all kinds frequently adorned the yards. . .the impression that it will be useful at some time in the future, was widespread. With regard to length of residency in the present

[4] One such complaint which prompted parental interference of at least a temporary nature was information which our interviewer relayed to a parent that her fourteen-year-old daughter was serving the male clientele of the community in what appeared to be a prostitution operation. The interviewer had heard one young teen-age boy relate to another the going price and heard the advice offered "to get in line". The line was formed outside one of the vacant residences in the community. The child was promptly retrieved, punished, and sent to the grandparents in another community (5 miles away) for a period of safe keeping until the incident passed over.

dwelling, 43 had lived there 10 years or more, 36 had lived there for from three to four years, and 21 had been there less than a year. The greatest number, 31, had come from some other small Arizona community. The largest number who had come directly from another state, had come from Texas, 31 respondents, not including members of their families. The next largest number, 14, had come from Arkansas. Six had come from Oklahoma, 6 from the deep South, and the remainder had come from a number of different places with frequencies of one or two each.

When asked to specify the kind of racial composition they would most prefer in an ideal neighborhood, 70 preferred a racially mixed neighborhood, and 30 preferred Blacks only. Sixty-eight of the respondents considered their homes to be adequate for their needs and 32 expressed some degree of dissatisfaction. The principal reasons for dissatisfaction were over-crowded conditions and faulty construction. The fact that so many seemed satisfied with their homes seems to be a part of a larger mosaic which suggests that a very dulled or incipient sense of alternatives is one of the main characterizing variables of the rural Black.

Occupation

TABLE 2: WORK CLASSIFICATION OF RESPONDENT AND SPOUSE

Work Classification	Respondent (Female)	Spouse (Male)
None	46	28
Unskilled	27	39
Semi-skilled	11	19
Skilled manual	4	7
Clerical, sales	0	4
Military	0	0
Public Service	10	3
Professional	2	0
TOTAL	100	100

Of the 46 respondents who were unemployed, 68 percent or 31 were not looking for work. Thirty-two percent or 15 were seeking employment. There were 28 male heads of families unemployed. Twenty-three were not seeking employment at the time of the interview, while 5 were job hunting

The wives estimated their job satisfaction to be greater than that of their husbands, (although contrary to the urban lower-income Black, the husband's jobs reflected relatively higher status and produced more income). The respondents expressed greater satisfaction with their male children having the same jobs as their fathers than with their female children having similar occupations to those held by themselves. Upon being questioned about this difference, the general theme was that it was easier for boys to get by and girls needed all the breaks or advantages they could get.

TABLE 3: INCOME OF EMPLOYED RESPONDENTS (N=54) AND SPOUSE (N=72)[5]

Income Categories	Respondent	Spouse[6]
Under 3000 or $57/wk.	11	2
3001-4000 or 58-76/wk.	21	6
4001-5000 or 77-96/wk.	13	37
5001-6000 or 97-115/wk.	6	14
6001-7000 or 116-135/wk.	1	7
7001-8000 or 135-155/wk.	1	4
Over 8000 or over 155/wk.	1	2
TOTAL	54	72

When asked to designate as specifically as possible what occupation they would like their children to go into regardless of the sex of the child

5. Eleven families had "other" wage earners who contributed to the family income. For the most part, the additional wage earners were adult children or children-in-law.
6. There were indications that the income reported was not necessarily derived from their formal employment, e.g., from gambling, a second job, and in one instance an income producing activity which amounted to a protection racket. Moreover, of the 23 male heads not actively seeking employment, were characherized by the wives as always having money.

15 did not have a clear-cut idea; 47 suggested that anything the child wanted would be all right; 8 specified public service; and 18, professional work. No respondent indicated unskilled or skilled labor.

In spite of the apparent economic disadvantage under which the majority of subjects lived, more believed one can work his way out of debt than believed the loan companies, retail store, used car dealers, etc., make it impossible to ever be free. Forty-seven believed that it was possible to progress economically without incurring the neighbor's envy. Fifty-three expressed some version of the "bucket of crabs" idea, i.e., when you try to get ahead, others will try to put you back in your place. All in all, the expressed philosophy of life concerning economic status and the importance of friends indicated relative contentment. The economic and social alternatives in rural areas are possibly drawn in less sharp relief than in urban settings, which might account for the relative satisfaction with the status quo.

When asked to designate the social class to which they felt they belonged, the responses were as follows: Upper, 5; Middle, 31; Lower, 17; and 47 had no opinion or refused to commit themselves.[7] Sixty-one felt their economic status had improved within the past ten years. Thirty-two thought it had remained the same and 7 indicated a decline. Exactly half of the families received some sort of financial aid in addition to any earned income.

Education

In the educational area there seemed little in the responses to set the group apart. There was no evidence of gross neglect of children's

7. Subjective estimates concerning one's position in the social structure are hazardous at best. When the respondents were probed, it was evident that the "upper-class" designations were made in relation to others in the community rather than society at large. They were, respectively the president of the local water company and general community spokesman, a school teacher, a minister, and two for whom no logical basis for the designation was apparent.

education by the parents. On the other hand, there was little deliberate or regular assistance given. A number of children were reported to have dropped out of school or to be having difficulty of some sort. The parents had only a vague idea of their children's educational interests or preferences and so long as they were occupied with their lessons, all seemed well. The children were reported to have the usual out-of-school activities -- playing with friends or watching T.V. Mothers did feel that the rural school should concentrate more on specific skills and less on general education. About a third of the mothers believed the school to be adequate; another third, inadequate; and the rest had no opinion. The majority however, indicated that the children's education was superior to their own. Twenty believed it was either worse or much worse.

The wives' educational attainment was clearly superior to that of the husbands' as seen by the table below:

TABLE 4: EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF HUSBANDS AND WIVES

Highest Grade Completed	1-5th	6-8th	8-10th	11-12th	12+	TOTAL
Husbands[8]	22	29	14	1	0	66
Wives	16	28	32	22	2	100

All the respondents valued high school education for their children, but a number had already dropped out -- 7 in junior high school. Fifty-eight indicated they wanted their children to go on to college.

Sell (1971:19) in her study of educational aspirations and expectations found: "The overwhelming majority of Black homemakers had exceptionally high educational aspirations for their daughters." Also Sell concluded that there

8. Includes those males of common-law unions.

were no significant differences in educational aspirations and expectations between metropolitan and non-metropolitan respondents. She also indicated that "about half" of her respondents feel it to be more important for men than for women to have an education.

In the present study, 43 percent indicated that it was important for a boy to go to college but 60 percent thought it was important for a girl to do so.[9] This attitude seems to reflect the belief that college prepared one for teaching and females made better teachers than males. Also, the idea was expressed that males could "always do something to get by, schooling or not." Females needed special training in order to be able to make some money if their marriage did not work out.

Bacon (1973) found that 43 percent of a rural Black sample of females were either pregnant when married or had a child before marriage. The corresponding figures for rural whites was 16 percent and for urban blacks and urban whites, 53 percent and 14 percent respectively. These figures appear to make the note of pessimism concerning the daughters' chances of attending college well founded.

When querried about sex education, the majority of parents, 64, felt that the subject should be taught in school. They acknowledged, however, that in fact, most children learned the "facts of life" from friends rather than school or family. In no case had the father of any of the 100 families made any attempt to the respondent's knowledge to educate his children -- boy or girl -- in matters pertaining to sex. Twenty-one of the respondents had made some effort to prepare their daughters for inevitable sexual encounters;

9. These indications come from two separate questions. There were other alternatives than college for each question. The number of respondents who thought their children would go on to college was considerably smaller than those who indicated college was important. Boys were generally seen as not liking school enough to go on and girls were seen as either not being sufficiently interested, they would be married by then, or college was too expensive.

however, their attempts had taken the form of advice rather than enlightenment. None of the respondents felt that sex education was effective as a constraint on sexual activity. One respondent whose unmarried daughter had two children living with her in the parents' household, had told the daughter, prior to the birth of the children that she would be put out of the house for good should she ever get pregnant. The respondent related the story with a smile and went on to indicate that she loved her daughter's children as much or more than she ever had her own children. This seemed to be a characterizing attitude toward children. The status of their nativity was far less important than the child per se. The negative attitude most often expressed toward children born to unwed daughters had to do with the continued responsibility for child care at a time in life when grandparents had hoped to be free of such duties. The parents of such children almost always worked to bring in some income, leaving the children in the care of the grandparent.

Ethnic Perception

The rural Balck appears to be much less concerned about the attitudes fostered by the various components of civil rights movement than his urban counterpart. There is less awareness of "pride in being Black", although the differential may, in fact, be more a function of generational differences than between the rural and urban populations. Among the respondents, there was little reticence to refer to oneself as being Negro rather than being Black. Ideal choice concerning the ethnic group one would wish as neighbors included Whites, Indians, and the amorphous category of "others" almost as often as Blacks. The supporting rationale for such apparently integrative attitudes was that non-Blacks were more likely to deal fairly with one. Blacks were to much inclined to take advantage of their own

kind.[10] There were many instances of exploitation by whites, but such behavior seemed to be less disturbing -- possibly because it was more in line with expectations.[11]

With respect to treatment by agency officials and law-enforcement personnel, 28 percent thought they were treated fairly; 37 percent felt they were treated unfairly and 35 percent had no particular impressions one way or the other. Eighty-eight percent, however, thought that Whites received the best treatment of any group. In short, they were aware of, or believed in a double standard of treatment.

Political Perception

Participation in political behavior, particularly voting, is often assumed to be indicative of one's sense of involvement and sense of potential control over elected officials. It was interesting to note that exactly the same number voted in the last elections for Governor and for President i.e., 46 percent. Fifty-four percent did not vote in either election. Presumably the same people are the voters regardless of the office in question.

The respondents were asked whether they believed that Black politicians did (or would) work for the Blacks' interests or whether the Black elected officials would forget about other Blacks after being elected. Twenty-six

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10 In one community, for example, the "president" of the local water company was charging usorious rates, operating a protection racket, and was operating a gambling arrangement in which "somehow he always won." The author was made aware of the tendency of Blacks in the inner city areas of San Francisco during a fellowship study period in 1969 to rise in positions of leadership in the community only to consolidate their gains rather than help others up the ladder of success. Such behavior of course was not general, but it occured with sufficient frequency to be of concern to those who occupied positions of leadership in the anti-poverty programs of the late 1960's.

11 One such example also involved a rural water company. In this situation a white individual had gained control of the company and refused to sell water to Blacks. His apparent motive was to force them to sell so he could acquire their land holdings. The issue was settled satisfactorily in court.

felt the Black politicians would work for Black interests. Sixty-five, however, said they had no confidence in Black politicians and the remainder, nine, said they had no opinion.

Religion

Ninety of the respondents characterized themselves as following a religion. The dominant religion was some pentacostal variety of Protestantism. The major denomination was Baptist. In descending order were the denominations specified as Baptist, In Jesus Name, Church of God in Christ, Church of Christ, Methodist, Jewish[12], and Catholic. Seventy-three respondents said they were of the same religion as parental families. The seventeen who responded negatively changed denominations or churches for a variety of reasons. The leading reason was that the church in which they grew up did not have a branch in their present community. Other reasons varied from dissatisfaction to influence of friends. Also, in two instances the minister's life outside of church was perceived as being discrepant with what the church represented.

The majority of church goers believed the following: It is necessary to go to church to lead a good life; it is important that children attend church; that life's misfortunes should not be attributed to God's will; and God knows what is in store for each individual.

Voodoo is not a religious belief per se, however, it does require a faith commitment, or a fear commitment, in order for it to achieve credability. There was evidence among the sample of significant respect for the practice. The question or statements concerning voodoo and the responses appear in

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12 Two respondents claimed Jewish affiliation.

the table below:

TABLE 5: BELIEF IN VOODOO[13]

Question	Positive or Negative Response		Total
	Yes	No	
Voodoo can cure some illness that medicine or doctors cannot	17	73	100
Illness can be caused by voodoo	35	65	100
Has anyone in your family been made sick by voodoo?	8	92	100
Has anyone in your family sought services of a person practicing voodoo in order to be cured?	7	93	100

When querried about health and illness, the great majority held realistic ideas about causes of disease and poor health. A few held fatalistic views such as "Sickness is punishment for bad behavior, 8 percent. "Each person has a certain amount of time to live and there is not much he can do about it," 23 percent.

When asked about the number of childhood diseases their children had had, fifty-four reported between 1-3 diseases, 39 reported between 4-6; and seven reported more than 6 diseases. The occasions on which visits were made to the dentists and doctors were largely those requiring treatment; i.e., illness or toothache. Relatively few made preventive trips or went regularly as a matter of course. In general the respondents seemed well informed about health practices and illness. Most of the children received preventive treatments through the schools.

Recreation and Leisure

All the respondents but two had television sets and the majority had radios. Program preferences included news, soap operas, westerns and

13 Frequent probes were needed to clarrify the responses. Respondents were often uncertain or gave uncertain responses initially.

popular music. Sixty-two percent indicated they never attended movies and only one attended frequently. Fifty-seven stated that they never or rarely read books while 43 read books occasionally or often. Thirty-eight subscribed to or regularly purchased newspapers, while 62 did neither. Only 17 in the entire group received magazines regularly.

Almost half, 42 respondents had not been more than 50 miles from their homes within the last year. The remainder had traveled within the state. Thirty had gone to various places within the United States -- principally to the West Coast, Texas, and the deep South. The principal reason for the trip was to visit relatives, 86 percent, and the remainder for other reasons such as vacations.

Visiting with relatives proved to be one of the most common forms of recreation. Thirty families visited "very often; ten visited "quite often, forty visited occasionally, and twenty, "seldom or practically never."

Organizations

When asked to indicate the organizations or clubs to which they belonged, 61 did not belong to any. The remainder, in order of their frequency, listed fraternal organizations, P.T.A., church groups, and NAACP. Only eight participated regularly and none held any office. Church was the exception. Ninety indicated membership in a religious organization.

DISCUSSION

When an investigator views a Black community such as those in Southern Arizona he is struck by the sheer ugliness of the homes and the evident disregard for order and neatness. The typical home is run down in

the worst sense often without indoor plumbing. The yard is an unbelievable tangle of old cars, boilers, tubs, tires, tin siding, farm implements, and other unlovely items, including a variety of domestic animals -- usually chickens, dogs, goats, and pigs. This seems incongruous with his own style of living and often with the economic status of the families.

I found myself somewhat put off by all this and and had to be careful not to equate what I thought I saw to what I thought it meant. I went along with the Black interviewer for several interviews in each of the communities -- only after she had established some degree of acceptance and rapport. We were treated with courtesy and consideration in most of the homes. Refusals and hostility, however, became more frequent as the interviews moved closer to city areas. The interviewer explained this as a function of increased exposure to racism with closer proximity to cities. We lost a white interviewer early on due to her experiences with hostile Blacks near city areas.

I also learned that questionnaire responses among this population do not yield the same qualities of life style that can be obtained through informed observation.[14] This is a step short of participant observation, but it is an approximation of that method.

Each family was described both on the basis of the interview data and in terms of additional information obtained from neighbors, social workers, public health nurses, and from the interviewee herself as she became more relaxed after the formal interview was over. Sometimes as much as three or four hours was spent in a single home. The Black interviewer

14 This is an operational term which is meant to indicate our method whereby the Black interviewer would stay in a community night and day for a week at a time. The information revealed through conversations with people of all ages other than the victims of random selection, proved most informative.

was a graduate in psychology and had grown up in one of the communities. She knew most of the families intimately. The more comprehensive description provided through the informed observation method plus her own insights, yielded family and community pictures that could not have been inferred from the formal interview data.

For example, we asked the respondents a few questions relating to sex roles, particularly about the male's role in household practices -- making decisions, buying food, child care, and so forth. The responses indicated that the male's role was seen as important as the female (59 percent). Seventeen percent felt it was more important for the father to make decisions than for the mother. In general the male was seen to be gaining in the importance of his household participation. On the other hand, in community affairs the male and female subcultures are sharply dichotymized. The males tend to define their social world along male lines with the exception of sexual activities -- in which, of course, female participation is warmly welcomed. Females, also, are inclined to interact with other females aside from sexual activity, and particularly in such settings as church, community projects, and purely social occasions.

I should like to leave the topic of interview responses -- which can be read in the hand-out -- and talk for a moment about a particular community in which we attempted to look at some additional factors.

We were fortunate in having excellent contacts through prior acquaintances of our Black interviewer in the community of Rillito, which is 17 miles northwest of Tucson in Pima County. Rillito, with a population of 215, mostly Blacks with a few Mexican-Americans, has been basically a farm labor home base community. Recently, the residents are turning more and more to other non-farm occupations. The community existed without a

water supply from the time of its origin until 1967. Prior to this time water was hauled in 55-gallon drums, buckets and other containers from a Southern Pacific well located across the freeway from Rillito.

Of the 55 housing units in the community, 5 still have no water inside and 26 have outside water only. There is no sewage disposal system aside from the 37 outdoor privies. The majority of the houses are of very poor construction and of the 24 units having kitchen sinks, 11 of these have sink wastes draining directly onto the ground surface. Only 11 housing units of 55 were judged to be in reasonably good condition.

Less than one-quarter of the households are in the income bracket of $5,000/year, and the unemployment rate for males is 38 percent.

You can obtain a generalized impression of some aspects of the rural Black family from the summarized questionnaire data. In order to glimpse family life in this community in sharper focus, I will present three or four very brief family summaries from our study in Rillito.

1. Cases # 6 - 2 - 5 - 7 (family)
2. Social and Economic Problems (community)

These illustrations portray a reasonable facsimile of life in one rural Black community in Southern Arizona. My impression, after having some exposure to this and other Black rural communities, is that each one has evolved traditions and life styles having a number of elements in common to be sure, but having significant idiosyncratic characteristics as well. These characteristics depend on fortuitous patterns of leadership, the economic base, the articulation with the larger community, adequacy of transportation and education, success of interventional programs, and very likely other factors. The contrast between Rillito and another small community, McNary, is striking.

McNary is a company town in mid-Arizona in the White Mountains about 200 miles north of Tucson. There are 366 Blacks living there. The majority of the wage earners among the McNary Blacks are employed by the logging industry there. McNary is not an all-Black community, but the segregation there is virtually complete. The Blacks in McNary are treated in a highly paternalistic fashion, and, according to Dr. Wienker of the Anthropology Department of the University of Southern Florida, in Tampa, they are deep in debt to the company-connected retail establishments in the town.

The Black community was created very suddenly in 1923-4 when the logging industry in McNary moved there from Louisana. The Black employees came along. I have not studied the family there, but have made enough inquiries to sense some important differences between the life styles in this community and Rillito. (Expand the point.)

SUMMARY

1. Alienation and acculturation compared with urban Blacks.
2. Methodology suggested.
3. Paucity of research on rural Blacks.
4. Strength and coping capacity.
5. Implications

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