

**Western Political Science Association
University of Utah**

Review

Reviewed Work(s): Protest and Prejudice: A Study of Belief in the Black Community by Gary T. Marx

Review by: William C. Spragens

Source: *The Western Political Quarterly*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (Sep., 1968), pp. 526-527

Published by: University of Utah on behalf of the Western Political Science Association

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/446633>

Accessed: 28-02-2019 21:34 UTC

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <https://about.jstor.org/terms>



JSTOR

Western Political Science Association, University of Utah are collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *The Western Political Quarterly*

This is an enlightening new look at an important legislative and enforcement problem, although the scope of the study might have been broadened somewhat.

Wisconsin State University, Oshkosh

WILLIAM C. SPRAGENS

Protest and Prejudice: A Study of Belief in the Black Community. By GARY T. MARX. Foreword by BAYARD RUSTIN. (New York: Harper & Row, 1967. Pp. xxviii, 228, xxvii. \$8.95.)

This comprehensive study, part of a series commissioned by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, gives useful insights into a vital issue, attitudes of the American Negro toward the white majority.

Findings of the study, expressed empirically, are based on sample surveys carried out in 1964 and 1966, primarily in Negro ghettos. The author says the data suggest that many people hold an overly sensational image of the Negro mood. It would be interesting to have results of a similar survey made just after the Detroit riots of 1967. Marx comments: "To be sure there is deep anger and frustration, as well as varying degrees of suspicion and resentment of whites. Yet, there is still optimism about the possibility of change within the system. Most Negroes favor integration in principle, are loyal to the United States, are opposed to indiscriminate violence, and are not consistently antiwhite or anti-Semitic. These facts aside, rather than endless discussion about the nature of so-called Negro extremism, attention might better be focused on changing the general social conditions that have given rise to virulent hatreds and extreme attitudes on the part of a small but no doubt increasing minority of the black community."

The first part of the Marx study is concerned with describing various Negro responses to the civil rights struggle and evaluating their prevalence. The second part of the study is concerned with Negro attitudes toward whites, and one aspect of the study is an analysis of Negro anti-Semitism.

Numerous breakdowns of data by item analysis, such as a score on Index of Actual Social Participation, are presented, as well as representative quotations from survey respondents.

Conclusions of the 1964 and 1966 surveys included the following: Only a third of the Negro community was consistently militant in outlook. In spite of what many would consider strong provocation, even fewer were strongly antiwhite. To the degree Negroes distinguish between Jewish and non-Jewish whites, they prefer Jews. Civil rights militancy was negatively related to antiwhite and anti-Jewish feelings. In spite of its importance to protest in some respects, religiosity is an important factor inhibiting militancy. Conventional civil rights groups and leaders enjoyed overwhelming popularity. Very few Negroes were strong supporters of the Black Muslims. The least-privileged Negroes, who are most likely to profit from social change, were the least likely to be militant.

Marx warns however that "... [S]uch findings offer no grounds for complacency. The magnitude of moral injustice, the intensity of concern felt by many, and the ever-increasing potential for social disruption cannot be measured by a simple counting of the 'yeas' and 'nays'..."

The work cites such well known sources as Clark's *Dark Ghetto* in underlining the stark nature of the current problem. It tends to buttress the findings of the Kerner Commission report.

The main shortcoming of this excellent study lies in its limitation as to time and the fact that it could survey only a small segment of the problem. The author has done an impressive job of verifying empirically some of our recent unhappy discoveries about the direction of Negro-white relations in the United States.

Wisconsin State University, Oshkosh

WILLIAM C. SPRAGENS

Sociological Analysis and Politics: The Theories of Talcott Parsons. By WILLIAM C. MITCHELL. (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1967. Pp. xvi, 222.)

This is the third item in a series edited for Prentice-Hall by David Easton. It is curious that Easton should introduce the book as one "devoted to empirically oriented theory," for admirers and critics alike would agree that there is nothing empirical about the work of Parsons. Nor, indeed, is it theoretical: Parsons himself has said that he has only reached the stage of classificatory concepts and not that of theory.

Parsons' ambition is to characterize the necessary structure and functioning of any social system — not any empirical social system, but the ideal type of all the ideal types of empirical social systems. The concepts he has developed for this purpose are the concept of system; the four functional prerequisites of any social system; the "pattern variables"; equilibrium; and, inevitably, boundary interchanges and inputs and outputs. As Parsons says, these are normative concepts — they are used to characterize successful systems. For the most part, the scheme is an exercise in tautology, a distillation of the meaning attributed to the word system. There is no meat on these words; they are, as Barrington Moore has said, "a collection of verbal categories, empty file drawers, as it were, that are arranged in a neat and, at first glance, imposing pattern."

Since Parsons has achieved celebrity in a sister discipline, and political scientists have begun to borrow his vocabulary, students of political theory need to know the names on the file drawers. For this purpose it is enough to read a secondary work. The best single treatment is the Cornell volume edited by Max Black. Mitchell's book is inferior in exposition, but it does report faithfully what Parsons has said, and has the advantage of including Parsons' scanty and ill-considered observations on politics. Although some of the critical literature is footnoted, there is no sustained examination of the issues raised by critics. The discussion is adulatory.

If Prentice-Hall is to publish more volumes in this series, it should hire a copyreader to correct expression and spelling and save the author from acute embarrassment.

University of Utah

FRANCIS D. WORMUTH