

**Irene I. Blea. *Toward a Chicano Social Science.* (New York, Praeger Publishers 1988) 176 pp., \$37.95; \$14.95 paper.**

The author's stated purpose of this work was to "inform the reader about the Chicano population and its concerns" and "the potential impact of the group on America's future." In that sense the work is a resounding success. The author correctly points out that "those who teach and design policy relevant to Hispanic children are few . . . [and thus] the need to understand the Chicano in order not only to be able to provide services but also better race and ethnic relations in the United States" is great.

The author supports her points well, utilizing a well-documented bibliography. In this sense the work serves as a valuable resource for augmenting further study on topics that might be covered in a cursory manner. It is this reader's opinion that the purpose of this book is to provide introductory level material for students, both minority and majority, early in an ethnic or Chicano studies program, hence the inclusion of a great many topics covered in a peripheral manner.

Perhaps one of the more interesting notes concerning this work is the fact that it is written from the viewpoint of a Chicana, and thus it includes much of the feminist perspective, a perspective that is often omitted from works on Chicano culture. The book contains adequate treatment of the Chicana experience in the United States as it relates both to sexism and racism. Considering the focus of the book, it presents quite a detailed view of the sex roles within Mexican-American society in comparison to mainstream American (Anglo) society. Its major shortcoming in this area is the superficial treatment and overgeneralization of female-male relationships in marriage, both inter- and extra-cultural.

This book does adequately treat the need for additional research by Chicanos on Chicanos to help the social sciences break away from the "culture of poverty" perspective of blaming the victim for its subjugation. An interesting counterpoint is made, one which most social scientists outside of the Chicano culture ignore, that rather than having Chicanos assimilating into the dominant culture they might "experiment with the idea that the dominant culture might want to assimilate into Chicano culture or negotiate a compromise."

In summary, the work is quite successful as an introductory work serving to provide background information on the Chicano experience to serve as a stepping stone to further and more detailed study.

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