

First, the number of patients interviewed is small. Forty-one patients with nutritional diseases and 30 with kwashiorkor were included in the first stage of the survey. In the examination of the quality of food eaten by rural and urban Shona, 150 men and women were interviewed; 50 from the urban area, 50 from Shona tribal trust areas and 50 from European farming districts.

Secondly, the random sampling procedure was not used in selecting the informants. The people interviewed were patients attending Harare Hospital only, and do not perfectly represent either all diseased persons or all the urban and rural Shona. One may ask, for example, to what extent the small number of urban patients with nutritional diseases and kwashiorkor who went to Harare Hospital for treatment was due to the availability of other medical agencies in the town

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such as government and municipal clinics and private physicians.

Thirdly, the interview technique used in determining the quality of food and dietary habits of urban and rural patients has its limitations. Interviewees may suffer from faulty memory and inability to articulate, or may consciously avoid facts which they consider embarrassing. What is needed as a counterweight to the use of questionnaires is participant observation over a fairly long period of time.

In spite of these defects, however, Professor Gelfand must be congratulated on this richly documented study which will be of practical value not only to medical practitioners but also to administrators, missionaries, historians, sociologists and educationalists; indeed anyone who is interested in African society will find the work useful.

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WATTS, H. L., ed. 1970 *Focus on Cities*. Durban, University for Social Research, 497 pp. no price indicated.

This work is the printed account of the proceedings of a conference organised by the Institute for Social Research of the University of Natal in Durban, and held there in July 1968. It is almost impossible to review such a work, so great is the range of subjects: the pattern of urbanization, the history of individual towns, urban sociology, health, community services, politics, architecture and planning. All that a reviewer can do is to indicate the overall nature of the contents.

Most of the papers concentrate on South Africa but there are interesting case studies of Falkirk, Scotland, and Dallas, U.S.A., and equally interesting general surveys by Professors J. Spengler of Duke University and K. Davies of the University of California; Rhodesia is only poorly represented with short descriptive surveys of the history of Salisbury and of the social services of its municipal townships for Africans.

The considerable amount of factual material on South African cities will no doubt be useful to a wide range of students in history, politics, sociology and geography; but the overall effect is rather disappointing. Much of the work is survey-orientated to an extent that would have horrified C. Wright Mills and is concerned with the marginalia of urban life rather than basic questions. It is like the nineteenth century survey work on urban

poverty which concentrates on descriptive detail rather than analyses of the system that made people poor. Planning details of Soweto or job aspirations of Africans can hardly be meaningfully discussed except in a context that includes the turning circle of a Saracen armoured-car or European job reservation.

Similarly much of the work on urbanisation seems superficial in that it takes little account, to put it no more strongly, of the rural modes of behaviour which are, supposedly, being changed. Even this supposition, however, may be a perspective that is sociologically of relatively little value. Surveys of urban Africans' drinking or sexual habits might be more insightful if they were concerned not with divergence from those of distant rural relatives, but with their close approximation to European urban ones. For it is what Professor Blacking calls the 'tribalization' of Europeans in Southern African that is sociologically interesting. Urbanization (if such a term is meaningful) of the poor is on a world-wide scale; decadence of the rich and powerful is less common. And these are the questions that urban sociologists in Southern Africa should be asking; otherwise, as social anthropology was once the philosophy of imperialism, so sociology will become one of the techniques of its successors.

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