

Black Chicago: The Making of a Negro Ghetto, 1890-1920. By Allan H. Spear. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1967. Pp. xvii, 254. Notes, tables, maps, illustrations, note on sources, index. \$7.50.)

The development of Chicago's black ghetto was not simply a physical phenomenon brought about by the huge Negro migration during the era of the First World War. Nor did this migration act as the catalyst which caused Chicago's Negro leaders to discard their integrationist views in favor of the dream of a self-sustaining "Black Metropolis." In *Black Chicago*, Allan H. Spear contends that Chicago's Negro ghetto developed gradually, stimulated by the population shifts of the war years, but resulting primarily from white hostility toward the Negro's quest for better jobs and decent housing.

Spear traces the growth of Chicago's Negro population from the 1890's, before the ghetto really appeared. Though concentrated on the south and west sides, Negroes comprised more than 10 per cent of only two wards in 1900 and as late as 1910 were less highly segregated from native whites than were Italian immigrants. After the turn of the century, efforts by Negroes to move into all white sections met with increasing hostility, and they were forced to find housing within areas partly inhabited by Negroes. The ghetto began to take shape, spreading over Chicago's south side as black immigrants poured in from the South and white residents fled to segregated sections of the city. Segregation did not solve the city's problems; it exacerbated them. Separation bred continuing suspicion and hatred, which in turn led to racial violence. The Chicago race riot of 1919 was the ultimate result of white racism and "destroyed whatever hope remained for a peacefully integrated city" (p. 221).

Paralleling this population shift was a change in the direction of Negro thought. During periods of increased hostility the Negro American has consistently turned to a philosophy of self-help, be it the mild, accommodating version advanced by Booker T. Washington or the militant cry of "Black Power." Prior to 1900 Chicago's Negro leaders were committed to a policy of total integration; but as the ghetto took shape and white hostility mounted, Negro businesses emerged to serve the growing black population. These new Negro businessmen, while still demanding equal rights for Negroes, focused their efforts on building a strong black community, politically powerful and economically self-sufficient. But Chicago's Negroes possessed neither the experience nor the resources to create a viable community of their own, and "Black Metropolis" proved to be "a woefully inadequate, vastly inferior version of White Chicago" (p. 228).

Much of *Black Chicago* has a familiar ring to it: citizens in white areas organizing to resist Negro encroachment; Negroes working at menial, low paying jobs with little opportunity for advancement; and white politicians courting the Negro vote when running for office and perpetuating slum conditions while serving in office. Indeed, what is most striking about *Black Chicago* is the similarity that exists between conditions and attitudes in

Chicago fifty years ago and today. The basic problems—jobs, housing, and race prejudice—remain relatively unchanged.

Black Chicago is a very good book. The author's research is sound, his prose terse and effective, and his conclusions illuminating. Because this book is written at a time when black ghettos all over the country are exploding in outbreaks of racial violence, this is also a very important book. Spear's urgent message is that oppressive conditions in the Negro ghetto are real, and they have existed too long. The period of time for white America to do something about them is running out.

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Return to Winesburg: Selections from Four Years of Writing for a Country Newspaper. By Sherwood Anderson. Edited with an Introduction by Ray Lewis White. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1967. Pp. xi, 223. Notes, illustration, selected bibliography. \$5.95.)

Sherwood Anderson's career was often marked by flamboyant attempts to exorcise frustrations by escapes into over-simplification. Such attempts include, at thirty-six abandoning his family and a solvent business in Ohio for creative release among Chicago artists and writers; his four marriages and attendant divorces; a streamlined Freudianism as a direct route to the secrets of human problems; flirting with sentimentalized Marxism for social reform; and typically, as demonstrated in this new and valuable anthology, his flight in 1925 from pressures of the city and literary success to country quiet in southwest Virginia and a try at rural journalism.

In October, 1927, Anderson bought a printing business in Marion, Virginia, together with its rival weeklies, one Democrat, one Republican. Caught up in the excitement of what seemed simpler and more natural writing and in an experiment that hinted of redemption for a decadent American press, he poured all his professional energies for a time into editing his two papers. Then, with complexities multiplying as usual, he turned most of the labor over to his son and fled back to his major world of fiction, general writing, and lecturing.

Of this interim journalism only the items Anderson chose for his unsuccessful *Hello Towns!* (1929) have been generally available. Now, *Return to Winesburg* brings a balanced, well-edited sampling of eighty-seven pieces from November, 1927, through December, 1931. They provide a coverage that will be very useful to both biographer and critic.

Anderson obviously reveled in the variety his papers gave him. Early locals show him getting acquainted, cultivating a chatty, folksy manner, and inevitably doing more editorializing than straight reporting of Kiwanis meetings and courthouse business. In a revered American humor tradition, he creates a fictional Buck Fever who writes rustic dialect letters to the editor. Better worked are sketches of the countryside, revealing the sensitive impressionism