

Book NOTES

Opening Up the Suburbs: An Urban Strategy for America, by Anthony Downs. (Yale University Press, 1973, \$7.95)

Anthony Downs, chairman of the board of the Real Estate Research Corporation, states in the preface of this book three roles he plays as author: the predominant role of a social scientist, a second role of an advocate of policies he believes society should adopt, and a third role of an advisor to society. Social scientists rarely admit that they are playing the second role and often don't admit they are playing the third role. Yet virtually any discussion of public policy issues must involve implicit or explicit value judgements if particular policies are to be suggested. Even if a social scientist acts as an advisor to society, and states, for instance, "since society (through Congress) has established the goal of adequate housing for every American family, the best method to implement this goal is . . ." many extra value judgements are made. Explicitly or implicitly, some judgement is being made about the value of improved housing compared to the value of better health care, better education, better public transportation, or a better environment. Thus many social scientists involved in public policy questions end up acting as advocates. This is not a bad situation, since without some degree of advocacy, social science becomes useless and boring. But some recognition of value judgements used is often appropriate in policy recommendations.

One of the virtues of Anthony Down's book is that the **distinction between** advocacy and social science analysis is fairly clear. Downs presents a proposal for opening up the **suburbs through a policy of dispersed** economic integration. The emphasis of this policy would not be on neighborhood-level economic or racial integration, but rather on providing low-income inner-city families with the schools, jobs, and services available in the suburbs. Downs sees many social problems resulting from the concentration of low-income families in inner-city areas. Exclusionary zoning practices in the suburbs limit the number of low-income families who can move to the suburbs. Downs' proposals include establishing metropolitan agencies for comprehensive development, minimum sizes for government bodies exercising zoning powers, local consolidation, creating a housing allowance program, continuing many present housing subsidy programs, providing counseling services to low-income families, creating housing information and counseling centers, subsidizing improved public transportation in suburban areas, shifting all costs of welfare programs to the federal government, shifting more local school costs to federal or state governments, developing property value insurance for homeowners near low and moderate-income housing, adopting state laws requiring a certain percentage of land devoted to low- and moderate-income housing in each community, adopting state-wide building and housing codes, using mobile homes for public housing, developing a res-

idential maintenance assistance program, and exempting rehabilitation and modernization from local property taxes. Because of Down's recognition of the complexities involved in housing policy, *Opening Up the Suburbs* would be an excellent book for a course on the social aspects of housing.

Sherman Hanna

Lawyers Title Home Buying Guide, William Laas, New York: Popular Library Edition, 1973, paperback, \$1.25, 160 pages, index.

This well-written, up-to-date, well-organized book covers various aspects of buying and financing homes. Chapter titles include "Location, Location, and Location," "Dream House Versus Real House," "Dealing with a Developer," and "Elements of Good Design." The book also contains a chapter on buying apartments, i.e., cooperatives and condominiums. There is a fairly strong plug for title insurance, which is not surprising, since the copyright is held by the Lawyers Title Insurance Corporation. Although the book is an excellent how-to guide, it also contains broader, analytic material.

For Sale by Owner, Louis Gilmore, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1973, paperback, \$3.95, approx. 190 pages, no index.

This book is specifically and exclusively a how-to guide, covering in detail how to set the right price, prepare selling aids, market your house, etc. It contains thirteen pages of mortgage tables, for amounts from 15,000 dollars to 55,000 dollars, terms from 15 years to 35 years, and interest rates from six percent to nine percent (with quarter percent divisions.)

Housing the Poor, Donald J. Reeb and James T. Kirk, Jr. (eds.), New York: Praeger, 1973, hardcover, index, 343 pages.

This book is a collection of papers from a conference in 1971. The varied approaches to the problems of housing for the poor and the overall quality of the papers make this book a useful source for a graduate course on social and economic aspects of housing. The first chapter, "Housing Policy as a Component of Urban Policy," gives a provocative, if necessarily brief, analysis of the interrelationships of housing policy and urban processes. In the paper, "Housing Needs of the Poor: A Reinterpretation," economic and sociological definitions of the concept of housing need are examined. The authors conclude that the housing problem, in a long term context, is really an income problem. Topics in other papers include state housing programs, nonprofit housing, housing for the elderly, rural housing, public housing, housing allowances, housing of public assistance households, and housing goals. — S.H.