

**BEYOND THE MELTING POT;  
THE NEGROES, PUERTO  
RICANS, JEWS, ITALIANS,  
AND IRISH OF NEW YORK CITY**

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Beyond the Melting Pot; The Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Jews, Italians, and Irish of New York City  
by Nathan Glazer & Daniel Patrick Moynihan

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**NATHAN GLAZER & DANIEL PATRICK MOYNIHAN**

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# Beyond the Melting Pot

THE NEGROES, PUERTO RICANS, JEWS,  
ITALIANS, AND IRISH OF NEW YORK CITY

BY NATHAN GLAZER AND  
DANIEL PATRICK MOYNIHAN

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# Preface

**T**HIS is a beginning book. It is an effort to trace the role of ethnicity in the tumultuous, varied, endlessly complex life of New York City. It is time, we believe, that such an effort be made, albeit doomed inevitably to approximation and to inaccuracy, and although it cannot but on occasion give offense to those very persons for whom we have the strongest feeling of fellowship and common purpose. The notion that the intense and unprecedented mixture of ethnic and religious groups in American life was soon to blend into a homogeneous end product has outlived its usefulness, and also its credibility. In the meanwhile the persisting facts of ethnicity demand attention, understanding, and accommodation.

The point about the melting pot, as we say later, is that it did not happen. At least not in New York and, *mutatis mutandis*, in those parts of America which resemble New York.

This is nothing remarkable. On the contrary, the American ethos is nowhere better perceived than in the disinclination of the third and fourth generation of newcomers to blend into a standard, uniform national type. From the beginning, our society and our politics have been at least as much concerned with values as with interests. The principal ethnic groups of New York City will be seen



maintaining a distinct identity, albeit a changing one, from one generation to the next. One group is not as another and, notably where religious and cultural values are involved, these differences are matters of choice as well as of heritage; of new creation in a new country, as well as of the maintenance of old values and forms. Our discussion of these differences necessarily touches, even dwells, on the consequent, widely varying patterns of achievement in areas such as education, business, and politics. Understandably enough, the unevenness of achievement in such matters is the source of resentment and even bitterness by many individual members of the different groups. It may be that our discussion will also be resented by such persons, for much the same reason. We would therefore, in advance, ask a measure of forgiveness for taking up a subject which needs to be discussed, but which cannot be aired without giving pain to some.

The Joint Center for Urban Studies of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard University sponsored this study, and its indefatigable director Martin Meyerson sustained it in adversity. A grant from the New York Post Foundation made possible much of the research and writing. We are singularly indebted to a great many scholars and fellow New Yorkers who have given us information, ideas, and encouragement. We would like particularly to acknowledge the counsel of Daniel Bell, Leonard Covello, Father Joseph P. Fitzpatrick, S.J., Herbert J. Gans, Frederick L. Holborn, Will Maslow, Michael Parenti, and Lloyd Rodwin. Nancy Edelman and Victor Gioscia helped with research on the Puerto Rican and Italian sections. Professor James S. Coleman generously provided an analysis of the results of the 1962 New York gubernatorial election.

This work was conceived and organized by Nathan Glazer. He wrote "the Negroes," "the Puerto Ricans," "the Jews," "the Italians," and most of the "Introduction." Daniel Patrick Moynihan wrote "the Irish" and most of "Beyond the Melting Pot." We have discussed and criticized each other's writing, and worked together to formulate the thesis that the book presents.

*Washington*  
*April, 1963*

N.G.  
D.P.M.

# Contents

## INTRODUCTION 1

<b>THE NEGROES</b>	24	25	Numbers
		29	Jobs
		44	Education
		50	The Family and Other Problems
		53	Housing and Neighborhood
		67	Leadership, Politics, Intergroup Relations
<b>THE PUERTO RICANS</b>	86	86	Prologue
		91	The Migration
		99	The Island-Centered Community
		110	The Mobile Element
		116	Lower Income
		122	The Next Generation: Family, School, Neighborhood
		129	Culture, Contributions, Color
<b>THE JEWS</b>	137	143	The Economic Base
		155	The Passion for Education
		159	Community, Neighborhood, Integration
		166	Politics
		171	Culture and the Future
<b>THE ITALIANS</b>	181	186	The Community
		194	Family Influences
		202	Religion
		205	Occupations
		208	Politics
<b>THE IRISH</b>	217	219	The Green Wave
		221	The Democratic Party
		230	The Roman Catholic Church
		238	The Wild Irish
		250	"There Are Some of Us Left"
		262	The Party of the People
		274	City of God and Man
<b>BEYOND THE MELTING POT</b>	288	292	The Jews
		294	The Catholics
		299	Negroes and Puerto Ricans
		301	The Role of Politics
		310	The Future
		317	<b>TABLES</b>
		325	<b>NOTES</b>
		349	<b>INDEX</b>

# Introduction

**I**N 1660 William Kieft, the Dutch governor of New Netherland, remarked to the French Jesuit Isaac Jogues that there were eighteen languages spoken at or near Fort Amsterdam at the tip of Manhattan Island. There still are: not necessarily the same languages, but at least as many; nor has the number ever declined in the intervening three centuries. This is an essential fact of New York: a merchant metropolis with an extraordinarily heterogeneous population. The first shipload of settlers sent out by the Dutch was made up largely of French-speaking Protestants. British, Germans, Finns, Jews, Swedes, Africans, Italians, Irish followed, beginning a stream that has never yet stopped.

The consequences of this confusion, soon to be compounded by the enormous size of the city itself, have been many. Not least has been the virtual impossibility ever of describing New York City or even the state in simple