

Survey Shows Michigan Offers Most For Negro

ANN ARBOR — Which one of the 50 states offers the greatest opportunities to the Negro?

The answer is Michigan, according to Everett Claspy, author of the book "The Negro in Southwestern Michigan."

Claspy explains his conclusion:

"The LITERARY world is filled with books and articles about the condition of the Negro in the South and in the ghettos

of the Northern cities. It is usually assumed that the deplorable conditions in these areas would be almost cured if these people could be spread out in such a way that they would be constantly associated with white people in schools and work.

"Almost no attention seems to have been given to places where Negroes have been enjoying these conditions for generations, including the right to vote, and where they can live

under a variety of conditions as on farms or in small towns, or more recently in resort areas.

"It is believed that these conditions are most prevalent in the region under study, although they are true to some extent all over Michigan, which perhaps has the best record of any state in providing the Negro with an opportunity for advancement."

Black persons have long lived in rural areas of Ohio, In-

diana, Illinois, but according to Claspy it is generally admitted that conditions, especially in the southern part of those states, are not much different from those across the Ohio River in Kentucky.

"With these states ruled out, the only rival to Michigan in the just treatment of the Negroes is Kansas," he declares.

MANY NEGROES still live in the small towns of western Kansas, where they have attended the regular schools and colleges, and where, like Michigan, they currently are represented by three Negro state senators, according to Claspy. The land was relatively poor there, however, and the state has not developed industrially as Michigan has.

Claspy's history centers on more than a dozen communities in southwestern Michigan.

Some highlights: Calvin as early as 1862 reported having 1,000 black residents out of a population of 1,693.

"The only community in the world which can be compared with Calvin is located in three townships of Mecosta County, of which Big Rapids is the county seat," Claspy writes. "The colored farms are not adjacent to each other as in Calvin but, instead, spread out near the village of Remus and Mecosta in the eastern part of the county."

CASSOPOLIS, which serves as the shopping center and post office for the Calvin community, also has the schools where its young people get their education. Census figures listed Cassopolis with 395 Negroes in a population of 2,027. The school system, according to the author, may well be the best integrated in the United States.

4 Canoe Maps Are Available

The new 1968 set of four Huron River canoeing guide maps, illustrating routes from west of Pontiac to Lake Erie, are now available free from the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority. HCMA is a five-county park agency serving the counties of Livingston, Macomb, Oakland, Washtenaw and Wayne.

The new maps show portages, campsites, launching areas, access roads and include a mileage chart indicating distances between important points and travel time between these points.

The four maps cover a total distance of 106 miles, which the average canoeist should be able to paddle in 48 hours according to William F. Hopkins, chief naturalist for the HCMA.

HCMA canoe campsites are located at Canoe Island in Kensington Metropolitan Metropolitan Park near Milford, a site near Hamburg, and at Hudson Mills Metropolitan Park near Dexter and northwest of Ann Arbor. The map also identifies canoe campsites operated by the Michigan Department of Conservation in the Proud Lake Recreation Area and Island Lake Recreation Area.

These colorful, detailed maps may be obtained by contacting the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority, 1750 Guardian Building, Detroit, 46226 (Phone - 961-5865). When making requests, be sure to specify "canoe maps."

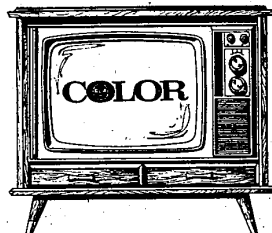
Permits are available without charge for use of HCMA canoe campsites located at the parks listed above. The authority does not rent canoes at any of its parks or campsites; however, canoe liveryes are located in Milford and Ann Arbor and at Kent Lake Beach in the Island Lake Recreation Area.

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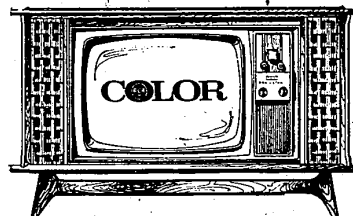
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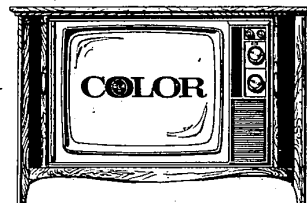
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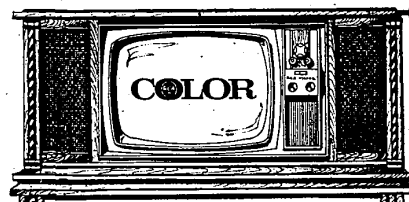
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