

“Trouble in NYC”, Warren Hoffman (Naysayer) Precis:

Warren Hoffman’s, The Great White Way includes many contradicting statements, specifically in Chapter 3, “Trouble in NYC”. Hoffman’s book disregards all Puerto Rican related problems and focuses on the “whiteness” of the musical. Hoffman reveals how Leonard Bernstein, the creator of *West Side Story*, had never met a Puerto Rican prior to the creation of the musical. Hoffman continues to explain the background of the musical but fails to explain the racist aspects of the musical that came from this lack of knowledge. In his book, Hoffman stated, “Sure, the Puerto Ricans are suspect figures, but suddenly so too are the Jets, who are no more blue-blooded than the Sharks” (Hoffman, p. 110). In saying this, he insinuates that the Puerto Ricans and the Jets equally faced the same struggles throughout the musical, which is so clearly incorrect as we view scenes such as Anita’s rape scene, as mentioned earlier. When paying close attention to the racial slurs towards the Sharks, and the overall mockery of the Puerto Rican culture, it is evident that the Sharks received much more racial stereotyping.