Perspectives in Mexican American Studies is an ongoing series devoted to research on Mexican Americans as a national group. All selections published in Perspectives are refereed.

Perspectives is published by the Mexican American Studies & Research Center at the University of Arizona and is distributed by the University of Arizona Press, 355 S. Euclid, Suite 103, Tucson, Arizona 85719.

Individual copies are $15.

Subscriptions to Perspectives (2 issues) are $25 for individuals and $35 for institutions. Foreign individual subscriptions are $28 and foreign institutional subscriptions are $44. For subscription orders, contact the Mexican American Studies & Research Center, Economics Building, Room 208, the University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona 85721-0023.

For additional information, call MASRC Publications (520) 621-7551. Perspectives is abstracted and indexed in Historical Abstracts and America: History and Life.

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ISSN 0889-8448
ISBN 0-939363-07-0
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Twelve years ago, in the first volume of *Perspectives*, the editors, Juan R. García and Ignacio García, set out the journal’s goals in a short preface. These were to stimulate and promote new research, present new and different viewpoints, and ultimately expand the boundaries of scholarship about Mexican Americans. That original volume was a compilation of articles on Mexican American folklore dating back to 1944. Professor José R. Reyna of California State University, Bakersfield, served as special editor of this introductory issue.

In publishing the work of pioneering scholars such as Arthur L. Campa, Aurelio M. Espinosa, and others who came later, the editors sought to preserve a rich part of a cultural legacy that could inspire and serve as a model to students of Mexican American history. They succeeded. The volume soon went out of print, and its articles are often included in class reading packets at various universities, and routinely cited by scholars. Subsequent volumes have featured articles on a variety of topics—immigration, Chicano film, ethnic identity, education, literary analysis, and children’s health to name a few. Two volumes, the first, noted above, and the fifth, sub-titled, “Mexican American Women: Changing Images,” were thematic, although a range of subjects were covered in each.

The present volume contains seven articles by several new voices, and by others who have a long list of published works to their credit. They provide us with information of interest, and offer fresh observations of the Mexican American experience. The authors include veterans of *el movimiento*, such as Armando Navarro; experienced scholars such as Elsa O. Valdez, Richard Santillán, and Raymond V. Padilla; and some who are newer on the scene, such as Armando Solórzano, John Hardisty, Jorge Iber and Anne Fairbrother.

In the first article, professors Solórzano and Iber describe the experiences of successive waves of Hispanic miners and their families who moved into Utah in the early part of the twentieth century. These groups included Mexicans, Mexican Americans, and Puerto Ricans. To retain their cultural roots and identities, members of these newly established communities founded patriotic councils, such as the Sociedad Honorífica Mexicana, and mutual-aid societies.

According to the authors, there was a significant amount of conflict between the different Hispanic groups. The relationships between Hispanos, as those who came to Utah from Colorado and Northern New Mexico called themselves, and those of Mexican descent who had preceded them, were strained. Such was the case in Bingham, a mining community southwest of Salt Lake City. There was also friction with Anglo
Latter-day Saints, and with Puerto Ricans, who first came to the Beehive State because of labor shortages during World War II. But conflicts are only part of this rich and complex history. Hispanics also overcame poverty and prejudice, retained their community ties, and made major contributions to the economy and culture of Utah and the nation.

John Hardisty, in “El Laberinto de la Comunidad: A Rural View of Mexico,” tells us how he learned about his neighbors in southern California by spending a summer in a small town in central Mexico. As he conducted field research for an anthropologist from the Universidad Autónoma de Querétaro, he gained some insight about the increasing presence of foreign manufacturing plants in Mexico. Yet he also discovered the benefits of living in a close-knit, if poor, community. Hardisty earnestly, and sometimes humorously, details the personal connections that are so often invisible in media portrayals of Mexico, mexicanos, and immigrants.

Armando Navarro outlines in detail how Chicanos and Chicanas fought for and won political control in the small southern California community of Cucamonga during the late 1960s and early ‘70s. Chicanos, who made up a large part of the population in San Bernardino and Riverside counties, suffered from unemployment, poverty, and political disenfranchisement. Although there was a 60 percent Chicano drop-out rate in the Cucamonga School District, the conservative school board largely refused to seek readily available federal funds to help alleviate such problems. As was the case in many other schools in the Southwest at the time, there were virtually no Chicana or Chicano teachers or administrators.

These conditions set the stage for the actions that followed in Cucamonga. The success they ultimately achieved was the “Chicano Movement’s first political takeover of a school board in Aztlán,” Navarro proudly writes. The 1968 takeover and the early years of the “experiment” delineated in this essay, preceded the successful electoral revolts orchestrated by La Raza Unida Party in the Winter Garden area of Texas in April 1970. It was, in fact, the movement’s first successful effort at controlling a school board. The well-organized effort brought Chicanos to power, and delivered tangible improvements to the community. In “The Cucamonga Experiment: A Struggle for Community Control and Self-Determination,” Navarro shows how idealism, hard work, and political strategy were used to bring about much-needed reform.

Elsa O. Valdez studied the political involvement and ethnic identity of Latino students in New Mexico and southern California. The data and information from Chicano and Latino students at New Mexico Highlands University and California State University, San Bernardino, revealed that, among other things, students in Southern California are more likely to identify themselves as Chicano rather than Hispanic, be involved in conflict politics, and engage in some conventional political activities.
In her study, Valdez points to several factors that might be the cause of these behaviors. One of the most likely reasons for political activism among California students is that the sociopolitical and economic climate in California has increasingly become anti-civil rights. Campaigns such as the successful English-only (anti-bilingual) education proposition, and anti-immigrant legislation are causing more young people to become active in politics. In contrast, as she points out, Chicanos and Latinos in Northern New Mexico occupy key governmental and economic positions. Students, therefore, do not see the need to continually engage in conflict politics.

In “Chicano Pedagogy: Confluence, Knowledge, and Transformation,” Raymond V. Padilla writes that the border region is one where cultures come together in a “torrential encounter.” He sees the region as a place of great energy and possibility, not the site of alienation, as it has been viewed historically. His thesis is that the current educational attainment gap “cannot be eradicated unless a Chicano pedagogy is created that takes into account the historical and cultural realities of the Chicano population along with the North American context in which those realities must be reassessed and transformed.”

Padilla proposes a system of transformational education that goes beyond previous affirmational and reformational models, which have had only limited success. He describes a method by which Chicanos and Chicanas can “collectively analyze and implement solutions to common problems.” Although the system he proposes is designed primarily for the college level, Padilla believes it can be applied to the elementary and high school grades as well.

In “Mexicans in New Mexico: The Tri-Cultural Trope,” Anne Fairbrother adds her voice to the long-standing discourse concerning the ethnic identity of Hispanos in New Mexico. The discussion—which at times has been heated—began long before the era of Chicanismo. For example, Arthur L. Campa, whom Fairbrother quotes, debunked the Spanish-origin myth more than 50 years ago.

Fairbrother reviews and comments on the Mexican and Mexican American history in New Mexico and the history of racial intimidation that fed into the Spanish heritage idea that took root after 1900. She states that many factors, including the move toward U.S. statehood, the economics of the tourist industry, and the works of well-intentioned writers such as Cleofas Jaramillo and Mary Austin contributed to the development of this Spanish Romance. The tri-cultural image, according to Fairbrother, excludes anything that is Mexican and, by extension, mestizo. She takes a close look at that image, and explores concepts of Hispano identity and homeland in order to uncover a more realistic history.

In the final article, “Mexican Baseball Teams in the Midwest, 1916-1965: The Politics of Cultural Survival and Civil Rights,” Richard Santillán describes and docu-
ments Mexican American participation in baseball in the Midwestern states that began in the 1920s.

Organizing their own teams, leagues, and associations such as *El Club Deportivo Internacional* of Gary, Indiana, people of Mexican descent created a way for youth and young adults to enjoy physical competition and develop leadership skills. Generations of Chicanos and Chicanas in the Midwest have played on teams, and organized events and clubs. This article is excerpted from a larger manuscript that includes chapters on Chicano participation in other sports. Santillán, using interviews he conducted with former players, adds to the growing history of Chicanos in the American heartland.

The topics covered by the authors in this volume, from sports in the Midwest to small town life in Central Mexico, seem to have little in common except for their focus on Mexican-descent people. However, on closer inspection, one can see that the idea of labor runs like an arroyo through this book. Sometimes it is on the surface. At other times it is a subterranean channel, unseen, but still the reason for the shape and placement of the dry wash above. In some of the articles, the one by Solórzano and Iber, for instance, the hard labor of the various Hispanic groups in Utah and its consequences are readily apparent. In others, such as Padilla's, it is just below the surface, yet is the force that moves teachers to improve the educational lot of Chicanos and Chicanas. They want a better life for future generations, and know that achieving this goal depends on the ability to obtain and perform meaningful work. This is why Mexican Americans and mexicanos organized sports programs in places like Topeka and Kansas City in the 1940s, and why college students in southern California protest anti-Chicano and anti-immigrant policies today.

We are grateful to the authors for their perceptive and insightful essays. We also thank Adela de la Torre, director of the Mexican American Studies & Research Center at the University of Arizona. Her support and encouragement have made this edition of *Perspectives in Mexican American Studies* possible.

Tom Gelsinon
Associate Editor
December 2000
Introduction

Underneath the history of economic segregation lie cultural strategies that helped shape the destiny of Hispanics in the United States. In the course of their daily lives they developed a group identity that, although internally and externally contested, acted as the foundation for community representation. This paper offers a glimpse into the economic subordination, cultural production, identity formation, and community building of Hispanic miners in Utah. The study reveals how the mineros advanced cultural and community building in spite of their low socioeconomic status. Culture and identity for these Hispanics often transcended class and racial pressures, and evolved as a conscious act of resistance which helped establish their roots and institutions in the Beehive State. While preserving cultural practices, the various groups, religious organizations, and educational endeavors of Utah Hispanics also challenged the economic practices established by Utah’s majority population.

This study assumes that culture and identity are not unidimensional or undifferentiated, but rather, are filled with contradictory and multidimensional beliefs. It emphasizes complexity, elasticity, and contestation that occurred as Hispanics created their community and ethnic identity. The life of Hispanic miners in Utah was shaped by two factors: the state’s predominant religion—Mormonism, and the diversity of Hispanic groups that arrived in the state to work in the mines. The daily life of mineros in Utah in turn transformed racial relations. More importantly, they achieved this goal under circumstances that permitted them only minimal economic and social mobility.

In analyzing this history, we begin with an examination of the economic and political forces that attracted the Hispanic miners to Utah, then look at the social conditions that made possible the emergence of a Hispanic comunidad. The process of identity-formation is scrutinized by examining relations be-
tween Anglos and Hispanics, as well as intraethnic conflicts that pitted Mexican Americans against Puerto Ricans and New Mexicans. Finally, the impact of Mormon missionary activity on community and identity creation among Spanish-surnamed families is detailed. While the Latter-day Saints (LDS) can rightfully claim the mantle of Utah’s pioneers and settlers, Hispanic miners can proudly profess a role in inaugurating a new era in the state’s history. Their efforts at maintaining their identity and creating civil and political organizations, as well as the spread of their communities substantially transformed Utah’s landscape. Indeed, small groups of “common people” have left indelible imprints on the history of the state.

Spanish-Surnamed in Utah’s Mines

Between 1847 and 1896 Mormon policies for self-sufficiency and isolation restricted mining operations and kept Utah from full participation in the U.S. economy. The Mormon agenda of the second half of the 19th century was to build a religious kingdom, not a capitalist enterprise. These intentions, however, drastically contrasted with the laissez-faire tendencies of the nation, which eventually led to the undoing of Mormon economic separatism. Arrington put it succinctly: “The leviathan of American finance capitalism ruled Utah as it had long ruled Montana and other Western states and territories.”

The state’s incorporation into national and international markets depended upon the development of commercialized farming, the creation of enterprises that transcended regional boundaries, and the complete reorganization of its labor force. At the turn of the century, the mining industry became the principal catalyst for Utah’s metamorphosis. In 1904 the mines in Bingham Canyon, southwest of Salt Lake City, were incorporated into the Utah Copper Company. By 1915 Kennecott Copper Corporation absorbed all copper mining in the state, becoming Utah’s most important enterprise, producing 90 percent of the state’s copper and more than eight percent of world’s copper. World War I greatly increased demand for this mineral and lead to further expansion of activities in Bingham. As mining technology improved, the need for skilled miners decreased and drastically changed the ethnic makeup of the canyon’s population. Before the 1910s the work force consisted primarily of European immigrants, most from the British Isles. Where Cornish and Irish miners predominated in the 1890s, Greeks, Italians, and Japanese were most numerous by 1912.
The infusion of Guggenheim's capital into Utah fueled development and radically transformed conditions in the mines. Mechanization increased the demand for pick and shovel work and, in turn, this produced an ethnic padrone system. Labor contractors recruited and imported unskilled immigrants and provided them with work in the mines or railroads. Three padrones dominated this system during the 1910s: Leonida Skliris who imported Greek and Slavic workers, Edward D. Hashimoto contracted Japanese laborers, and Moses Paggi recruited Italian miners. The newly hired miners were assigned low paying, high-risk jobs. A significant challenge to this situation occurred on September 17, 1912, when nearly 5000 mine workers demanded increased pay, the elimination of the padrone system, and the recognition of labor unions. Utah Copper refused these demands and called for negotiations on an individual basis. Miners, with Greek workers at the forefront, walked off their jobs. At the Utah-Apex camp, only twenty-five men out of 200 continued working. The economic, social, and political consequences of the strike were immediately felt in Bingham. To normalize operations, Utah Copper officials recruited hundreds of Mexicans who were brought in as strikebreakers. Newcomers encountered a vigorous resistance because of their status as "scabs," as well as for their drastically different cultural background. The other ethnic and national groups were already firmly established, with some owning stores, saloons, and bakeries. The majority of ethnic groups had already feuded with each other (Greeks, Serbians, Japanese, and Italians), and established important labor connections with union leaders and local politicians. Besides these groups the new immigrants had to interact with the American-born miners who would not align with Mexicans, whom they looked down on as "foreigners."

The decision to bring Mexicans to Bingham, however, was not an easy one. Leaders of the mining operations throughout the West, especially in Arizona, would not hire workers who could not speak English. "Miners who cannot speak the language," advised the Salt Lake Mining Review, "do not have a clear or adequate idea of the rights of others, or of the sacredness of the laws of our land." The Review's owners believed that to protect the mining industry and the welfare of the miners, jobs should be offered only to those who could speak English fluently. But in the end, Mexican workers were hired. The language barrier could be overcome: it was more important that the Mexicans were not unionized.

The majority of Mexicans who came to work in Utah's mines were driven
out of their country by the violence of the Mexican Revolution of 1910. Along with these Mexican nationals came Mexican Americans from Arizona, Wyoming, and Colorado. An examination of Kennecott Copper Corporation records reveals important information on these miners.

Most of these *mexicanos* were young and single; only 30 percent claimed to be married. The majority did not remain in Bingham long. The physical demands of mine labor led to a great deal of turnover, nearly 67 percent left after 40 days. Some applicants who were hired never showed up. Many Mexicans left mining because once in Utah they discovered that higher salaries could be earned in other, less strenuous, pursuits (such as agriculture and the railroads). Reflecting on the working conditions at the mines years later, Filomeno Ochoa, a Mexican from Sonora, stated "It didn't take long to get a job but you can't stay very long either . . . because you have to work like a mule." When applying for a job at Kennecott, Juan Flores was told that the company needed people willing to engage in physical labor: "We need a man, no machine man, no nothing. I need men just to dig and dig over there." After few days of digging Mr. Flores left the mines: "I have to dig rocks about that high and put a post and dig and get down on my knees. I work about eight days and I don't like (sic) that job and I quit, I quit."

The Mexicans, as had the Greeks, Japanese, and Italians before them, worked in the lowest paying, least skilled occupations. While whites and some Europeans (primarily the Swedes) secured higher paying jobs and skilled machine positions, Mexicans and Mexican Americans put down tracks, blasted rock and drilled. Table 2 depicts the occupational hierarchy of the Hispanics in Bingham mines.

The overwhelming majority worked in track gangs. Their salaries were minuscule and employers justified this practice by claiming that they "didn't
Table 2
Hispanic Occupations in Bingham Canyon: 1912-1935

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OCCUPATION</th>
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<tr>
<td>Stopper</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Bankman</td>
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<td>Tunnelman</td>
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<td>Lobbier</td>
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<td>Waterboy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Machine Operator</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Handyman</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camp Watchman</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car Runner</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second Helper</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laborer</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car Repairer</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helper</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitman</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mucker</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trackman</td>
<td>437</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Source: Kennecott Copper Corporation records. Marriott Library, University of Utah

have the education to work in other jobs. Confined to these positions, few achieved higher posts. By the early 1930s more than 5000 mineros had rendered services in Kennecott, but only two had achieved the rank of foreman. Of the 4000 Mexicans introduced to the mines, most left northern Utah after the resolution of the 1912 labor dispute. However, a small number remained and eventually brought their families to Bingham. The majority of the new immigrants worked diligently, but as a group they were soon characterized as "thieves," "gamblers," "outlaws," and "killers." The foundation of this characterization is rooted in the story of Raphael Lopez. The legend revolves around a man who was wanted for murdering Juan Valdez in Bingham on November 12, 1913. There is no direct evidence as to the reason for the act, but versions of the story cite a dispute over their interpretation of the Mexican Revolution, jealousy over a woman, or revenge for the death of Valdez' brother as
motives. Although authorities launched an intensive manhunt, Lopez was never found. The story's significance lies in its negative identification of Mexicans. This notion, according to Elorreaga, comes mostly from popular Anglo folklore, and strongly influenced the assessment of the Mexican Americans' contributions to the mining community.

Given the lower salaries, and the lack of political and social representation, the mineros were transformed into a colonial labor force, with few possibilities for occupational advancement. They faced discrimination at company stores as well. A 1972 oral history interview with the widow of Richard Córdova helps corroborate this assertion. Córdova recalls that each time her husband picked up his check, it included a payroll deduction for goods bought. "You could go in and sign your name and it'd go right through the payroll office and they'd deduct what you owed them, and there were two prices, [one] for the poor whites and also [one] for the poor Mexicans." This economic deprivation prevented the purchase of houses. Mexicans had no alternative but to rent or live in boarding houses. Such circumstances made it extremely difficult to create a sense of community and to erase widely held misconceptions.

A post-World War I recession devastated Utah's mining industry and, as in other areas of the country, Hispanics were among the first ones fired. Demand for metals decreased during the late 1910s and early 1920s, and the production of gold, silver, lead, and zinc plummeted. By 1920 copper production was 50 percent below 1917 levels. Utah Copper reluctantly closed its mills in 1921, laying off more than 6000 men. Louis Amador, a Bingham Mexican, recalls that on average, 18 Mexican workers per day went back to Mexico. The exodus continued for six months. By 1922 conditions improved and by 1929 Bingham mines experienced a boom. Mines were, once again, operating at near capacity and Mexicans and Mexican Americans were aggressively recruited. However, this prosperity was short lived. By 1930 copper lost its luster; in November the metal's price had dropped below the break-even price of 12 cents per pound. Utah Copper shut down most of its operations by 1932. A disastrous fire on September 8, 1932, compounded the economic crisis. Seventy five homes were destroyed as the fire devastated the Highland Boy section of the canyon. One of these houses belonged to the family of Gavino Aguayo. During the 1930s, they subsisted primarily on tortillas, beans, and chile sauce, but the children felt lucky to be as well off as they were. "You know, we were poor . . . But really at
that time . . . we didn't know it.” Conditions were so arduous that most mineros left Utah during the 1930s. Those who remained were either too proud to ask for governmental assistance or were not aware of available programs. Many were forced to change occupations. A good number started working in the railroad; even Mexican women joined the labor force. The case of Juanita Jimenez illustrates this point. In 1930, after her husband died of a disease contracted in the mines, she looked for work and refused to ask for governmental assistance. “We never got help from the government. We never asked for anything.”

The start of World War II finally ended the Great Depression in Utah as federal military expenditures, starting in the late 1930s, had a salubrious impact on the economy. Between 1940 and 1945 ten military bases were established, the state received more than $1.1 billion in war-supply contracts, and another $430 million was invested in facility construction. As a result, total personal income, which had languished at around $300 million before 1940, surpassed $700 million by 1943. Per capita income, well below the national average before the war, soared to almost 103 percent of the national average. This economic bonanza reversed the out-migration that had characterized the state’s population since 1910, and led to full employment. This revival also produced a strong demand for labor. Spanish speakers, who had fled Utah during the 1930s, returned. In contrast to the immigrants of the 1910s, the new wave of trabajadores hailed from rural farming villages of northern New Mexico and southeastern Colorado. Many of these people had been displaced by the capitalist transformation of their region, which began after the U.S. takeover in 1848. Many had been forced to abandon traditional farming and economic practices. Without land to sustain their families, Hispanos wandered throughout the Southwest in search of work. In contrast with earlier arrivals, however, most Hispanos were married and had firmer intentions of remaining in Utah.

The mining and mineral-processing sector in Utah also responded to wartime demands. New plants came on line during the 1940s and facilitated the exploitation of the Utah’s mineral wealth. Utah Copper, Kennecott Copper, and American Smelting and Refining poured more than $15 million into plant expansion. This increased activity drew the Spanish-surnamed to Utah’s refineries, mines, and smelters. By 1940, many worked in the mines of Carbon County. Many were not enthusiastic about working in coal mines because they offered the lowest salaries in the industry. Rosa Sandoval, who had lived
in Carbon County since she was two years old, observed that the coal miners were "the poorest people on this earth. I don't care what they say, especially when you're raising a family, all you have money for is groceries."\textsuperscript{36} Still, mining during the war years had its advantages. In the 1940s, "if you worked in Salt Lake for $2 an hour, you would have to hold two jobs in order to get what you're getting here (Carbon County); $6 or $7 an hour."\textsuperscript{37} Plus, mineros could work as much overtime as they wanted in the mines. Valentin Arámbula moved to Utah in 1943 because "Utah was paying one dollar a day more (than in his home state of Colorado) and they were working more than we were. In fact, we were only working five days a week and here, at Sunnyside, they were working six and seven days a week and overtime during the war.\textsuperscript{38}

In Carbon County, Greeks, Italians, and Japanese were better positioned; many owned businesses, restaurants, and grocery stores. The labor discrimination Hispanics experienced in the mines translated into marginalization and created tension and rivalries with other groups. Evidence suggests that Italians and Greeks classified them as "a poor class of people."\textsuperscript{39} Italians, Greeks, and Japanese, said José Jesús Palacio, "always seemed to hold better jobs than we did ... they were always given the better opportunities to make better money, to make a better living. We didn't have the opportunity."\textsuperscript{40}

Perceived physical differences also caused tension. According to Rosa Sandoval, "I had a personal argument with an Italian. We almost came to blows. She started telling me that my nationality was Mexican; [that we were] darker complexioned people; that we looked more Negro than they did." Rosa fought back by arguing that the Italians from Naples were even darker than the blacks. "I've seen and I've read some of your history (Italian). And they couldn't tell you apart from the Negro, even if they tried."\textsuperscript{41} Some Hispanics believed that given the working conditions in the mines it was extremely difficult to distinguish the color of the miners. Therefore, the sources of racial and ethnic tensions were caused primarily by economic differences among groups and individuals. Ellen Córdova, stated that regardless of ethnicity, miners shared some things in common. "Have you ever seen a miner when he comes out of a coal mine? They're all black, every last one of them. You can't tell a white man from a black man. The only discrimination that comes in coal mining is between a boss and being a regular laborer ... that's the only distinction there is."\textsuperscript{42}
Unlike the Mexican miners of the 1910s and early 1920s, some of the mineros of the 1940s were successful and achieved a higher economic status that their predecessors. As an illustration, Louis Amador acquired his own drilling machines and negotiated a contract with Kennecott. He extracted ore, copper, lead, zinc and bismuth; he earned a $5,800 check for three months of work plus a $2,800 bonus from the federal government. Merlin Barela, whose first job in the mines was as a powder man earning $8.88 per day, was eventually promoted to shovel operator, increasing his daily pay to $46.94.

The wartime demand for copper and miners increased the intragroup diversity of Hispanics. In 1943 Bingham mining companies brought in hundreds of laborers from as far away as Puerto Rico and New York City. These workers encountered circumstances similar to earlier waves of Mexicans and Mexican Americans. The islanderos (islanders) did not bring their families, were transient, and were assigned to the most strenuous and lowest paying jobs in the mines. Exact statistics on the composition of Bingham's population are not available, but studies have estimated that during World War II Hispanics were at least 65 percent of the canyon's population.

Social Conditions Among Hispanic Miners
From 1912 through the 1930s most Spanish-speaking miners in the canyon lived in Dinkeyville rather than Bingham or Copperfield. Nick Leyba recalled that "... there were more Mexicans in Dinkeyville than there were in other places." Dinkeyville was located in the mountains above Highland Boy and Copperfield. Mineros lived in shacks that were old, crowded, and inadequate. Water was a primary concern since there was often only one well for every five families. Those living conditions stood in stark contrast with those of managerial personnel who lived in Copperton, where "Mexicans" were not allowed to reside. Edith Meléndez, a resident of Dinkeyville, believed that segregation was not strictly based on racial divisions, rather it was created to keep "the elite away from the workers." Hispanics also lived in the Highland Boy section, an area that was more ethnically diverse.

Housing patterns changed dramatically after 1940, when the majority of Spanish-speaking people began concentrating in Copperfield. Housing conditions, however, were not much different from those which Mexican miners experienced in Dinkeyville 25 years earlier. The scarcity of housing during
World War II made matters worse. In the mines of Dragerton and Horse Canyon, Hispanics often lived in tent cities since "houses hadn't been built yet at that time so it was either tents or trailers."^{50}

Not all Mexicans endured such difficulties. The Meléndez family lived on Main Street in upper Bingham. Their house had two bedrooms, was furnished by Kennecott Copper, and rent was deducted from an employee's paychecks. Mike Meléndez's recalls that during his youth, "We weren't very well-off at the time. Well, I could say that probably we have never been well-off. I remember our chairs ... were wooden boxes ... We had a coal stove. And our home was furnished very, very modestly. My main activities at that time were just playing in the mountains and in the hills."^{51} By the 1940s, some of the mineros who had worked in Bingham for about two decades began purchasing homes in Dinkeyville, Bingham, Copperton, and Highland Boy. The homes were modest and many needed substantial mending. Highland Boy resident Merlin Barela, recalls that his house "didn't cost too much. We bought the home for $5,250 so that couldn't have been too good of a home, but it was a big house. But I did a lot of repairs on it."^{52}

Some Hispanics acquired apartment buildings, which they then rented to bachelors. Although conditions were difficult, many mineros liked living in the ethnically diverse sections of the canyon. Alberto González, who moved from Highland Boy to Bingham, observed: "One thing I liked about Bingham, what I remember, is that there were so many different kinds of people, different nationalities, and I used to really like that."^{53} Harold Nielsen considered the mining towns "quite a melting pot," where Italians, Yugoslavians, Greeks, Mexicans, Georgians, and Armenians lived.^{54} Not all, however, enjoyed Bingham's ambience. Some considered it lacking in morals, and conducive to deviant behavior. Louis Amador, a Mexican miner, traveled to Salt Lake City every day rather than risk Bingham's pernicious influence. He said, "Bingham was a beautiful town if you want to drink ... No matter what time of the hour or what day you always find a beer joint open and music here and music there."^{55}

The Emergence of a Hispanic Community
The significant influx of Mexican miners, beginning in 1912, was reflected in the 1920 federal Census that reported 1666 people of Mexican descent living in Utah. The 1900 Census had counted only 40. The growth from 1900 to
1920 is explained by the effects of the Mexican Revolution and by the efforts of the Utah Immigration Commissioner to attract workers. In 1910, the Bureau of Immigration described Utah as "a splendid state for the best class of immigrants." The Spanish-speaking population in 1920 consisted primarily of young, single males. Most lived not in urban centers, but in the state's rural areas; for each Mexican living in the urban core, three lived and worked in rural Utah. By 1930, the ratio of men to women was reduced to 2:1 and the rural/urban ratio was down to 2:1. Table 3 depicts the composition of the Hispanic population in Utah in 1930.

The increase in the Mexican-origin population warranted the establishment of a Mexican consulate in Salt Lake City in 1912. Although this entity provided some assistance, Utah's familias developed their own aid networks to ameliorate poverty and deprivation. Given Bingham's ethnic composition, it is not surprising that such ties and organizations flourished there. Mutual-aid societies and the Cruz Azul (Blue Cross, the Mexican equivalent of the Red

Table 3
Characteristics of Utah's Hispanic Population: 1930

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2728</td>
<td>1284</td>
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<thead>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Rural Farms</th>
<th>Rural Non-Farms</th>
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<td></td>
<td>1392</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>2472</td>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Distribution</th>
<th>1-10 years old</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
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<td>1200</td>
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<th>Marital Status</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1258</td>
<td>711</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Illiteracy Rates</th>
<th>Hispanics in U.S.</th>
<th>33%</th>
<th>Hispanics in Utah</th>
<th>28%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Cross) emerged in the early 1920s to provide economic and emotional support. It also sponsored social and cultural events. The Blue Cross was created with aid from the Mexican consul, who hoped to provide legal assistance to persons without proper documentation. These activities were motivated by altruistic intentions and organized on a volunteer basis. Crisoforo Gómez, owner of a boarding house, and one of the founders of the Blue Cross, often allowed Mexican nationals to stay in his house for free.59

Another entity based in Bingham, Unión y Patria (Unity and Nation) was created in 1927 by Jesús Avila, and introduced non-Hispanic miners to Mexican and Mexican American festivities and celebrations. In 1927 this society sponsored soirees in Bingham and Copperton to show the rest of the community the positive side of Mexican culture. Jesús Avila, one of the organization’s leaders, hoped other ethnic groups would view Mexican Americans not as “a bunch of revolutionaries” or strike breakers, but as heirs to a rich culture and heritage.60 Unión y Patria also sought to increase the miners’ level of education and organized a night school in the basement of the Copper Hotel. The escuela offered classes in Spanish, English, and Spanish literature. To advance their political objectives, Mexicans created the Sociedad Honorífica Mexicana, an organization sponsored by the Mexican consulate. Its goal was to protect the civil rights of Mexican nationals. Members met every Sunday, alternating sites between Highland Boy and Copperfield. Leaders of the Honorífica emphasized patriotism and made sure that the Mexican flag was prominently displayed. This theme was repeated in social activities, for example, on the 5th of May and 16th of September. The Honorífica always opened its celebrations with the Mexican national anthem, as a group of children dressed in red, white, and green carried the Mexican flag.61 One of the Honorífica’s principal achievements was the creation of a school, located on Main Street. Agustín Hernández and Salvador González taught Spanish language and literature at the school where Mexican children went in the evening after attending Copperfield schools. Mineros praised the Honorífica for providing their children with a bilingual and bicultural education, and for promoting multiculturalism among the miners.62

Mexican celebrations in Copperfield were more than mere merrymaking; they became educational tools. Members hoped their celebrations would unify Mexicans with others in the mining town. Unfortunately, the difficult economic circumstances during the Depression finally vanquished the Honorífica.
By the early 1930s, the group had only six active members, the majority of whom could not afford to pay their dues. Nonetheless, the informal associations and mutual-aid developed by the Mexican miners proved to be powerful instruments in the creation of ethnic ties and identification.

**The Intraethnic Struggle for Identity**

The influx of Hispanos from New Mexico and Colorado in the 1940s produced racial tension between Mexican miners and the newcomers. This internal ethnic dispute was caused by differences in language, group identification, and cultural practices. Mexicans showed little tolerance toward the newly arrivals because they identified themselves as “Spanish Americans.” This term was openly and bitterly contested because many from the “old country” argued that these “Spanish Americans” were really Mexicans. Jesús Aparicio commented, “I can tell you that all these people are wrong, people from New Mexico, Colorado, Arizona, and California. All that territory belonged to Mexico. All people from Mexico, from New Mexico, all people descended from the Spaniards, mainly because it was in Mexico where Cortez arrived.” Conversely, for a “Spanish American” to be called a “Mexican” was a grave insult, it was as if someone had used a “four letter word.”

New Mexicans used this term in order to reaffirm their perceived racial purity. By calling themselves “Spanish Americans” they “identify themselves with something very Spanish and not Indian at all.” This argument made no sense to Jesús and Agapito Castillo. The brothers argued that the Spanish conquistadores had acquired their wives in the New World and consequently the offspring produced were of mixed heritage. “People from New Mexico and Texas are all the same blood... To me it’s a big myth they’re trying to carry among themselves that they’re of noble blood, whatever that’s supposed to mean to them.” Regardless of what Hispanos thought, Mexicans did not consider them a people of “pure blood.” Although Mexicans tried to create a common bond with their New Mexican neighbors, most spurned the mexicano identity. For their part, Mexican miners knew that through their decades of hard work in Bingham they had won a modicum of respect from others in the mines. In Jesús Palacio’s words, “Some of us have proven ourselves just as good or a little better than some of them.”

Some Mexicans sought compromise on this issue. Such was the case for the
Castillo family, a Mexican family that lived in Texas prior to coming to Utah. The Castillos looked to establish friendly relationships with other Bingham Hispanics. As a concession, Agapito and Jesús Castillo coined a new identifier for themselves, “Mexican-Spanish.” “I speak the language, Spanish, yes, and for that reason (I) often put down on paper ‘Spanish.’ When one is asked what (one) speaks . . . you realize that you speak Spanish, you are a Mexican but you speak Spanish.”72 Contested identification impacted relations among adults and caused friction among Bingham’s Spanish-surnamed niños. Emilio Vázquez believed that the relationship between Hispanics and Mexicans would continue to fester. “It goes all the way down to—I mean—like the younger children, younger generation, they always still have this thing that they’re better than the other Mexicans from Old Mexico, and then when their kids are born, it’s still the same thing, the same thing follows. Cause I mean there’s no change.”73 Many Hispano children believed they had little, if anything, in common with Mexicans. “They really didn’t want to identify with Mexican, to them Mexican was a dirty word . . . and Spanish is supposed to be something elite.”74

The friction between these groups resulted in the use of names such as manitos, mateos, and surumatos. Mexicans called the people from New Mexico “manitos.” In return, New Mexicans called the Mexicanos “surumato” or “mateo.” These names and identifiers often created open warfare.75 As a fifteen-year-old, Eduviges Garcia learned the meaning of surumato when the copper mines closed and her family returned to Mexico. “We were moving back to Mexico, and they called ‘surumatos’ to all of us. And the girls would say let’s go and see the train of ‘surumatos.’”76 Interestingly, the same Hispanos from New Mexico and Colorado were not offended by the use of the term “manito.” As far as they were concerned, the term was not derogatory, but instead denoted friendship and affection. As Francis Yañez explained, “We used to say, ‘Somos Manitos,’ you know, they’re my brothers and sisters, and that’s how I remember that word.”77 Jesús and Agapita Castillo believed that the term manito was a very popular expression in New Mexico and it was used to “call each other hermanito (little brother), and from this came the word . . . manito.”78

Language was another source of tension. Some Mexicans (who could not speak English) claimed to be unable to understand the Spanish of the Hispanics. On the other hand, the New Mexicans often could not speak either English or the dialect of Spanish that the Mexicans could understand. Filomeno Ochoa, a
Mexican native and longtime resident of Bingham, recalled, “when I came from Mexico, I didn’t know how to ask for a glass of water in English. But most of these people from New Mexico they don’t speak English, nothing.” Mexicans went as far as claiming that the Hispanos had their own dialect and not a proper language. “The majority of them still speak that way since they have always lived in small towns and still use the same dialect that they have developed.” Mexican miners were proud of their attempts to learn English. Their desire for incorporation into mining town life motivated them. Francisco Solorio understood that his inability to speak English severely limited the possibilities of associating with other ethnic groups. “You know, I don’t speak (English) well at all, although I tried. You know, I’ve tried. But I thought, as long as I could understand what they were saying, this bothered me, until I did, so I tried to hurry and learn. But there’s still a lot of them that don’t speak the language. So they might be just isolated by themselves or something.” He added, “I have not yet met any of those who came from Old Mexico who could not speak English.”

A further element of differentiation was the celebrations and festivities of each group. Mexicans commemorated the 5th of May and the 16th of September with traditional dances, and Hispanics attendees often felt out of place. Emilio Vázquez, a Mexican miner, exaggerated this situation by saying Hispanics attended celebrations only to drink and disrupt the festivities. “All they want to do is fight.” Competition for jobs added more fuel to intraethnic struggles. Emilio Vázquez said New Mexicans sought to take jobs from Mexicans. “What the people from New Mexico and Colorado wanted were jobs, even if they were paid less than the normal wages.” This issue fostered bitter feelings among Mexicans who felt that newcomers accepted jobs for less pay.

Given the cultural and occupational differences, it appeared that Hispanics in Bingham would never unite, but two trends helped surmount differences. First, as the children of these miners reached their teenage years, they began to date each other. Ultimately, intraethnic marriages took place. These unions helped foster acceptance. Jesús Palacio recalled, “You see, I was brought up with the belief from my parents that us type (sic) of Mexicans from over there were so much different from these here, and that our culture and everything was a lot better than theirs. But as I grew up I found out different. There is no difference.”

The second event that pushed unification was a shared distrust of the latest Spanish-speakers to arrive: Puerto Ricans. The misunderstanding and prejudice
that had created cleavages between Mexicans and Hispanos subsided with the arrival of the islanderos in 1943.\(^{85}\) The established Spanish-surnamed groups now focused their ill feelings and hostility toward these new immigrants.

**Increasing Complexity of Intraethnic Relations**

The outbreak of World War II caused a severe labor shortage for Utah's industrial enterprises. One response by Kennecott officials was to go to Puerto Rico and entice workers to replace the mineros who had enlisted in the army.\(^{86}\) Puerto Ricans were recruited, in part, because Kennecott wanted to hire U.S. citizens. Once candidates passed a physical examination, they were sent to Miami, where the Puerto Ricans boarded a train bound for Bingham. The first group consisted of about 100 recruits. Some took up residence in the Bingham Hotel, others were sent to Highland Boy and Copperfield. Accommodations were Spartan and three individuals often shared one room. When Puerto Ricans arrived, they saw only hills around them. Gerardo Meléndez, one of the first to arrive, exclaimed “What are we going to do here?” This was a logical question since the islanderos did not have any mining experience. As was the case with the Mexicans and Hispanos before them, the islanders found themselves on track gangs, drilling, blasting, and working underground. Within a week, the majority of Puerto Ricans left Kennecott. They abhorred the working conditions and the absence of cultural markers. The turnover rate for a second group of 100 mirrored that of the first—only ten stayed. According to Edith Meléndez, Puerto Ricans stayed just long enough to earn railroad vouchers with which to leave: “They didn’t like it here, they hated it.”\(^{87}\) For those who stayed, survival was the primary goal. Without families, and working in an alien environment, many Puerto Ricans gravitated toward beer joints, pool halls, and baseball fields. “There was nothing to do in Bingham,” remembered Gerardo Meléndez. The fact that nobody had a car kept them from traveling to Salt Lake City, which in turn, increased their feelings of isolation.\(^{88}\)

The few Puerto Ricans in Utah seemed to get along with the Japanese, Greeks, Italians, and Native Americans. Initially, they did not notice any differences between Bingham’s Hispanos and Mexicans. As far as most islanderos were concerned, all Spanish-speakers shared the same language and professed the Catholic faith.\(^{89}\) Briefly, it seemed as if intraethnic harmony would prevail. But not all perceived the situation in the same way. Harold Nielsen believed
that tensions among Puerto Ricans and other groups began almost immediately. In addition to their physical appearance, Puerto Ricans spoke Spanish differently and had different cultural practices. Fights occurred regularly at dances when Mexican girls refused to dance with the Puerto Ricans, or when a Mexican teenager danced with a Puerto Rican. Even the clothing worn by Puerto Ricans caused controversy. “Their clothing is mainly of the tropical style, usually all their dresses are white and with pictures of coconut trees embroidered in the cloth . . . their shoes were mainly white,” said Gerardo Meléndez.90

By the mid 1940s, Mexicans and Hispanos distanced themselves from the islanderos. Socioeconomic status and religious differences also worked to strengthen cleavages. Some Spanish speakers, who had been in Bingham since the 1920s had acquired small amounts of real estate, moved into higher paying positions, and even started small businesses. Higher-paying jobs such as foreman, brakeman and driver were primarily awarded according to length of service. Therefore, a clear occupational hierarchy separated veterans and newcomers. Many residents also viewed islanders as threats to their community and daughters. In spite of shared characteristics, many regarded Puerto Ricans as foreigners and as blacks. Even the Mexican consul, Carlos Grimm, supported this assertion when he stated that, “Spanish blood did not diffuse through Puerto Rico. During the early slave trading days Negro blood was mixed with that of the Puerto Ricans.”91 This “Negro issue” became a key concern among Hispanics because of some theological beliefs of the Mormon religion.

Religious Influences on Minero Life
The theology of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) asserts that Native Americans and mestizos are part of a people known as Lamanites. This belief grants mestizos (and therefore Mexicans and Mexican Americans) certain benefits since the Mormons’ intention is to redeem this group. Silas Lobato, a miner and convert, asserts that “the LDS religion looks upon the people of Spanish origin or Indian origin, as very . . . you know, even favorably. And they took me under their wing and I was pretty well set with them.”92 Part of the appeal came from LDS texts that explained the origin of the Indian and mestizos. According to Mormon theology, the Lamanites were part of a lost tribe of Israel that came to the Americas in ancient times. The Book of Mormon identifies Lamanites as a group of people that rejected the teachings
of Lehi and were cursed by God with a dark skin. Although they embraced dark-skinned mestizos, Mormons did distinguish between brown and black-skinned individuals before 1978. The descendants of Lamanites could join the church and brown-skinned males were allowed membership in the priesthood. Black persons could join, but males could not perform priestly duties. This drove another wedge between the Spanish speakers of Bingham. Since Puerto Ricans were darker than the rest of the area's Hispanics, LDS converts often discriminated against them.

Before 1920, the influence of the Mormon church on mineros was slight. A Mormon congregation, the *Rama Mexicana* (Mexican branch) commenced operation in Salt Lake City during the early 1920s. The distance between the city and canyon limited proselytizing among the mineros and most Spanish-surnamed persons in Bingham remained at least nominally Catholic. "You could just about count (on) your fingers those who weren't Catholic." Besides Catholics, there were a few Methodists among the mineros, and Mexican children had some contact with Mormons, mainly through their interaction with their school mates and teachers. Some Mexican Catholic miners considered the Mormons to be "nice fellows," and not much different from people of other denominations. Active proselytizing targeting Spanish speakers in Bingham began in 1922, and many of the individuals and families graciously welcomed LDS missionaries to their homes. Still, only a small number were willing to give up their Catholic beliefs. "My parents raised me as a Catholic so every time they came over, I'd treat them nice, yes, but I was a Catholic and didn't want to change . . . I told them right out that I wouldn't change my religion." During the 1920s several mineros did convert. Perhaps some adopted Mormonism because of the material support provided by the church. In Crisoforo Gómez's case, the LDS church paid for the funerals of his wife and mother. This generosity caused him to declare that: "There is no better church than the Mormon one." One of the demands of his new faith was to convert others. A few months after his conversion, Crisoforo was sent to Ogden (about 50 miles north of Salt Lake City) to proselytize among railroad workers. His loyalty and works earned him the status of elder, which meant he could baptize converts. But his faith was not strongly rooted. Crisoforo eventually abandoned the church because he married Petra Gómez, a young Catholic woman from Mexico. Gómez said that Mormon officials disapproved of his wedding, and he had no
other alternative but to come back to Catholicism. Several years after his conversion to the LDS church, Crisoforo was once again a practicing Catholic, and an active member in the Guadalupe Center in Salt Lake City.

During the 1920s and 1930s the majority of Mexicans lived in Highland Boy and Dinkeyville—towns without Catholic facilities. For recreational activities youths attended the local Methodist Community House, which contained both a library and gymnasium. The Methodist Church in Bingham was better organized and provided more services than the Catholic Church (the Salt Lake Catholic Diocese did not establish a mission to minister specifically to Spanish speakers until 1927). Hispanic Catholics found no discrimination among the Methodists and often attended their services and programs. In spite of the hospitality, they felt pressure to convert. Katherine Chávez, a miner’s daughter, commented “Of course, they were trying to get us . . . One of the deaconess wanted to send me to one of their training schools. I didn’t realize how serious she was getting until she suggested it . . . she said that I could get into one of the training schools and . . . I told her I couldn’t . . . I just couldn’t. I didn’t feel that I wanted to change my faith.”

The first Catholic priest who attended to the spiritual needs of Bingham’s Spanish-surnamed population was Father Leahy. He was followed by the Catechists and, finally, Franciscan nuns and priests. Community members seemed to prefer Franciscans because they were more educated and stayed with the community for longer periods of time. Franciscan nuns taught catechism, organized summer schools, worked with the children, and supported the tradition of compadrazgo through the celebration of baptism, confirmation, and communion. By the mid-1930s, Hispanics in Bingham enjoyed a broad range of religious and social activities sponsored by the Catholic Church, both in the canyon (at the Church of the Holy Rosary in Bingham) as well as at Our Lady of Guadalupe Mission on the west side of Salt Lake City.

Although there were tensions between Spanish-surnamed Mormons and Catholics, shared economic difficulties in the 1930s helped create some unity. When Cosme Chacón’s child died, he requested a Catholic priest to celebrate a funeral mass and to officiate at the burial. When a priest could not attend, a Mormon bishop paid for the funeral and stayed with the family for prayer and support. Based on this action Chacón believed that, in some aspects, Mormons were more charitable and “Christian” than Catholics. For Chacón, the His-
panic people who criticized the LDS Church were ignorant and ungrateful. “People should love people who practice justice, it does not matter if they are Mormons or from other religions.” Religious identification and affiliation were not rigid among Bingham’s Spanish speakers. Ellen Cordova, for example, was raised Mormon, but married her husband, Alfredo, in a Catholic church. Some Catholic priests approved of these mixed religious marriages. “The priest told us that if we wanted to have it blessed in the Catholic Church you could do so without becoming a Catholic, which we did. But then I became a Catholic. After Mr. Cordova died, I was baptized because of my (six) children; they are all Catholics.” After her children grew up, Ellen left the Catholic Church and returned to her childhood faith.

Conclusions
The history of Utah’s mineros is intertwined with the state’s economic development. In fact, what some termed the “late presence of Chicanos in Utah,” is a reflection of the late incorporation of Utah’s economy into national and global markets. Conditions for Hispanics were shaped by many of the same forces that affected their brethren throughout the West and Southwest. Even if the majority of mineros did not greatly improve their economic status as a result of their labor, their contributions to Utah are manifested in the transformation of race relations.

Initially, the identity of Hispanics in Utah was forged by the stereotypes created, in part, through the Rafael López incident. Between 1912 and 1945, however, their identity was externally defined by Salt Lake City newspapers, which portrayed this community mainly through its celebrations and interactions with Mexico. Mineros became visible to the press only on May 5th and September 16th. Particularly during the World War II era, details of Mexican festivities were reported in the Salt Lake Tribune; editorials depicted these celebrations in very positive, even glowing terms. Mexico was portrayed as a sister democracy doing her share to aid the United States in its war against fascist foes. But in spite of these positive images, neither the Salt Lake Tribune nor the Deseret News considered these people citizens. The events were exclusively classified as “Mexican celebrations.” Newspaper articles also did not recognize the intraethnic diversity among the Spanish-speaking groups in the mines. The intention was to unify disparate groups for the common war effort. Local newspa-
pers dissolved class and ethnic distinctions in an appeal for equality and homogeneity.

Utah Hispanics, however, hotly contested definitions of identity between 1912 and 1945. At the beginning of this period, most of the mineros in Bingham based ties on nationalistic premises, and Mexico was the center of their culture. They used symbols such as the Mexican flag and relied almost exclusively on the Mexican consul and the honoríficas. But between 1912 and 1945, Mexican miners in Utah learned, negotiated, and assimilated into a new social and political environment. Additionally, they were forced to deal and associate with other Spanish-speaking people. A shared language was not enough to create a single identity among Mexicans, Mexican Americans, Hispanos, and Puerto Ricans. Cultural traits such as dress, language patterns, and eating habits separated one group from the other. During the Second World War, the arrival of large numbers of New Mexicans or Hispanos in Bingham caused much trepidation among the established Mexican miners. Although there were tensions between the two groups, social connections were eventually made.

The issue of identity among Spanish-speaking people in Utah was shaped not only by economic circumstances and the interaction of the various ethnic groups, but religious beliefs as well. The Spanish-surnamed miners who came to Bingham found that the area lacked a well-developed Catholic infrastructure on which to reaffirm their identity. Instead, they found a state heavily influenced by Mormons who perceived Catholicism, in the words of one LDS writer, as "an example of the wrong manner of carrying forward the work of the Lord." To practice their faith, Catholic miners in Bingham needed to build churches, maintain a clergy, and pay for teachers—things they could not afford. In many ways, Catholicism in Bingham was left to individual expression, and never became a public manifestation of faith.

The contributions of mineros to the development of Utah's economy are undeniable. As important cogs in the state's economic infrastructure, they created a variety of institutions that helped transform race relations and the perception of people of color. These achievements were the result of a process of
community formation even in the face of internal and external pressures. These forces produced a heterogenous Hispanic community which was (and still is) segmented by lines of language, culture, religion, and nationality. While this diversity might be interpreted as a lack of cohesion, it can also be viewed as a reflection of a society that can coexist in spite of significant internal differences. Certainly, Utah changed once mineros left the mines and moved to other communities in the Beehive State. During the last half of the 1900s their sons and daughters became railroad workers, sugar beet planters, and migrant workers. Eventually, many became professionals, teachers, political leaders, and business owners who, during the last decades of the twentieth century, helped provide some of the impetus for a social, racial, and political transformation in the state of Utah.

NOTES


Salt Lake Mining Review. October, 1912.


Mexican strikebreakers were not recruited through Mexican officials or patrones, but by E.D. Hashimoto, a Japanese contractor who maintained close connections with nonwhite workers in Mexico. Interestingly, after the strike of 1912, the power of Leonidas Skliris, the Greek padrone, was broken, and he traveled to Mexico where he became the owner of several mining enterprises. See, Helen Papanikolas. Op. cit. 1965. p. 306.

Salt Lake Mining Review. October, 1912.


Ibid.


Ibid., pp. 163-164.


58 By 1925 a stable Mexican community started emerging in Bingham. As in other areas of the Southwest, the Mexicans who decided to remain in Utah continued traveling to Mexico on a yearly basis. One reason for these visitations were to maintain contact with their families and to provide them with financial assistance.

68 Ibid., p. 29.
Kennecott official recruited Puerto Ricans through radio ads. After filling their application in the employment office, Puerto Ricans were physically examined, and if in good condition, they signed a contract for six months. Puerto Ricans were guaranteed a salary of $4.15 per day and all transportation expenses were covered by Kennecott. See, Gerardo Meléndez. Op. cit. 1973. pp. 4-5.


This statement and other similar one can be found in Harold Nielsen. Op. cit. p. 89.


The Book of Mormon. 2 Nephi 5:20-21.


EL LABERINTO DE LA COMUNIDAD:
A VIEW OF RURAL MEXICO

John Hardisty

This is not the most traditional anthropology report. It will not cite prolific authors. Instead, it will cite everyday people going about their lives in an isolated pueblo in central Mexico. It tells how an American journeyed to another country to study its people and ended up learning about his neighbors at home.

In the summer of 1999, I conducted field research for Gaspar Real Cabello, an anthropology professor at the Universidad Autónoma de Querétaro in central Mexico, who is studying the socio-economic impacts of multinational companies establishing production plants in rural Mexico. A room Real provided in the Querétaro home he shares with his wife and their two young children became my home base, where I returned one day a week. The remainder of the time, I lived with the family of Don Marcial Iberra Cruz, the elected delegado, or mayor, of La Peñuela, a small, isolated community 45 minutes north of Querétaro by bus. The Texas-based poultry conglomerate, Pilgrim’s Pride, had established a large hatchery in La Peñuela and entered into “partnerships” with most of the local poultry producers.

The arrival of companies, such as Pilgrim’s Pride, has significantly changed the economic, cultural and social landscape of rural Mexico. For Real, La Peñuela was a laboratory to study these changes. For me, it became home. My assignment was straightforward: map the community, and observe and interview its residents. Real’s goal was to teach me the techniques of field research. In return, I was to bring him back information for his doctoral thesis in industrial anthropology—specifically the impacts of globalization.

Sounded simple enough, but regrettably my language skills were those achieved during four inattentive years in high school. And at 6 feet 4 inches, I was the tallest person in the community, the only American and the only person who spoke English. I was as out of place in La Peñuela as one could ever hope to be.
When I arrived, my rusty Spanish limited the conversations that would eventually provide the most insights. But I was determined. Early interviews went slowly. Someone would make a statement, then I would ask five minutes of questions, making sure I understood their meaning. As time progressed, so did my Spanish and the interviews improved. I forced myself to become intrepid, outgoing. When I approached strangers or groups and introduced myself, I was usually well received and able to keep the conversations flowing. Once people in town realized I could speak and understand a tolerable amount of Spanish, the jokes and outlandish stories also flowed, requiring me to develop a sensitive “filter” to sort out the good-natured exaggeration. Soon the residents accepted my note writing and incessant questioning as my job. And they seemed to appreciate my interest in their community. Don Nico, who, at 74 years of age, spent his days clearing rocks from the community’s road, was especially encouraging, urging me to take good notes because he wanted Americans to get an accurate depiction of La Peñuela.

When I concluded my study of the community, I discovered my notes contained more than just observations of La Peñuela. They were filled with insights into my native California, where all my life I have seen Mexican immigrants working the large fields of cotton, vegetables and fruit. I have eaten in Mexican restaurants and listened to the cooks talking in fast-paced Spanish. I have shopped in markets where I seemed to be the only non-Latino, the only one not speaking Spanish. Not until I lived in La Peñuela, however, did I begin to understand the world they came from and how very different it must be for them to live in California.

La Peñuela
The foothills at the southern end of the Colón Valley form the backdrop for La Peñuela, a community, or pueblito, of about 2,500 people. Its nearest urban neighbor is Querétaro, which is a three-hour bus ride north from Mexico City. Because of its secluded location, residents rarely see outside visitors.

Looking down on the Colón Valley from a foothill ridge, the tree-filled terrain appears to be lush and green. But upon closer inspection, the ground is rocky, brown and unforgiving. The semi-arid valley receives no rain nine months of the year. It is a hot and dusty farming region, the soil of which is dense with granite and obsidian rocks. The valley is filled with small communities like La
Peñuela, where most families have lived for generations, struggling to make a living from the soil, from the few businesses and jobs in town, or in Querétaro. Because of its location three kilometers off the main highway and bus route, La Peñuela is more isolated than other towns.

An outsider will find in La Peñuela most of the amenities expected in other small towns, but they are in short supply. La Peñuela has telephone service, but only one telephone. There is gas for cooking, and electricity for lights, television, stereos and refrigerators, which many people own. But some residents are without these conveniences, relying on the desert to provide their food and fuel. A municipal system provides water for residents, but irrigation for crops must come from the sky. The monotonous flat landscape of farmland and one-story buildings is interrupted occasionally by a two-story building, church steeples and powerline poles. Dominating the community’s appearance is a maze of walled streets that hide residential lots. The doors through these walls are the only indication that there is a home on the other side. The streets, primarily dirt and rock, become torrents of water and rubble when the summer rainy season begins in June and roars through the community for three months.

The small government presence, which is led by the elected delegado, responds to the presidente in the county seat of Colón. The presidente responds to the governor of Querétaro. And so on up the line to the national government. A focus of the delegado’s energies is improving streets to control the annual flooding. While the delegado also mediates disputes between residents in La Peñuela, police officers are the more traditional enforcers of the law. Several times a day three uniformed officers squeeze into the cab of a new Chevrolet pickup truck and drive through town. Their last patrol is around 9:30 p.m.

The predominantly Catholic community has three churches—the main church in the town center, a smaller church located next to a school, and a shrine. La Peñuela has its assortment of tiendas, or convenience stores, bakeries that make pan and tortillas, stores that roast meats, and maintenance shops. To an outsider, La Peñuela’s comforts seem meager at best. When I first arrived, I was perplexed: Why would these people want to live in such a secluded, dusty, inconvenient little pueblo? I assumed they could not afford to live elsewhere. Weeks of living in La Peñuela enlightened me. My initial impressions and doubts were products of my culture and ideas of comfort and quality of life. Only after I lived in La Peñuela did I understand how different it was—but not necessarily
better—to live in California.

A reservoir that sits atop a nearby ridge is a favorite place for La Peñuela’s kids to smoke and talk. From this vantage point, many see their whole world spread out before them. Some will move to Querétaro or farther away. But most will spend their entire lives in La Peñuela. I only met one person who had traveled to the U.S. and returned. With the exception of the resident truck drivers, few people had traveled outside the Valley of Colón or farther than Querétaro. In La Peñuela, it is likely a person will die within a block of where he is born.

While there are divisions in the town—primarily created by neighborhood boundaries or barrios—there is a strong sense of community and generational responsibility. Neighbors have known each other all of their lives. Most people buy houses down the street from the ones in which they were reared. Everyone is connected by some type of history. Everyone seems willing to help out in times of trouble. Many residents distrust and fear the outside. Reports of crime—including kidnappings and robberies—in Mexico’s larger cities reinforce their resolve not to leave home. When I asked people why they stayed in La Peñuela, the common response was: “Muy tranquillo.” The secure and tranquil streets, the comfort of knowing your neighbors, and the support of close-knit families kept them rooted.

**The Rhythm of the Pueblo**

Life in La Peñuela did not have a fixed routine. It had a rhythm. During the day, the streets were mostly empty. Many people commuted to work, while mothers and children remained in their houses cleaning, cooking and washing clothes. Before the rains began, I would sit on the bench in front of Don Marcial’s tienda at midday writing my observations. Occasionally, a young child would dart from house to house trying to avoid the blistering heat. Protecting their heads with a thin fabric, a few women would make their way to the store to buy a bottle of Coke or other necessities. Young boys on bicycles would drop by to exchange their fathers’ empty beer bottles. When school was in session, children filled the streets as classes changed between 1:00 and 2:00 p.m. It was common to see a young boy riding a burro with a load of hay on its back. Always present on the streets were the groups of ragged-looking men sharing a container of pulque, a home brew. Around midday, men and women who had been working in the fields or picking berries returned home for comida, or lunch.
Trucks delivering Coke, gas, chickens, eggs, candy, pork, Pepsi and other commodities provided most of the daytime activity. They belonged to middle men who made stops at the tiendas. Vendor trucks sagging under the weight of fresh fruits, plants, and other merchandise traveled the streets, using cab-top speakers to call customers out of their houses. The only other daytime noises came from the conversations of construction workers and the sound of tools pushing up new buildings.

Real change came after 5:00 p.m., when people returned from their jobs in the fields, in the Pilgrim's Pride hatchery, in the nearby factories, or in Querétaro. As trucks, cars and the public bus delivered workers to their homes, the air filled with the sounds of stereos pumping out music. Some people showered, ate, watched television, and then went to bed. Others joined in the nightly fútbol (soccer) games that began around 6:30 and lasted until nightfall. At 8:30, darkness set in and the yellow street lights began to glow. The night streets filled with people walking with their friends, spouses and children. Couples sat in doorways or secluded shadows. Men huddled in groups on benches and street corners playing card games and drinking. Groups of young kids roamed the streets. The county police truck patrolled for a short time. The half-dozen tiendas scattered around the neighborhoods were alive with customers and video game players. By 11:00 the stores closed and people returned to their houses. At midnight, the only ones still on the streets were a few love-struck teenagers and the borrachos, or drunks, who never seemed to leave their uncomfortable beds of rock and dirt.

Because Sunday was the only day of the week most people did not have to work, on Saturday evenings the streets were filled with people. Don Marcial's tiendas displayed special foods for sale. Out front, he roasted elotes, or raw corn, covered in salt, lime and chili powder, which he sold for three pesos apiece. People packed into an adjoining room to eat and watch movies on a 19-inch television set. Saturday nights were for festivities, drinking, and unwinding from a six-day work week. The unwinding did not end until after midnight.

On Sundays, nearly everyone was home from work. People dressed in nicer clothes. Mass was said in the morning and evening. And at midday, the fútbol games began. Stores were open all day selling enchiladas, tamales, tacos and other food. The streets filled with people walking from house to house, shop to shop, or to the campo de fútbol. For many, drinking started early and ended
late. The evenings were festive. Sunday nights ended earlier with the approaching work week, when the rhythm repeated.

Adapting to Life in La Peñuela

It is not possible to be a “fly on the wall” or invisible observer when you are an outsider in La Peñuela. At times, I became the center of attention, and at others I was not even acknowledged. The longer I stayed in the community, the more my presence was accepted.

Initially, I became angry and frustrated when my presence affected the activities of others. I wanted to watch the community as you would a glass ant farm and document every movement within. But I soon learned that this would not be possible. I faced the reality of my situation in a crowded Catholic church on my first Sunday night in town. I was eager to document the activities of the priest and the people, as well as the ritual of the mass. But when I gave up my seat in a middle pew to an older woman standing in the aisle next to me, my simple movement of standing up halted the mass and drew all attention away from the priest. I was heartbroken. A sea of heads were all staring at the tall stranger who had invaded their sanctuary. Even the priest stopped talking for a moment. Trying to ignore the reaction, I swallowed a mouthful of dry spit and stood there sweating for the next 45 minutes as the mass continued. From that moment, I realized I could never blend in with these people. My observations always would be influenced by their reactions to my presence.

Not all of my impacts were accidental. Realizing there was no way to avoid being part of the community, I decided to leave my mark. One way was to join in the nightly card games. The men taught me to play their games of Briska and Con Quién. I gave Blackjack lessons. I brought to La Peñuela the ability to draw portraits of people, which I gave away as gifts. My drawing sessions attracted crowds entertained by watching the portraits take shape.

My presence provoked two common curiosities: How much money did I have and why was I there? It took me weeks to convince people I was a starving student from California being paid for my summer’s research with the knowledge gained from the experience. Satisfied with this explanation, most people seemed pleased that an American wanted to learn their language and way of life. My adaption to La Peñuela was as challenging and awkward as was its adaptation to me. For example, the bathroom was different. Located in the
corner of a gray, cement box of a room was the toilet, which was similar to the ones I had used for about two decades. But it lacked a seat, was usually wet and required priming with a bucket of water to flush. The bathroom lacked a shower or bath tub. There was only a hole in the cement floor. You bathed by first filling a bucket with cold water. Standing in the middle of the room, you scooped out a cup of water from the bucket, poured it over your shivering naked body and soaped up. You rinsed by dumping the remainder of the bucket on your head while you screamed.

The most common adjustment outsiders have to make to Mexico is to the food and the digestion problems it can cause. You are advised when you leave for Mexico not to drink the water or eat suspicious food. It is impossible advice to follow when living in a rural community. On several occasions, I was destroyed by stomach problems. I explained to my hosts that my constitution was not quite as strong as theirs. Roadside chicken tacos, an excess consumption of chilies and platters dripping with grease caused me to wonder if my stomach would ever recover. Strangely enough, the water in the community had little or no effect on me. After some weight loss and the development of a close relationship with the four-foot-tall crucified Jesus in my room, I recovered from my bouts of indigestion and was able to eat most foods. Gradually, I adjusted to life in the pueblo. I grew independent, cooking some of my own meals and making my own connections. I had gained a sense of home in this community even though I was its most unlikely resident.

**Don Marcial’s Family**

Don Marcial Iberra Cruz is the dark-skinned, small-statured, 42-year-old father of the family that gave me food and shelter during my summer in La Peñuela. For $200 pesos ($20 US) a week, I was fed and given a stark bedroom in the family’s two-story house behind one of their two stores. A generous man, Don Marcial would have allowed me to stay in his house for free. But I insisted on paying, prompting a weekly ceremony of him refusing the money and me pushing it into his hand.

Twenty-one years earlier, Don Marcial had married María Rosario Pajaro Herrera. Roughly the same age as her husband, she is a commanding woman with pale skin and a deep voice that can whip out orders to her children with powerful authority. Their eldest child, Gilberto Iberra Herrera, 21, is married
and works for Pilgrim’s Pride. Next in line is Francisco, 19, who lives at home, but has a full-time job delivering candy in Querétaro. The eldest daughter is Juvencia, 18, who ended her education after completing secondaria, which is equivalent to junior high school and the first two years of high school. She works at home and in the family business. Struggling through classes in preparatoria, or the upper grades of high school, is Susana, 17. Her tall and skinny brother, Eloy, 14, is just starting secondaria. Chubby Roberto, 11, is in primeria, or elementary school. The two youngest children are Alejandra, 8, who is in primeria, and Carlos, 3. Josefina Iberra Herrera’s presence in the house is a framed birth certificate cluttered with all of the children’s pictures, including hers. Born on July 9, 1986, with a heart defect, she died a few days later.

The most peculiar feature of the house in which I lived was that I was its oldest inhabitant. Don Marcial and María Rosario did not sleep in the main house. María Rosario usually worked in the other, smaller tienda located blocks away. When Don Marcial was not off shopping for products to sell in nearby cities, he would man the front counter of the main store. At the end of the day, I noticed neither parent ate dinner or slept in the house behind the main tienda where I lived. At first I feared I had displaced the gracious couple. I soon learned the mother had moved out because the children’s incessant racket gave
her severe headaches. After a few weeks of listening to screaming adolescents and deafening music, I began to wonder if I should also move my cot to the other store.

The Iberras shared many of the characteristics of others in La Peñuela—hard work, love of family, feeling of community. However, Don Marcial's responsibilities as the delegado set them apart. When he was not on business trips, he spent his days working around the house and in the tienda. His obligations as delegado consumed his free time—mostly evenings.

Each month, Don Marcial, María Rosario and Carlos would travel to the office of the presidente in Colón, where he would deliver a status report on La Peñuela, including updates on government projects. Don Marcial's obligations went beyond compiling this monthly report. Typical of his service was the evening I returned home from a walk to find him conferring with a group of people in the dining room, mediating the sale of property. Lasting far into the night, the mediation concluded with Don Marcial's approving signature. A few nights later, he handled the repercussions of a fight between two drunken girls and counseled a couple feuding with neighbors, whom the wife had cursed—behavior prohibited by the town's constitution. Also that evening, he wrote recommendations for four youths applying for factory jobs.

Maintaining two households, operating two businesses and serving his community resulted in very long days for Don Marcial. At 11:00 p.m., the steel door of the tienda finally would be dragged shut and his 15-hour work day would end. Before heading to the other store he would drink a cup of atolé, or hot chocolate, with his children and eat some pan dulce, or sweet bread. It was a time of random conversations and unwinding. Susana usually sat outside with her boyfriend, Hector, for an hour, or until heckling from inside of the house brought her in. Within the house, some watched a movie on the VCR and others played dominos. There was no set time to go to bed, although everyone generally was asleep by 12:30 a.m. The sound of the stereo lulled this house full of children to sleep.

Life for Juvencia
The family's eldest daughter, 18-year-old Juvencia, shouldered much of the household work and held the matriarchal position in the house. Her two primary jobs were staffing and cleaning the main tienda and cooking for the fam-
ily. These are jobs she had been performing since she was 10 years old. Many times, Juve (pronounced who-vay) combined her responsibilities by cooking and serving food from a room attached to the tienda, where she was able to watch for customers. Meals were made from the most basic of ingredients and cooked on a gas-burning stove—when gas was available. Food came from the tienda’s stock, was harvested from the family garden, and bought from neighbors and other stores. The family usually ate in shifts, with Juve making sure everyone had enough. She was always the last to eat. The only occasion when I observed the whole family eating together was at Juve’s birthday party, an event I doubted would ever happen. Celebrated nearly a week after her birthday, it was rescheduled three times. When the fiesta night finally arrived, it was celebrated around a table in the courtyard with a giant roasted chicken and platters of frijoles, rice and guacamole. Although Juve was allowed to eat first, she ended up cleaning the dishes when the celebration was over.

Juve’s other job was helping to run the business. She memorized stock prices, knew what needed to be replaced better than her father, and could accurately guess the weights of fruits and vegetables before customers put them on the scale. A drawer filled with loose bills and a bucket of change was her cash register. When she was not making a sale or cooking a meal, she would be mopping the

*Don Marcial Iberra Cruz and his daughter, Juvenicia, staff their store.*
floor, repairing the video game, or reading a risqué romance novel, which she kept hidden under the front counter.

It was not surprising to learn that Juve found La Peñuela boring and longed to move to Querétaro. With an education only spanning the secondaria, and a shaky engagement to a truck driver who seemed satisfied to live in La Peñuela, the odds of her leaving were slim. But she found some enjoyment in spending time with her boyfriend and listening to the popular English lyrics of John Lennon.

The most industrious of the three girls was eight-year-old Alejandra, who had the daunting task of washing and drying all of the family's clothes and cleaning the inside of the house. I was amazed at this child's capacity to work. A typical bag of laundry was more than half her size. The house was always spotless and perfectly organized. Every day, Alejandra would bathe her three-year-old brother only to watch him moments later run screaming into the dusty street. Carlos was a holy terror with a sling shot and would try to wrestle anyone who crossed his path. He was skilled at convincing adults to lift him up so he could kick them in the groin or face. His nickname was niño peligro (dangerous child).

The Youth of La Peñuela

Hot-blooded relationships, liberation from traditional cultural restrictions, and a changing view of pre-marital relationships have lead to an increase in teenage pregnancy. It was only after I had been living in the community for several weeks that I broached the subject with Juve. I had returned to the tienda after a long walk in the foothills and was relaxing with a cold Fanta. One thing led to another in our conversation, and we landed on the topic of sex and teenage pregnancy. This was a hushed conversation, with Juve continually checking to see if anyone was coming into the tienda.

She explained that 18-year-old Juana, a neighbor down the street, is married and has a one-year-old child. A 14-year-old mother also lived in La Peñuela with her 16-year-old husband. Alejandro, a lively man in his late 20s who frequented the tienda, has an 18-year-old wife he married four years ago when he got her pregnant. I asked about the use of condoms or other forms of contraception. She told me none of the stores would sell them and there was no pharmacy nearby.

I asked Don Marcial what he thought about the teen-age pregnancy prob-
lem. He immediately corrected me, saying it was only a problem if the couple
did not get married. As long as the boy did the "right thing," there was no
problem. Don Marcial attributed increased teen-age pregnancy to the liberation of teenagers—their roaming the streets at night and having girlfriends and boyfriends. It was much stricter when he was younger. He and his brothers
married when they were in their early 20s and had children shortly thereafter.

A secluded community that rarely sees an outsider, La Peñuela managed to
maintain the old values and strict cultural restrictions until recent years. As the
community is experiencing the effects of a globalized economy—with a multi-
national corporation's chicken hatcheries now casting a shadow over the town,
and products, such as Coke and Pepsi, becoming mainstays on dinner tables—
the influx of outside information is affecting local culture. Radios, televisions,
satellites and VCRs connect La Peñuela to the rest of the world. News of Bill
Clinton's scandal with Monica Lewinsky was as current in La Peñuela as it was
in the United States. There may be only one telephone to talk to people in the
outside world, but the community and its children are watching the world
change and are changing with it.

Backyard Secrets
The streets of La Peñuela have the appearance of corridors of interlocking walls.
The only indication of the enclosed residences are the steel doors that break the
continuity of the walls.

One afternoon midway through my stay in La Peñuela, sweat was pouring
from me as I used a crowbar to break the hard-packed surface of dirt in Don
Marcial's backyard. Earlier, we had cleared away the rocks and trash in prepara-
tion for installing a carpet of grass. Potted plants had already been scattered
about by his children. Within a few days, the yard was a flourishing garden. I
became curious why he hid this beauty behind walls and away from the eyes of outsiders.

Don Marcial's property is enclosed on three sides by a tall cinderblock wall.
From the outside, all that can be seen is the wall's gray, dingy face and a rusted,
double-door gate that sags on its hinges. The store forms the fourth wall and
completes the barrier. Inside the store, the lighting is low and the tiled floor has
been scuffed by more than a decade of foot traffic. In one corner, flies buzz
around fruit. A beat-up video game provides background noise. Holes in the
The streets have the appearance of corridors of interlocking walls.

corrugated iron roof shoot beams of sunlight onto the gouged, wooden counter. From the facades of the cinderblock wall and the tienda, a stranger would never guess that an immaculate living space is hidden inside. Don Marcial’s house is a collection of arches and tiles that reflect like mirrors. The yard is an oasis.

Don Marcial is not the only one hiding secrets behind high walls and ugly gates. La Peñuela’s walls hide affluent homes and valuables. They also hide poverty. The walls served to level the playing field, making it difficult to tell who have the most extravagant homes and possessions. The same modesty was reflected in people’s dress. Most rarely dressed up unless for a fiesta or official ceremony. At these events, almost anyone can be mistaken for a rancher or someone from the city. Possessions had walls as well. My host family had a large stereo system they moved from room to room. When it was taken to the tienda, dirty rags were used to cover the speakers and electronic system. It was not being hidden from thieves. Rather, the family was modest about owning such valuables.

Globalization and Its Impact
Shortly after my arrival in La Peñuela, I hiked into the nearby foothills. From the edge of the highest cliff, the view was breathtaking: the entire valley spread
out below, with Querétaro in the hazy distance. The ornate government build-
ings in Colón could be seen in the other direction. Directly below, sun reflected
off the white paint and aluminum roofs of long, box-like structures that ap-
peared to be giant fluorescent light tubes illuminating the stark valley floor. The
structures formed the Pilgrim's Pride hatchery—my reason for being in La Peñuela.

The controversy that continues to swirl around the North American Free
Trade Agreement and the Mexican government’s willingness to open its bor-
ders to foreign investors leaves most Americans with the impression that Mexico
and Mexicans are reaping great rewards from these arrangements. A few years
ago, Reform Party presidential candidate Ross Perot rallied Americans with his
cry to hear the “giant sucking sound” at the Mexican border as U.S. jobs flowed
south with NAFTA. More recently, the World Trade Organization summit in
Seattle was disrupted by demonstrators, some contending U.S. trade agree-
ments favored foreign countries at the expense of American workers.

In fact, the results in Mexico have been mixed. Impacts on the culture,
economy and quality of life in rural communities have been both good and
bad. La Peñuela’s relationship with Pilgrim’s Pride demonstrates this mixed
result. Professor Real’s research documents the company’s establishment of large
hatcheries in Mexico’s heartland—the country’s fertile center that is reminiscent

*A father and son work their field on the outskirts of La Peñuela.*
of the U.S. Midwest. It is where hardworking farmers and ranchers cultivate the land and tend their livestock, with local communities consuming some of their production and the rest going to Mexico's large, urban markets. The arrival of Pilgrim's Pride a decade ago, Real reports, was quickly followed by a decline in the number of small-scale poultry producers. The producers who remained entered into partnership agreements with Pilgrim's Pride. The large corporation paid off the smaller producers' debts, and in return the smaller plants became satellite Pilgrim's Pride hatcheries. These small producers were obligated to use and pay for Pilgrim's Pride's technologies.

The arrangement that continues today is simple: Pilgrim's Pride supplies the chicks. The "partner" fattens them up. The full-grown chickens are returned to Pilgrim's Pride for sale when they have reached market weight. Feed and medicine must be obtained from the corporation. Pilgrim's Pride assumes no responsibility for losses. The economies of scale give Pilgrim's Pride and its partners the advantage in the marketplace. Small independent producers who decided to remain independent have been forced to find markets for their poultry.

Two such producers in La Peñuela are Don Nacho and Don Alfredo. Don Nacho entered the poultry business in 1981, long before anyone heard of the industry's "globalization." He lived in a small shack of a house on the same property his barns now occupy. Managing to make it through the pitfalls of early entrepreneurship, he developed a successful business, and raised a family. The family now lives in a two-story, spacious house a short distance away from the hatchery. Every eight weeks, Don Nacho sells his stock of 2,000 grown chickens in Querétaro for a price of $30,000 pesos (about $3,000 U.S.). The chicks are purchased from aviculturists in a nearby community. The feed and medicine are purchased from Pilgrim's Pride.

Don Alfredo's enterprise dwarfs Don Nacho's. Starting in 1972, he remains independent, buying only feed from Pilgrim's Pride. Despite the drastic rise in production costs and fall in poultry prices that came with the large company's arrival, his business has survived, partially because he has diversified his stock to include pigs. These two independent producers are rare exceptions on the economic landscape that has been drastically changed by the American company's arrival. Most of the producers and their markets have been consumed by Pilgrim's Pride.
The great sucking sound Ross Perot heard has not created more jobs in La Peñuela. Some jobs have transferred from small producers to the larger corporation. But overall there has been a reduction in numbers. However, the quality of the jobs that remain—the pay and skill they require—seems to have increased. The Pilgrim's Pride operation, unfortunately, only provides about 150 of these “quality jobs.” As a result, the town has become dependent on outside employment. Long gone are the days when the crop yields from the campo, or countryside, could support this community. La Peñuela has become a town of commuters. People are fleeing the fields for jobs in the big city of Querétaro. No job is too menial to seek. All that is required is a means of commuting.

Nineteen-year-old Francisco delivers Sonric's candy using a company Volkswagen van that he is allowed to drive home in the evenings. Rosa, who has worked for five years as a secretary in the social security office, commutes by bus. Eloy and Mariano share a ride to their jobs as electricians. When the bus returns to La Peñuela at 5:00 p.m., it is filled to capacity with waiters, store clerks, factory workers, students and many others.

Some work, however limited, still can be found in La Peñuela. All of the tiendas have employees, although they are usually family members. There are a few backyard metal and mechanic shops. The several ranchitas still need hands. A few men work tirelessly each day clearing rocks from the road for the government. And a small economy—an invisible word-of-mouth network of mostly women—grows vegetables and herbs, and makes handicrafts for neighbors.

Observing the shift of jobs from the rural community to the city, one is left to ponder: What will become of La Peñuela's agricultural base and fertile soil? Few young people I spoke with wanted jobs in the fields. The Mexican countryside is at risk of becoming a collection of deserted fields surrounding communities of commuters created by multinational corporations consolidating jobs and markets.

Perceptions and Immigration
Unlike some other pueblos in Mexico, La Peñuela has not become a ghost town, with its inhabitants gone to the United States. Although, there was a strong desire expressed by many men to work in the U.S., the population has remained stable with only a small percentage having left. I discovered only one individual,
Don Nico, the grandfather in the family I lived with, who had worked in the U.S. and returned to La Peñuela. Don Nico became my oldest friend and source of interesting conversations. He had the appearance of a man who had worked in fields his entire life. His face was dark and weather-beaten. His frame was small and thin. At 74, he awoke at 5:00 a.m. and cleared rocks from the streets all day. Through gritted teeth and a smoldering cigarette, he told me stories of how he had traveled through the agricultural fields of the western United States, working in the Bracero Program of the 1950s.

Emigration to neighboring communities, as well as to Querétaro from La Peñuela did occur to a limited degree. However, strong family ties held most people to the community. With the presence of an American in their midst, immigration to the U.S. became a topic of nearly every conversation. I was asked many questions about finding work in the U.S. The general impression was that it was very easy to make more money in the U.S. But many did not realize the drawbacks of immigrating illegally. They only knew there was work to be had in agricultural fields and in the sprawling urban centers of California and other states. Only a few realized the importance of having a connection on the other side. Most thought it was only necessary to show up and take the best-paying job. Almost everyone knew of someone or was related to someone who was working in the U.S.

Some of the questions proved difficult for me: Why should Americans be allowed to cross the border so easily into Mexico when Mexicans are not allowed to cross into the U.S.? Why are Americans too lazy to work their own agricultural fields? What gave America the right to steal Mexican land and then refuse to let Mexicans live there? I tried to explain the cycle of dependency that American agriculture, especially in California, has developed by having access to undocumented workers from Mexico who are willing to work for less money than American citizens. I tried to explain the hypocrisy of California voters who pass laws to increase border restrictions and make the already difficult lives of immigrants more of a struggle by trying to take away medical care and education. I tried to explain that without the Mexican field worker, an orange sold in a U.S. store would cost much more, and that other foods might not even be harvested. Some of them understood the complex politics they would encounter if they crossed the northern border. Others just concentrated on the fact that it was possible to make more money.
I could not deny the truth that their incomes would be higher in the U.S. But I countered with other strong points—the sacrifices they would be making by leaving the comforts of a town like La Peñuela. Nowhere in the U.S. would they find such a secure, comfortable, and amiable community. They would be living the life of an undocumented citizen without rights of any kind. Perhaps they were aware of the advantages of their home in Mexico and the drawbacks of life in the north. Perhaps this was the answer to the question I asked during my first day in La Peñuela. This is why they stayed.
THE CUCAMONGA EXPERIMENT: A STRUGGLE FOR COMMUNITY CONTROL AND SELF-DETERMINATION

Armando Navarro

During the early months of 1968, in a turbulent era of protest, "the Cucamonga Experiment" in community control, social change, and self-determination was begun. In 1969, in what was then a small and unincorporated community in southern California, Mexicanos orchestrated the Chicano Movement's first political takeover of a school board in Aztlán. After one year of intensive organizing, Mexicanos took political control from the local racist white elite by winning three seats on the Cucamonga School District's board of trustees, giving them a majority. This political takeover preceded the successful electoral revolts orchestrated by the Raza Unida Party (RUP) in the Winter Garden area of Texas in April 1970. In other words, it was the Chicano Movement's first successful effort at community control of a local school board. What would follow during the next four years in Cucamonga and San Bernardino and Riverside counties was truly an experiment in the politics of community control, social change, and self-determination.

While this article provides a historical case study of the organizing activities and salient events that shaped what I have designated as the "Cucamonga Experiment," its primary focus is on the formative organizing years of 1968 to 1970. I do, however, examine, if only briefly, some of the important events and politics that occurred between 1970 and 1973.

Chicano Politics: A History of Resistance
The evolution of Chicano politics began in 1848 with robbery of Mexican territory by the United States under the guise of "Manifest Destiny." Although the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo guaranteed the civil, property, religious, and cultural rights of Mexicanos, it became "the treaty of broken promises." With the exception of Nuevo México, where they constituted a majority, throughout
the rest of the occupied and conquered Mexican territory, Mexicanos were relegated to a powerless status. For over one hundred and twenty years, the Chicano experience could be characterized as one of ongoing resistance to their subjugation by the United States' liberal capitalist system.

I argue that the history of Chicano politics consists of four stages: the Politics of Armed Resistance, the Politics of Accommodation, the Politics of Social Action, and the Politics of Protest. It was during the latter stage, when protest movements sprang up across the nation, that the Cucamonga Experiment occurred.

From 1965 to 1974, Chicano activists organized and embraced a new mode of protest and militant action under the aegis of the Chicano Movement or CM. During this epoch of unprecedented militancy, Chicanos rejected accommodation and social action politics and opted for unconventional protest strategies and tactics that included demonstrations, marches, picketing, boycotts, school walkouts, and other forms of civil disobedience. They struggled to extricate themselves from their powerless, subordinate, and impoverished status. Their political and cultural awakening, or identification with Chicanismo, engendered a political climate that was propitious for embracing the politics of community control, social change, and self-determination. One such example of this new mode of resistance politics occurred in Cucamonga.

**Genesis of the Cucamonga Experiment**

Inspired by the growing militancy and power of the CM, on March 12, 1968, the experiment began in the barrios of Cucamonga with the formation of the Cucamonga/Upland Mexican American Political Association (MAPA) chapter. The idea to form a political organization began several months before at Turi's (Arthur's) Barber Shop, located in el barrio de El Dipo (in the neighborhood where the train depot was located). Almost every Saturday, people from the local community and surrounding areas would gather at the barbershop to engage in discussion on various topics—from music to politics.

In January 1968 the discussions focused solely on the myriad social problems plaguing the community. I had a growing interest in movement politics, particularly writings by and about Reies López Tijerina, César Chávez, and Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales. I began reading works on social movements, community organizing, and leadership formation. Our discussions at Turi's brought
us to the conclusion that Cucamonga’s situation was no different than that of
other barrios throughout the nation, particularly those of Aztlán. Life for
Chicanos was a reality scarred by innumerable acute social problems. The most
salient of these were poverty, substandard housing, cantinas (bars) situated within
residential areas, unemployment, schools with high “push out” rates, functional
illiteracy, crime and gangs, alcoholism, drug abuse, unpaved streets with no
curbs or gutters, an absence of individual and organizational leadership, and
political disenfranchisement. Cucamonga’s three contiguous barrios—El Dipo,
El Norte, and Dog Patch—were cauldrons of growing discontent.

Based on the barbershop discussions, during the next two months several
community meetings were held at the Contact Station, a community center
located in El Norte. Three exploratory meetings were held with the main pur-
poses of introducing the idea of forming a community political organization,
ascertaining if barrio residents were interested in forming such an organization,
and conducting power structure research using the “reputation” method.11 The
power structure research was started immediately. Local residents were asked
to identify those whom they perceived as community leaders, the intent being
to identify those who might be willing to attend the meetings and subsequently
support the forthcoming organizing efforts. During the process, people were
also asked to identify pivotal barrio issues.

The meetings only drew a handful of people. Not discouraged, we formed
a core group of seven, three of whom were from Upland, including myself.
The seven decided to form a political action group. It was decided that the
effort should begin in Cucamonga since it had three contiguous barrios, whereas
Upland’s were small and separated. First, we took an inventory of what organi-
zations were already in place. These included the League of United Latin Ameri-
can Citizens (LULAC), the G.I. Forum, the Community Service Organization
(CSO), and the Mexican American Political Association (MAPA). The group
was overwhelmingly of the opinion that neither LULAC, the G.I. Forum, nor
the CSO were sufficiently advocacy-oriented to meet the pressing problems of
the barrios of Cucamonga and Upland.

The group decided to consider forming a chapter of the Mexican American
Political Association (MAPA). There were some, however, who felt that it was
too militant and expressed concerns about allegations made by some white
politicians that it was “Communist infiltrated.” The young people, on the
other hand, felt that MAPA lacked political accomplishments and clout. They said it was “too bourgeois” and lacked a barrio power base. In order to address these concerns, MAPA officials were invited to speak at the organizing meetings. In late February, the initial core group, which had now grown to some twenty people, decided that while MAPA had some problems, its political focus and progressiveness made it the most viable choice.

Meeting the requisite start-up membership of fifteen, the Cucamonga/Upland MAPA chapter was formed. Elections were held and I was elected chair, Delfino Segovia vice-chair, Carmen Betancourt secretary, and Larry Zambrano treasurer. Immediately, the chapter sought to gain the support of the barrio residents and expand its membership base. It quickly became a well-structured organization. Recruitment and scholarship committees were formed. Dues were collected and a checking account was opened. In order to coalesce the membership’s diverse interests and views meant spending considerable time holding individual and group “conscientization” sessions on a variety of topics. This was done with two organizing objectives in mind: to engender a feeling of community—of being a unified *familia* (family) imbued with the spirit of *carnalismo* (brotherhood)—and to formulate the chapter’s philosophy, goals, and objectives. A collective leadership emerged.

From the onset, the leadership sought to create a chapter that was politically reform-oriented. Its five cardinal objectives were: 1) the creation of a nonpartisan organization for the social, economic, cultural and civic betterment of Mexican Americans through political action; 2) the election and appointment to public office of Mexican Americans and other persons sympathetic to our aims; 3) the running and endorsement of candidates for public office; 4) the launching of voter registration drives; and 5) the promotion of a program of political education.

The chapter’s mission statement complemented its aforementioned objectives. In a pamphlet titled, “M.A.P.A.,” it stated:

The Cucamonga-Upland Chapter of the Mexican American Political Association was organized because we (the Chicanos) can no longer be the passive element in our society, because of the necessity of social and political reform, because the education of our children has suffered for the last 122 years, because of the great amount of discrimination in employment against the Mexican/American and because we have no government representation.

M.A.P.A. members believe the “Mexican cause” is every American’s cause. An injustice to one is an injustice to all Americans. Chicanos are distinctly
signifying their participation and involvement in movements such as M.A.P.A. attempting to achieve the realization of the true principles stated in the United States Constitution.

Join M.A.P.A. today and become and start interjecting your ideas—become part of the movement. BE INVOLVED ¡DESPERTEN! ¡VIVA LA RAZA! 14

From the onset, the local MAPA chapter embraced the CM’s victimization thrust and rhetoric as well as its adherence to a strong cultural nationalist posture, which denoted feelings of ethnic pride in being Chicano or Mexicano. 15 Although some of the barrio residents resented the usage of the name “Chicano” in all its literature and public statements, believing that it was a pejorative term, “Chicano” and “Mexicano” were used interchangeably. There was a categorical rejection of assimilation, and “chicanismo” was zealously propounded. The chapter developed a progressive and movimiento reputation. It was an admixture of cultural nationalist, socialist, and liberal capitalist beliefs.

Throughout 1968, the chapter charted a strategic organizing course that included increasing membership, winning support from barrio residents, ensuring a high media profile, organizing community projects, and taking on issues via political action. Developing links between the mapistas (MAPA members) and the barrio residents was a slow process. Some of the people were wary of MAPA’s political posture and questioned my intentions, despite the fact that I was raised in the barrio of El Dipo and my parents still lived there.

Moreover, while a majority of MAPA’s membership lived in the barrio, some of the entrenched business elite adamantly opposed the organization’s entrance.16 MAPA’s emphasis on politics and its usage of movimiento rhetoric troubled others, who construed it as being too militant and radical. Those averse to MAPA spread rumors that it was composed mostly of outsiders and troublemakers.

MAPA’s meetings were held twice a month in the barrios. Initially, the agenda was innocuous so as not to antagonize those who were distrustful. The leadership felt it needed time to consolidate and build a base of support among residents. They felt that once the base was solidified it could fend off the attacks that were sure to come when taking on “heavy” polarizing issues.

Education became the chapter’s immediate focus, not as an issue, but as a project. We felt that education was a safe enough issue to begin galvanizing the public, especially since what was proposed was a scholarship drive. In late May
1968, an officer’s installation dance was held, and the proceeds were used to set up a scholarship fund for Chicano students graduating from high school. The dance was attended by some 250 people and drew participation from MAPA regional officials, local politicians, and people from throughout the area. The event netted a profit, and in June two scholarships were given to two Mexicano students who had graduated from Altaloma High School and planned to attend Chaffey College (the area’s local community college).

That summer, MAPA initiated its first community project, “Operation Clean-up,” in El Norte, Cucamonga’s largest barrio. This beautification and self-help project cleaned-up the barrio’s empty lots and streets that were overgrown with weeds, and littered with trash. The effort sought to win-over the people’s confidence and support via the children. Tractors and large trucks were borrowed from sympathetic contractors and the school district. MAPA asked for contributions from the owners of the lots cleaned. The monies collected were donated to the local Boy’s Club for the purchase of sports equipment.

Every Saturday morning for two months, mapistas, accompanied by some forty to fifty barrio youth, as if conducting a military operation, drove tractors and trucks into the barrio. As hoped, the project garnered the support of both the youth and their parents. The media depicted the project as being illustrative of MAPA’s innovative “self-help” philosophy. It emphasized the organization’s commitment to change via the people’s own energies, determination, and resources, and not on government funding.

After finishing “Operation Clean-up,” MAPA continued with its summer recreation program. Without external funding, MAPA worked throughout the summer with the youth in order to alleviate the community’s gang and juvenile delinquency problems. Administered by volunteers, the chapter organized field trips to the beach, a camping trip to the San Bernardino Mountains, and conducted weekly recreational activities that included sports as well as “rap” sessions on various aspects of the CM. The intent was to bring the youth into the movement by instilling in them a sense of orgullo (pride), and carnalismo (brotherhood). At the same time that they were given heavy doses of Chicano history and politics, they were exhorted to stop their involvement in gangs, to stop juvenile criminal behavior, and to stay in school. The older youth were encouraged to finish high school and get involved with a local chapter of the Brown
Berets. The youth became a powerful support group for MAPA and an effective "organizing hook" in getting their parents to become involved as well.

In August, the chapter organized and financed a major field trip for 75 youths to go to Universal Studios in Hollywood to see the "Mardi Gras" from Mexico. As with any activity MAPA organized, media coverage was part of its image-shaping strategy. With its emphasis on Mexican culture, music, and indigenous past, the field trip served to enhance MAPA's strong cultural-nationalist ethos. Because of MAPA's youth activities and support for the Boy's Club, the barrios witnessed a dramatic decline of gang activity and juvenile delinquency. In a matter of a few months, MAPA had succeeded in creating a sense of espíritu (spirit). The Chicano Movement had finally arrived in the barrios of Cucamonga.

In order to raise the needed resources for its diverse programs and activities, the chapter spent a considerable amount of time fund raising and recruiting new members. However, some were still apprehensive and reluctant to join. By the end of 1968, the chapter's membership comprised some forty poor and middle-class Mexicanos, including community college and university students, and white- and blue-collar workers. Since, up to this point, little organizing had been done in Upland, most of the chapter's members were from Cucamonga.

The chapter began to gradually flex its political muscle. In preparation for the upcoming November 1968 general elections, it organized several political forums and conducted a voter registration, political education, and get-out-the-vote drive. A number of Democrat and Republican politicians running for various offices attended the forums and sought the chapter's endorsement. The candidates gave their pitch to audiences ranging from of 50 to 75 people. The politicians were drilled on a myriad of issues pertinent to the Mexicano community. The forums proved to be effective mediums for politically educating the community as well as the politicians. Both witnessed a mapista leadership that was articulate, assertive, and politically knowledgeable.

MAPA's leadership sought to instill confidence in the people and to make it clear to politicians that Mexicanos would no longer be ignored, taken for granted, or stereotyped as politically apathetic, sitting under a cactus chanting "mañana." Candidates were endorsed and a voter registration and political education drive was organized for the barrios of Cucamonga and Upland. On election day, mapistas canvassed and worked the barrio precincts to get out the vote.
By the latter part of the year, after weeks of research and meetings with community leaders and chapter supporters, MAPA initiated its own barrio renewal program. The program sought to build curbs and gutters, pave streets, and build low-income housing in the barrios of El Norte and El Dipo. Meetings were held with county and Housing and Urban Development (HUD) officials in order to secure federal funds for both projects.\(^1\) The curb, gutter, and street pavement aspect of the program failed to galvanize the people’s support because of several reasons; one was that some of the barrio residents simply did not understand the HUD guidelines. They fell victim to the old adage, “what people do not understand, they fear.” Foremost, however, was that some of the economic elite who owned businesses in the area refused to support the effort since it would cost them money. MAPA lost its first political battle due to its inability to remove people’s fears. Nonetheless, the low-income housing aspect of MAPA’s barrio renewal program did get the required support and those efforts were continued in 1969.

As part of MAPA’s efforts to preserve Mexicano culture, it organized, in December 1968, the first Posadas (traditional Christmas celebration) in the barrios of Cucamonga. The local newspaper, The Daily Report, featured a full-page pictorial account of the event. The article read, “Some 100 persons, including processers, and spectators shuffled along the streets of ‘Little Mexico’ stopping at the dusty yards of the inns to seek lodging . . . MAPA sponsored the Posada ceremony to teach Anglos as well as Mexican Americans something of the traditions and culture of Mexico.”\(^2\) As the year ended, MAPA prepared for the Cucamonga School District board elections scheduled for April. From the beginning, MAPA’s leadership used the various projects as a means to support its major priority, which was creating major educational change.

**The Cucamonga Electoral Revolt**

In January 1969, MAPA prepared for what could be described as an electoral revolt by taking control of the Cucamonga School District.\(^3\) A cardinal problem the chapter had to overcome, however, was public apathy. Decades of discrimination and segregation had engendered attitudes of political resignation and indifference among many barrio residents.

After months of researching the educational problems of the district, MAPA, in January and February of 1969, held community meetings with school offi-
cials to present its findings. MAPA concluded that the district was in the midst of an educational crisis due to the 60 percent "push-out" rate for Mexicano students and the prevalence of functional illiteracy. In addition, MAPA pointed out that the overwhelming number of teachers and administrators were white, while the majority of the students were Mexicano. Lastly, because of the conservative philosophy of school officials, the district had brought in few federal programs, the only major one being Head Start. Adjacent school districts, while having a lower tax base, had more educational programs than did Cucamonga, which had a rich tax base—a result of industry moving into the district. Up to that point, few Mexicano parents participated in the white-controlled Parent Teachers Association (PTA).

MAPA presented a series of educational change proposals to school officials in February. The proposals included the implementation of a bilingual/bicultural program, the hiring of Mexicano teachers, revision of the curriculum to include instruction on Chicano history and culture, a tutorial and a remedial reading program, and the construction of a baseball diamond for public use. The meetings with school officials included some one hundred people from the barrio. School officials, however, were not interested in implementing MAPA's proposals. This angered barrio residents and, as Saul Alinsky would say, MAPA had to thus "rub the people's sores of discontent." MAPA's leadership decided that the only option was to take control of the school board. The stage had been set for the CM's "first" struggle for community control.

Later in February, while building up its efforts to win the three open seats on the school board, MAPA responded to a flood disaster in Cucamonga. It got people from throughout the various West End communities to donate clothing, furniture, food, and money to its flood relief effort. Numerous Mexicano and white families were given assistance. That same month it started up a blood bank for the residents of Cucamonga and Upland's barrios. MAPA's education committee concomitantly established a Saturday school, which was a tutorial program involving some 75 students and 35 tutors. The curriculum focused on the three R's, with heavy doses of Chicano history and culture.

In the midst of all this activity, MAPA conducted a voter registration drive and began its search for three viable school board candidates. A political action committee was formed to organize the campaign. Members of the committee met with Juan Martinez, the only Mexican on the school board, to find out if
he was going to run for re-election. Initially, he said he would not, but soon after he and his son-in-law, Joe Sandoval, announced their candidacies. MAPA learned from reliable sources that their decision to run was encouraged by Superintendent Scott, who perceived MAPA as a threat to both himself and the white-controlled board.

MAPA responded by getting two whites to run on the pretext that it would give them financial and manpower support. A MAPA committee member actually went as far as filing papers for one of the candidates, just 10 minutes prior to the deadline and a check for $25.00 was contributed to the other white candidate’s campaign. At no time, however, did MAPA really make a commitment to endorse or support any of the white candidates. It merely inferred that it would.

The recruitment of three viable Mexicanos candidates was problematic. The political committee took inventory of potential candidates who lived within the district. Potential candidates were evaluated according to three main criteria: they needed to be intelligent and possess leadership qualities, committed to the movement, and supportive of MAPA’s educational change proposals. Some of the prospective candidates were afraid to run while others felt they were not qualified.

The search finally produced a three-candidate MAPA slate: Carmen Betancourt, an assistant librarian at Alタルoma High School; Arnold Urtiaga, a barber; and Manuel Luna, a masonry sub-contractor. Betancourt had two years of college; Luna and Urtiaga both had only an eighth-grade education. None had ever been involved in politics. They were political neophytes. When approached to run, Urtiaga expressed total surprise that he was considered because of his limited education and no previous political involvement.

Armed with its slate, MAPA went into full mobilization mode. By this time, it had done an excellent job of educating the people as to what was at stake. The political awakening in the barrios was evidenced by the large number of people who attended meetings and fund-raisers. After a year, MAPA’s meetings and forums were attended by anywhere from 75 to more than 100 people.

Very few people were initially made cognizant that MAPA was running a slate of its own. This was intentional. MAPA’s strategy was to conceal from the opposition that it was going to initiate a full-scale voter mobilization drive in
the Mexicano community. For weeks, especially in the white areas, MAPA sought to project the image of political neutrality. It did not want to alert the white community that a Mexicano political mobilization was in motion.

Without fanfare, MAPA organized a massive voter registration and education drive in Cucamonga’s three barrios. Registrars were secured from the area’s Democratic Party headquarters and Woman’s League as well as from within the ranks of MAPA. The registrars accompanied numerous volunteers, especially youth, who went door-to-door identifying Mexicanos who needed to be registered. In spite of poor weather conditions, more than one hundred Mexicanos were registered to vote. However, the voter registration drive revealed that many barrio residents were not United States citizens, but regardless, the gap closed to where Mexicanos constituted some 48 percent of the district’s registered voters.29

Injecting the element of surprise into the campaign strategy, a couple of weeks prior to the election, MAPA publicly announced its slate. The inexperienced mapistas unveiled their get-out-the-vote (GOTV) campaign, which was predicated on targeting only the Mexicano precincts. Precinct captains and block leaders were selected, campaign literature was developed, house-to-house canvassing was conducted, community meetings were held, a telephone canvassing campaign was organized, and a vehicle with a sound system was sent to the targeted precincts.30 Every targeted precinct was canvassed several times. Sample ballots indicating where voters needed to mark their choices were distributed. It was constantly mentioned that unless all three MAPA candidates were elected the educational problems of the children would surely worsen.

MAPA’s leadership also met with heads of the largest and most influential families in order to secure their support and the support of their extended family members. A “crescendo strategy” was used, and MAPA sought to “peak at the right time.” For weeks the white community was not aware of MAPA’s ongoing well-orchestrated mobilization and thus did not appear worried or threatened. Their perception that Mexicanos were politically unsophisticated worked in MAPA’s favor. Never in the history of Cucamonga had Mexicanos demonstrated such a degree of political participation, organization, and sophistication.

Integral to its mobilization strategy, MAPA sponsored several political forums to which all the candidates were invited. In an effort to ensure that MAPA
candidates shined before the people and the press, the three were given access to the questions that were going to be asked by the political action committee. The opposition candidates did little campaigning in the barrios. They seemed conditioned by past history to believe that Mexicanos did not vote and that the white community was going to elect them since they had Superintendent Scott’s support. Conversely, MAPA candidates concentrated their efforts in the barrios. They walked the precincts and made direct contact with the voters explaining the importance of the election.

A few days prior to the election, an anonymous letter was mailed to all the white voters of the district alleging that the three Mexicano candidates were nothing more than MAPA’s puppets. MAPA’s leadership chose not to directly or openly respond to the letter. Instead, it accelerated its GOTV drive and its appeal to the barrio residents’ sense of *mexicanismo*. By the closing days, the campaign was polarized along ethnic lines.

On election day, MAPA set up a command headquarters at the Contact Station to coordinate the precinct and block GOTV efforts. Some fifty volunteers canvassed the precincts, manned telephone banks, provided child care while mothers voted, drove the sound vehicle canvassing the precincts, cooked food for the volunteers, provided transportation to the polls, and acted as poll watchers.

At about 11:00 p.m., the results were in. MAPA’s three candidates had won by a wide majority. Carmen Betancourt garnered the highest number of votes with 247, followed by Manuel Luna with 212, and Arnold Urtiaga, who received 181. The two, incumbents, Paul Makabe and Juan Martinez, got 134 and 93 votes. The other three candidates received 88, 70, and 68 votes.  

History was made that evening in Cucamonga. Never before in California’s history had Mexicanos successfully taken over a school district. Equally important was that it was the first electoral takeover produced by the CM. No other movimiento organization in the nation, up to that point, could claim that it had achieved such a political feat. Prior to the CM’s emergence, only once before, in 1963, had Mexicanos won control of a local governmental entity. This occurred in Crystal City, Texas, with the election of five Mexicanos to the city council. Although it was not publicized extensively, the political victory served to enhance the CM’s growing demand for “Chicano Power” in San Bernardino and Riverside counties.
The Experiment Accelerates
The three mapista board members officially took office in July 1969. Having taken control of the school board, MAPA could now focus on implementing its proposals. Their first policy priority was to move on its bilingual/bicultural education proposal. Inexperienced and concerned with the growing ethnic divisions and polarization, the three initially moved rather slowly and cautiously in implementing the proposals. Their procrastination created major concern within the organization. Prior to their election, MAPA’s leadership had made it very clear to the candidates that, once elected they would be expected to implement the proposals. A warning was given to them: if they broke the accord, MAPA would respond.

Superintendent Scott continued to resist attempts to implement the proposals. While he was on vacation, the mapista board moved to appoint Ray Trujillo as acting superintendent. By late summer, federal funding was secured and several Mexicano teachers and teacher aides were hired. In September, the district implemented a bilingual/bicultural pilot program without any Title VII funds. Manuel Ramirez from Pitzer College was hired to further develop the program. Under his guidance, it became one of the finest bilingual/bicultural programs in the nation.

During this same period, MAPA had also been pressuring the school board to fire Scott. Becoming increasingly impatient with their slow progress, in November 1969, MAPA convened a meeting at a private home, at which time the three board members were given the ultimatum to fire the superintendent. The board chairman, Manuel Luna, reacted angrily that he was being dictated to. Consequently, schisms developed within the board over MAPA’s proposals.

MAPA’s aggressive organizing helped strengthen its political muscle and clout. In January 1970, members from the defunct MAPA chapter in Ontario became part of the West End chapter, which now included the neighboring communities of Montclair, and Claremont. Its membership increased to 100, making it one of the largest chapters in the state. The leadership essentially remained the same (i.e., I remained chairman, and Ruben Andrade from Ontario was elected vice-chairman along with the other vice-chair, Arnold Urtiaga from Cucamonga). New MAPA members were incorporated into the chapter’s various committees.

On January 13, 1970, at a school board meeting, attended by some three
hundred people, West End MAPA confronted the board for not firing the Scott. The reluctance of School Board President Luna to do so compelled MAPA’s leadership to resort to stronger pressure. The proposals introduced prior to the takeover now became “demands.” By this time, MAPA had developed a strong working relationship with other CM youth and student organizations from the area, such as the Brown Berets, United Mexican American Students (UMAS), and Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán (MEChA). They all agreed to support MAPA. That night after a blistering attack on the superintendent, I called for his resignation: “In the name of the people, in the name of change, we demand your resignation.”

The call for resignation produced a counter petition drive in support of retaining him. On February 24, at a second board meeting held to address MAPA’s demands, Carmen Vasquez presented the board with a petition bearing some 200 signatures supporting Scott. She charged that the board members represented MAPA more than the community. Manuel Luna responded sharply. “Mrs. Vasquez,” he said, “MAPA does not control this board.” The several hundred people present, who were mostly MAPA supporters, discounted the petition. The chairman’s comments, however, were the first public indicator of emerging schisms on the board.

On May 12, 1970, the board finally took decisive action and fired Scott as superintendent. In a motion made by Urtiaga, and seconded by Betancourt, the board voted unanimously to relieve him of his duties as superintendent (he was subsequently hired as a district consultant), and Trujillo was appointed in his place. The action allowed the board to expedite the implementation of MAPA’s educational reforms. For the West End MAPA chapter, Scott’s resignation and the changes that followed were major victories, which served to enhance its reputation among Mexicanos and whites alike as a group that had the leadership, and organizational skill to buttress its politics of change.

**West End MAPA Chapter: Precursor to La Raza Unida Party**

From 1969 to 1973, few organizations outside of Crystal City, Texas, or Cristal as Mexicanos call it, produced as many tangible victories as did the West End MAPA Chapter. Unfortunately, because the West End Chicano population was relatively small in comparison to that of Los Angeles, where the major media were located, the Cucamonga Experiment got very little publicity. Only
the local Riverside and San Bernardino county media reported extensively on its successes. Further limiting its recognition was that the MAPA leadership in L.A. downplayed the significance of any effort that did not come out of Los Angeles. L.A.'s MAPA leaders saw it as competition and were envious because they had not produced comparable results.

In October 1970, the West End MAPA chapter became the precursor to the Raza Unida Party (RUP) in California. Inspired by the electoral success of the RUP in Crystal City, Cotulla, and Carrizo Springs in Texas, it organized several regional RUP conferences and meetings, and in April 1971 spearheaded one of the first major statewide RUP organizing conferences, which took place at Chaffey Community College. Texas RUP founder José Angel Gutiérrez, political scientist Carlos Muñoz, and longtime activist Bert Corona addressed the 400 activists. I presented a plan of action for developing a statewide partido, which I called the “Trinity Concept for Community Development.” The plan called for concurrent political, economic, and social change activities that would ultimately lead to building a “nation-within-a-nation” for Chicanos, with RUP at the political vanguard of the struggle. Ideologically, it was eclectic in that it was a synthesis of cultural nationalist, socialist, and capitalist propositions and convictions.

From October 1970 to June 1972, while working on a Ph.D. in political science at the University of California, Riverside, I was the RUP's main organizer in San Bernardino and Riverside counties. After the conference, I moved to transform the West End MAPA chapter into an RUP two-county structure. It included a central coordinating committee, which was composed of representatives from the various local or barrio-based organizing focos. Concurrently, in order to get the RUP on the ballot statewide, voter registration drives were initiated. The focos were used to address issues as a means for developing the RUP organizationally as well as increasing its constituency base.

One such issue occurred in October 1971, when the RUP in the West End initiated the second successful school walkout in the history of the CM. The beating of a Chicano student by three white football players precipitated the protest. The walkout started at Upland High School and within a week spread throughout the Chaffey Union High School District's five high schools. Over one thousand high school students stayed out for a period of two weeks. Three barrio high schools were set up in community centers where instruction was
provided by a number of volunteer teachers. After nearly two weeks of intensive direct action (e.g., marches, pickets, pressure applied by the RUP and supported by MEChA, the Brown Berets, and other groups) the all-white board was forced to capitulate and give in to all the RUP's demands, which included hiring more Chicano teachers and administrators, and the inclusion of Chicano Studies courses in the curriculum. Approval of their demands meant an incredible victory for RUP and for the students and parents who stood strong in the struggle for educational change.

In 1970, the West End MAPA Labor Committee took on cases involving employment discrimination. After serious negotiations and political pressure, three accords were reached: the Ontario Motor Speedway agreed to hire 25 Mexicanos; the Ontario Airport agreed to do the same; and the Kaiser Steel plant in Fontana agreed to promote Mexicanos to supervisory positions. In support of the United Farm Workers, several pickets of Safeway stores were organized. In Cucamonga, the mapista board voted to support the UFW's lettuce boycotts. Replacing the West End MAPA chapter with the RUP focos did not lessen the ability of each community to implement the change-oriented agenda of the experiment.

Moreover, as part of the economic empowerment plan, the Barrio Investment Group (BIG) was formed. With 26 persons investing anywhere from $200 to $1000, BIG served as the catalyst for the organization's economic empowerment efforts. Supported by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, a self-help "barrio renewal" project was initiated that entailed buying empty lots in the barrio and building low-income housing. By 1971, five homes had been built in the barrios of Cucamonga using a Mexicano contractor and sub-contractors.

In 1971, BIG was transformed into a people's corporation, and named Corporación Económica para el Desarrollo de Aztlán (CEDA—Economic Corporation for the Development of the Southwest). The central thrust behind CEDA was to promote Mexicano control of the barrio economy by setting up a myriad of business enterprises and light industries. By 1973, CEDA had built two more homes in Cucamonga.

The RUP focos continued to carry out the efforts initiated by the West End MAPA chapter in 1970—developing youth and cultural activities and programs. They continued to support the Cucamonga Boy's Club by organizing field
trips, cultural and music programs, group counseling, and political consciousness sessions. The blood bank was expanded to serve the West End. Dances, the annual Posada, Cinco de Mayo, and Mexican Independence (16th of September) celebrations were all used to reinforce MAPA, and subsequently, the RUP's cultural-nationalist orientation.

The chapter's constant high profile, while positive in one sense, was negative in another for the simple reason that the chapter's leadership could not always keep up with the demands for assistance. For that reason, in 1972 efforts were initiated to implement the "social developmental" aspects of the Trinity Plan. Proyecto Acción Social (PAS—Project Social Action), a non-profit corporation, was designed as the vanguard social service agency within the triad of entities. Its cardinal purpose was to develop cultural, social, and educational programs and cooperatives to complement the political and economic empowerment struggles.

In April 1971, RUP candidate David Ortega was elected to the Cucamonga School District board giving RUP a 4 to 1 majority. The following year in Ontario, a city where Mexicanos were only about 17 percent of the population, the RUP was successful in electing the first Mexicano ever to the city council, Gustavo Ramos. That same year, Roger Granados ran unsuccessfully as an RUP write-in candidate for Congress against liberal Democrat George Brown. In April 1973 two more RUP supporters, David Hernandez and Luis Gonzales, were elected to the Cucamonga School District, thus holding on to the 4 to 1 majority. In 1971 and 1972 the Cucamonga School District accelerated the hiring of more Mexicano administrators, teachers, teacher aides, and maintenance and custodial personnel.

The End of the Experiment
By late 1972, the Cucamonga Experiment went into a precipitous decline, and eventually ended in 1973. With so many victories to its credit, why did it fail?

The Cucamonga Experiment's end was the result of several micro and macro factors. At the micro level, with my resignation as central coordinator for the two counties in June 1972 (I was preparing for my doctoral exams coming up in September), the RUP's new leadership was not able to sustain its organizing efforts. Divisions developed among the West End MAPA leadership over school board policies, the sale of three acres of land, and the transition from MAPA
into the RUP. Without having the required resources and trained organizing personnel the “experiment” became over-extended and could not maintain the momentum that was created with the transition into the RUP. Without the aforementioned system being in place, other communities within the two counties could not replicate what was done in Cucamonga and Upland.

At the macro level, the Cucamonga Experiment was affected by several factors. By 1973, the CM, along with other existing social movements, such as the Black Power Movement, had all entered a state of decline. The decline of the CM was also due to numerous schisms, power struggles, co-optation by mainstream organizations, burn-out of leaders, and law enforcement infiltration that permeated it and the RUP in general. By 1973, the “Viva Yo Generation” with its materialistic emphasis, and a nascent conservatism began to displace the “CM Generation.” The epoch of activism and militancy was being replaced by a climate of growing political apathy and complacency.44

Many continued supporting the RUP, but there was no longer a formal organization or structure, since most of RUP’s organizing efforts in the San Bernardino and Riverside counties came to a halt in 1973. PAS was funded for a drug prevention program in 1974 and functioned until 1977, when it became defunct due to non-renewal of funding. As for CEDA, after building seven low-income houses between 1970 and 1973, it too became defunct due to failed financial ventures.

The Cucamonga Experiment entailed a holistic struggle for community control, social change, and self-determination that produced unprecedented results. Occurring at the height of the CM (1968 to 1973), few community organizing efforts scored as many victories as those produced in Cucamonga. While Chicano activists in California by and large transformed their defeats into adulated symbolic victories, mapistas and RUP activists provided communities, especially in the West End of San Bernardino County, with tangible results.

The experiment’s accomplishments were numerous. Community control of the schools in Cucamonga was achieved. Numerous educational reforms were instituted, bilingual/bicultural education most notably. Most of the battles taken on either by MAPA or the RUP in the areas of education, labor discrimination, and civil rights, were won. Likewise, the various youth, labor, housing, cultural, civic participation, and political education projects were successfully
THE CUCAMONGA EXPERIMENT

implemented. It became one of first and main organizing forces for the RUP in California. In fact, outside of Texas and New Mexico, it was the only successful RUP effort to elect Chicanos to office. All of which was done without full-time staff, an office, or federal funding. Impelled by a powerful sense of self-reliance and self-help, the Cucamonga Experiment’s activities and projects were carried out by volunteers and financed by the people themselves.

There are three salient lessons to be learned from the experiment. First, movements for social change are products of the material and political conditions of the time. Without the presence of a CM, there would have been no experiment. However, struggles, such as those taken up in Cucamonga, contribute to the making and nourishment of social movements.

Second, for any struggle for social change to succeed, certain characteristics must be present: a climate of change, a viable leadership, a strong organization, a common vision or ideology, a hybrid tactical strategy, and power capability. And lastly, without a major transformation of the liberal capitalist system, the degree or scope of change possible is limited.\(^{45}\)

Thus, in the end, the Cucamonga Experiment’s legacy is that it succeeded for a few years where others failed. It planned for, and won, community control. It empowered people, and it brought about positive social change. But in the end, like so many other Chicano resistance struggles, it succumbed to its own weaknesses and the omnipotence of the liberal capitalist system. Nonetheless, out of the ashes of the Cucamonga Experiment, a more extensive, statewide Mexicano empowerment struggle emerged between 1977 and 1992.\(^{46}\)

NOTES

1. At that time, Cucamonga was an unincorporated farming community located in San Bernardino County approximately 40 miles south of the city of Los Angeles and 25 miles north of San Bernardino. According to the U.S. Bureau of the Census, in 1970 its population was 5796 people of whom approximately 40 percent was Mexican and the rest white. In addition, according to Donald Clucas, author of *Light Over the Mountain: A History of the Rancho Cucamonga Area*, the name of Cucamonga denotes “a sandy place or place of many waters.” Cucamonga had two school districts: the Cucamonga School District, of which 60 percent of the students were Mexicanos, two of the administrators were Mexican, and most of the teachers were white; and the Cucamonga Central School District of which the overwhelming number of students, teachers, and administrators were white.

“Experiment” is used in the context of the organizing activities, issues, and projects
that emanated from the struggle for community control, social change, and self-determination between 1968 and 1973 involving initially the communities of Cucamonga and Upland, then by 1970 Ontario, Montclair, and Claremont. With the emergence of RUP in late 1970, the experiment was expanded to include various communities within San Bernardino and Riverside counties.

Throughout the article "Mexicano" and "Chicano" are used interchangeably. Chicano denotes those Mexicanos born in the United States. There are more than 18 million Mexicanos that were born in Mexico in the United States and their number is growing. For purposes of unity and action, I prefer the usage of Mexicano.

The term "Aztlán is defined by some scholars and activists as the place of origin of the Aztecas. It was said to be somewhere within the five southwestern states: California, Texas, New Mexico, Colorado, and Arizona. I use the word "Aztlán" to describe the one million square miles that were lost by México because of the annexation of Texas and the U.S. war on México (1846-1848).


The concept of “community control” denotes the people’s direct participation in the decision-making process. It emerged out of the various struggles of the epoch of protest that sought to democratize local government by having the people more directly involved in it.

Since 1972 Chicano historians and social scientists have developed a number of works that posit the thesis that Mexicanos from the onset of the U.S. occupation in 1848 to the present have resisted their iniquitous and oppressive conditions using a variety of forms of resistance. One such scholar who strongly identifies with this view is Rodolfo Acuña, Occupied America: A History of Chicanos, (New York: Harper & Row, 1988).

I designed the political action plan I call the "Cucamonga Experiment," and was a leader in the political battles the experiment helped to win. Throughout the period of the experiment, I was married with children, and was a full-time undergraduate student at Chaffey College (1966-68), Claremont Men’s College (1968-70), and graduate student at the University of California, Riverside (1970-74) from which I received my doctorate in political science.

It is important to note that both Arthur and myself were professional musicians. I played trumpet and he played the conga drums. Moreover, at the time I was a sophomore at a nearby community college, Chaffey College. Hence, the following analysis is very much a product of not only my research that relies on primary and secondary sources, but on my observations as an active participant.


Usage of leadership hereafter denotes the chapter’s elected officers, committee chairpersons, and others who formed the collective leadership core or cadre. The number varied from time to time. At the apogee of the Experiment it numbered some 25 persons. Women constituted about a third of the leadership.
For most of MAPA’s membership, Mexicano and Chicano were synonymous and used interchangeably.

Interview, Arnold Urtiaga, April 11, 1998. Mr. Urtiaga became one of the main leaders of MAPA in Cucamonga. He was one of three Mexicanos to get elected in the takeover of 1969.


Interview, Ayala, April 25, 1998.

The demands called for the hiring of more Mexicano teachers, administrators, and staff commensurate with the district’s ethnic/racial make-up; retirement of teachers and administrators past the age of 65; ongoing evaluation of teachers and administrators; expansion of the bilingual/bicultural program; an investigation of why the district was not using Title VII funds for its bilingual/bicultural program; establishment of reading and tutorial programs; and the activation of a Title I parent advisory committee. (Source: Cucamonga School District Minutes, January 13, 1970).

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I formulated the Trinity Concept for Community Development to a response to what I considered was the Chicano Movement's lack of a well-defined ideology or comprehensive strategy for change. For explanations on the particulars of the model see my article, "The Development of a New Concept," *Agenda: A Journal of Hispanic Issues*, Vol. 10, No. 5, and September/October 1980.

I used the term "foco" instead of the conventional term "chapter." Focos were small organizing units or cells, no more than 25 members in size.

The first major Chicano school walkout occurred in late 1969 in Cristal City, Texas, under the leadership of José Angel Gutiérrez.

The demands included: Hiring of Chicano teachers and administrators; establishment of cultural centers in each high school; Chicano Studies courses in the curriculum; teacher cultural awareness in-service training; establishment of a 15-person community committee to monitor implementation of demands, etc. A plethora of front-page articles appeared in local newspapers.


Interview, Alfonso Navarro, April 26, 1998. Alfonso is my bother. He was the primary mover and organizer for the implementation of CEDA's projects.


See the epilogue of *The Cristal Experiment* for a more thorough examination of this analysis.

In 1977, I resigned my faculty position in Political Science at the University of Utah and returned to California where for the next 15 years I taught part-time at a number of universities and colleges and organized full-time. During these years, I formed several advocacy organizations and coalitions and dealt with a multiplicity of civil rights, social justice, and international issues. In 1992, I decided to return full-time to the academy and took a position at the University of California, Riverside, in Ethnic Studies.
POLITICAL ACTIVISM, ETHNIC IDENTITY, AND REGIONAL DIFFERENCES AMONG CHICANO AND LATINO COLLEGE STUDENTS IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA AND NORTHERN NEW MEXICO

Elsa O. Valdez

The present study is an examination of how political power is perceived by undergraduate Chicano and Latino students in northern New Mexico and Southern California. Specifically, the author sought to analyze the relationship between the students' perceptions and their political activism, attitudes, and behavior. Other possible factors affecting their political behavior, such as ethnic self-identification, local political culture, and use of Spanish-language media were also studied. This study is significant for several reasons. First, as noted by de la Garza, et al., there is a void in the "...analytical literature on the significance of 'culture' (or ethnicity) to Latino political attitudes and behaviors. There is a similar paucity of literature on the effects of ethnicity on routine Latino electoral mobilization, for example, during the regularly held elections that are the foundation of the nation's political life." Subsequently, this analysis will add to the contemporary literature on the effects of ethnicity on Chicano/Latino political activism and attitudes.

Second, as de la Garza, et al., also note, Mexican Americans, a significant portion of the state's population, have not been a major force in California government. As this population continues to increase, exclusion from political representation and participation will present a direct challenge to social and public policy. This comparative study investigates political values, attitudes, and behaviors of Chicano and Latino college students in two sites in an effort to highlight similarities and differences, so that we can begin to understand the linkage between macro-level conditions affecting the Chicano and Latino community and their micro-level political behaviors. Third, this type of research is important because the sociopolitical context in California is increasingly hostile
toward minorities in general, and toward Mexican immigrants in particular, and it appears that a resurgence in Chicano and Latino activism is occurring in the form of conflict politics. For example, when California voters approved Proposition 187 in 1994, which excludes undocumented individuals from elementary and secondary school, and prohibits post-secondary institutions from enrolling undocumented persons, students from numerous public schools and universities in California participated in walk-outs, marches, and protests that started several months before the election. There were numerous reports in the news of students who were arrested or beaten by law enforcement officers.

Similar trends were observed with the passage of Proposition 209 in 1996 and Proposition 227 in 1998. Proposition 209 eliminated Affirmative Action in education and public contracting, and Proposition 227 put strict restrictions on bilingual education programs. The Chicano and Latino community—along with a variety of other groups—responded with rallies, marches, and protests before and after the elections. Anti-civil rights initiatives have sparked a renewed interest in voting for California Chicanos and Latinos that hasn't been observed in many years. According to the Southwest Voter Registration Project, 1.3 million Latinos in the 1996 California general election cast votes, surpassing the previous record of one million in 1992. In its survey of 1,068 California Latinos, the project found that 86 percent voted for President Clinton, 86 percent voted for Democrats in congressional races, and 78 percent voted against Proposition 209. Consequently, it is important to assess changes in the political activism and voting patterns for one of the fastest growing minority groups in the United States.

**Theoretical Frameworks for Examining Political Socialization and Action**

Traditionally, the principal line of analysis in political socialization and activism research has focused on the effects of family, school, peer groups, and the mass media as socializing agents in the development of political attitudes. Weintraub-Austin and Nelson's study focused on the effects of ethnicity, family communication variables and the media on adolescent political socialization. They note that:

The adolescent's socialization to politics appears to take place in a complex interaction of cultural background, family communication, and exposure
to outside ideas through vehicles such as the mass media. Media effects, although striking, nevertheless take place in the context of the family, and ethnic background, where adolescents first learn cultural values and problem-solving styles.9

Rios’ study of the “impact of culturally hostile mainstream media” on Chicanos in Texas provides an overview of the “cultural struggle” with mainstream media, and the linkages between language acculturation and resistance to assimilation. She argues that:

Overall, the relationship that Chicanos have with the media is complex and cannot be simply understood as a direct impact process from media to passive consumer. The functions of the mass media for Chicanos are multiple and non-mutually exclusive. Cultural resistance to dominant culture is among the most relevant exercises for Chicanos within the dual function framework, because this practice allows Chicanos to protect positive ethnic group identity from the Eurocentric agenda of mass media. Chicano-Latino media and popular media forms typically are used as an imperfect cultural refuge for Mexican-heritage audiences.10

Hirsh and Gutierrez’ study of the effects of ethnic self-identification on social and political perceptions and political activity provides significant evidence that there are differences between “Chicanos,” “Mexican Americans,” and “Anglos.”11 They found that “students who self-identify as Chicano tend to have a higher level of political consciousness than students who self-identify as Mexican American or Anglo.”12 Additionally, Chicano students were more likely than other students to get involved in collective political activity such as demonstrations, marches, and rallies.

Trujillo’s analysis offers further insight into what can happen when Chicano cultural nationalism counters the established Anglo ideological domination. The focus of his study was Crystal City, Texas, from 1969-1989. He argues that the rise of La Raza Unida Party in the 1970s gave impetus to Chicanos gaining political control of “the school district, city, and county government.”13 Subsequently, this takeover led to major reforms in the bilingual/bicultural education program.

The emergence of bilingual/bicultural education in Crystal City was the result of various forces from both outside and inside the community. The call for bilingual education was a part of the broader Chicano civil rights movement, the bilingual education movement, and the ideology of ethnicity. As such, some scholars have noted that educational leaders within the movement came to regard bilingual education as having the potential to assist in the ethnic group’s quest for identity, cultural status, and political power.14
By the late 1980s, the goals of revived ethnic identity and community through bilingual and bicultural education had been abandoned. The program became a transitional pre-kindergarten through first grade program, and the school curriculum no longer emphasized ethnic history and culture. Although the original goals were relinquished, it is clear that the emergence of La Raza Unida Party was a crucial impelling force in the development of political attitudes, activism, and ethnic identity among Chicanos in the Southwest.

Sanchez Jankowski examined the political socialization of Chicano youth in Albuquerque, New Mexico, Los Angeles, California, and San Antonio, Texas. He focused on four primary explanatory variables that influenced the political attitudes of Chicano youth: social class, urbanism, level of assimilation, and the socioeconomic and political character of the city. Sanchez Jankowski found that Chicanos differed in their political attitudes based on social class backgrounds. Middle-class Chicanos were more likely to want to become integrated into the American political system, and less likely to be involved in radical politics, especially politics that stressed making fundamental changes in the existing order. In contrast, working-class Chicanos wanted fundamental changes to occur in the current political structure. Unlike their middle-class cohorts who merely wanted to influence those in power, working-class Chicanos were interested in securing some of that power and subsequently changing the existing socioeconomic, political arrangements. Moreover, working-class Chicanos were more likely to “…subscribe to a nationalist, separatist ideology.”

With respect to assimilation Sanchez Jankowski notes that:

The issue of cultural retention/deterioration has important implications for ethnic group integration into a particular society… it has been shown that those individuals (or groups) who have been integrated into the larger society have higher levels of trust in government, and a higher sense of political efficacy; and are more likely to participate in politics, particularly in political activities that are not conflict-oriented.

In San Antonio, notes the author, Chicanos have retained their traditional cultural institutions (Spanish language, Catholic Church, etc.), and there is no indication that they are assimilating into the Anglo-American culture. He argues that San Antonio society encourages the retention of these cultural institutions, thereby producing “…two relatively strong, self-contained, and stable communities, one Chicano and the other Anglo.” However, due to
the political culture of San Antonio—a caste-like social structure that is regulated by the U.S. military and by Anglo businessmen—Chicanos in San Antonio tended to feel constrained, and accommodated themselves to the Democratic Party by voting for a moderate candidate whom the party endorsed.

In contrast, middle-class, upwardly mobile Chicanos in Albuquerque have become assimilated into Anglo-American culture, and subsequently, they are less likely to be involved in the maintenance of cultural institutions; while Chicanos from the lower classes have assimilated at a much slower rate due to their lack of economic mobility. However, the political culture in Albuquerque differs from San Antonio: Chicanos in Albuquerque hold key political and economic positions. The result is that Chicanos in Albuquerque perceived fewer barriers to becoming involved in politics, and moreover, they felt that socioeconomic mobility was attainable for anyone who worked hard.

In Los Angeles, socioeconomic factors have encouraged and even forced Chicanos to assimilate to the norms of the Anglo-American society. Los Angeles society as a whole and Chicano society in particular are in a state of relatively rapid social change. This change and pressure to assimilate seems to produce differences in the political attitudes of Chicano youths. Although there were both conservative and radical political attitudes among both the middle class and working classes, Sanchez Jankowski found substantial evidence that Chicanos in Los Angeles were more likely to challenge the system and support nationalist politics and violence-oriented protest than Chicanos in San Antonio and Albuquerque. He attributes this to the geographic and socioeconomic complexity of Los Angeles.

Garcia’s study compared the political orientations of Mexican American and “core culture” children. The data was collected from four schools in east-central Los Angeles County. Garcia’s analysis showed that the orientations of Chicano and Anglo students toward the American political system differed. As Chicano adolescents matured, there was a weakening of attachment to America. He maintains that “. . . Chicanos’ initial liking is greater than that of Anglos, but with maturity an increased disaffection with America, and a rise in feeling for the ancestral home, was noted.” Garcia concluded that as Chicanos are growing up, prejudice and discrimination erodes their support for the political community and the United States in general. And finally, Gutierrez contends that Chicano ethnic identity is multidimensional and related to such factors as lan-
guage dominance, recency of migration, cultural practices, phenotype, and political participation. 23

What can we conclude from the preceding studies? First, political attitudes, participation, and action is influenced by a complex host of conditions. And second, ethnic identity, assimilation, region, and class appear to be crucial predictors of political perceptions and activism.

**Demographics and Characteristics of Study Sites**

The city of San Bernardino is located in Southern California. The 1990 Census listed the total population at 164,164 persons. 24 It appears to be a diverse city. In 1990, 46 percent of the population in San Bernardino was white, 35 percent was Latino, 15 percent was black, and six percent was Asian and/or Native American. The San Bernardino Economic Development Agency reports that the dominant language spoken in San Bernardino is English (71%), followed by Spanish (24%), Asian/Pacific (3%), and other (2%). San Bernardino's adult population splits into two distinct education groups: 43 percent have completed at least some college and 32 percent did not graduate from high school. In terms of income, the majority of families fell into the lower categories: 28 percent earned less than $15,000, 32 percent earned $15,000 to $34,999, while only 11 percent earned $75,000 and over. The local city government is facing budget deficits and shrinking revenues. These problems were attributed to the recession, and the closure of the local Air Force base. Other problems faced by the city include increasing crime rates, blight, foreclosures on homes, hate crime, and an increase in unemployment.

In contrast, the city of Las Vegas, New Mexico, has a population of 14,753 and is predominantly Latino. According to the Census Bureau, in 1990, 82 percent of the residents were Latino, 16 percent were Anglo, and two percent were “other.” 25 Economically “... Las Vegas has survived by becoming a ‘company town’ and building economic security through state government employment.” 26 Additionally, many native residents rely on ranching, farming, wood gathering, and the trading of services and home-produced goods. Although the median family income in Las Vegas is $20,016 (compared to $25,533 in San Bernardino), the cost of living is significantly lower in Las Vegas.

The ethnic makeup of the college students at New Mexico Highlands University in Las Vegas is 67 percent Latino, 23 percent white, and 10 percent
other; while in San Bernardino it is 15 percent Latino, 58 percent white, eight percent black, nine percent Asian, and 10 percent other. However, the faculty at both institutions is predominantly white. At NMHU, 65 percent of the faculty are white, 26 percent are Latino, and nine percent are other. At California State University, San Bernardino, 76 percent are white, eight percent are Latino, and six percent are black, and 10 percent are other. These socio-economic and demographic factors are important because they play a significant role in shaping the political culture of both cities. Las Vegas reflects the traditions, language, and values of an 82-percent Latino population, while, San Bernardino reflects the traditions, language and values of a 46-percent white population and does not appear to encourage the retention of Latino cultural institutions.

Sample and Data Collection Procedure

Questionnaires were administered to 137 undergraduate Chicano and Latino students attending New Mexico Highlands University and 105 Chicano and Latino undergraduate students at California State University, San Bernardino.27 Students in various introductory courses within the social sciences were asked to complete a questionnaire, and consequently, the sample was not randomly selected. Although these findings cannot be generalized to the larger Chicano and Latino population, they nonetheless, provide us with observable trends and patterns regarding political activism and attitudes among contemporary Chicano and Latino college students. Of the 137 students surveyed at NMHU, 59 percent were female and 41 percent were male; while at CSUSB, 77 percent were female and 23 percent were male. The majority of students at CSUSB tended to be older (42% were 21-27) than students at NMHU (53% were 21 or younger).

Ninety nine percent of the students in New Mexico were born in the U.S. compared to 71 percent in California. Family income for all students was comparable for the low-income category (0-$19,000) but varied for middle and high income categories. More students from NMHU (37%) said they earned $20,000 to $39,000 than CSUSB students (28%); and 37 percent of students from CSUSB reported earning $40,000 and higher, compared to 29 percent from NMHU. The majority of students at both universities said they were Catholic: 70 percent at CSUSB and 84 percent at NMHU. The majority (70% to 75%) of students at both universities reported being single.
Findings

Spanish Media and Geographical Location

Rios' study highlights the relationship between the media and cultural assimilation. She speculates that Chicanos appear to utilize the mainstream media primarily for informational purposes such as world news; and Spanish-language media for cultural affirmation, ethnic or language maintenance, dominant culture resistance, and "actively fighting off political, economic, and social oppression in the city." Subsequently, to test the hypothesis that the utilization of Spanish media is an indication that more political activism will occur, the use of Spanish media by region was compared.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Every Day</td>
<td>4.4% *</td>
<td>11.2% *</td>
<td>4.5% *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Few Times, Weekly</td>
<td>15.7% *</td>
<td>22.4% *</td>
<td>33.6% *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Few Times, Monthly</td>
<td>29.9% *</td>
<td>22.5% *</td>
<td>24.8% *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>44.0% *</td>
<td>29.9% *</td>
<td>60.9% *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>6.0% *</td>
<td>2.9% *</td>
<td>3.8% *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*chi square statistic significant at < .05
As Table 1 illustrates, Chicanos from Southern California responded that they are more likely to view Spanish television, listen to Spanish radio, and read Spanish newspapers, than Chicanos from Northern New Mexico. Subsequently, if Rios' hypothesis that Chicanos and Latinos use the Spanish media for political activism and resistance to assimilation is correct, Chicanos and Latinos from Southern California should be more likely to be active in addressing social, economic, and political issues that affect their community than their counterparts in Northern New Mexico. Other dimensions of political activism will be examined to determine if this is the case.

**Ethnic Identity, Geographic Location, and Political Action**

Hirsh and Gutierrez concluded that students who self-identified as Chicanos were more likely to be politically active than students who call themselves Mexican American or other labels. Along the same vein, Sanchez Jankowski focused on the relationship between political attitudes, class, assimilation and geographic location. He contends that middle-class, upwardly-mobile Chicanos in Albuquerque were more likely to become assimilated into Anglo culture and hold key political positions, while Chicanos in San Antonio who did not hold key political positions, were more likely to have retained their traditional cultural institutions. In comparison, Chicanos in Los Angeles were under intense pressure to assimilate, but did not hold key political positions. It seems that Chicanos in Los Angeles resisted assimilation by supporting nationalist or conflict politics.

In the present study, in order to determine whether regional differences in ethnic identity existed, students were asked whether they preferred to be called Hispanic, Chicano, Mexican American, or something else.

### Table 2

**Ethnic Identity and Geographic Location**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selected Ethnic Identity</th>
<th>Calif. (n = 105)</th>
<th>New Mexico (n = 137)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>5.9% *</td>
<td>82.4% *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicano</td>
<td>72.3%*</td>
<td>8.4%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexican American</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>7.6%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>21.8%*</td>
<td>1.6%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*chi square statistic significant at < .05*
As can be seen in Table 2, students from Southern California preferred to call themselves Chicano (72.3%), whereas students from Northern New Mexico said they preferred the label Hispanic (82.4%). These findings are similar to those of Sanchez Jankowski, and Hirsh and Gutierrez. Therefore, it should follow that students who self-identity as Hispanic are less likely to become involved in conflict-oriented politics or have more moderate political perceptions.

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Activity</th>
<th>Selected Ethnic Identity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belong to an Organization</td>
<td>(n= 104)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>14.4% *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>85.6% *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend Demonstration</td>
<td>(n= 108)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>17.6% *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>82.4% *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boycott Goods</td>
<td>(n= 106)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>16.0% *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>84.0% *</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*chi square statistic significant at < .05

In Table 3, overall it appears that students who self-identified as Chicano are more likely to belong to an organization, attend a demonstration, and boycott goods than students who self-identified as Hispanic or Mexican American. Nelson notes that ethnicity has a greater effect on political participation than does socioeconomic status. One explanation, known as ethnic political consciousness, suggests that “... as ethnic political consciousness increases, a
political culture more supportive of participation will develop." Subsequently, the role of ethnic political consciousness may explain why Chicanos and Latinos in Southern California are more likely to identify as Chicanos rather than Hispanics: the term Chicano denotes individuals who have developed a politicized, ethnic critical consciousness in response to discrimination and racism. And considering the anti-Latino, anti-immigrant sentiment in California, it is proposed that ethnic identity among Chicanos and Latinos will increasingly function as an impetus for political mobilization and political activism. As noted earlier, since 1996 Latinos in California have been turning out at the polls in record numbers, and have been very active in opposing anti-civil rights initiatives through marches, protests, and rallies.

**Political Culture and Political Activities**

To examine the relationship between their community's political culture and their political activities, students were asked if they belonged to organizations such as a community group, labor union or political group, whether they had ever boycotted goods produced by companies that Latino groups opposed, and if they had ever gone to a demonstration to get a law changed or protest an unfair policy. For all three categories, students from Southern California were more likely to report that they had been involved in boycotting goods, demonstrations, and belonging to an organization than students in Northern New Mexico. These findings support Sanchez Jankowski's contention that the political culture of the cities in which Chicanos lived influenced the kind and degree of political involvement. The figures in Table 4 show that Latino college students from Southern California tended to be more supportive of conflict-oriented protest than Latino students in Northern New Mexico.

The political culture in San Bernardino can be described as relatively conservative. Relations between the dominant culture and minorities are for the most part adversarial. When the interviews took place, Propositions 187 and 209 divided the community among racial/ethnic lines. In two local newspapers, numerous letters to the editor appeared on a daily basis. Many of the letters reflected intense hatred and fear of immigrants and minorities. Although elected public officials are somewhat diverse, conflict-oriented politics appears to be the norm. For example, in 1996, during a city council meeting, the mayor and two other city officials became involved in a physical altercation with a citizen who
Table 4
City's Political Culture and Political Activism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Activism</th>
<th>Calif. (n= 101)</th>
<th>New Mexico (n= 123)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belong to an Organization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>32.7% *</td>
<td>13.8% *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>67.3% *</td>
<td>86.2% *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend Demonstration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>39.4% *</td>
<td>15.7% *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>60.6% *</td>
<td>84.3% *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boycott Goods</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>45.9% *</td>
<td>13.6% *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>54.1% *</td>
<td>86.4% *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*chi square statistic significant < .001

went over his three minute time limit and refused to leave the podium. Another indication of adversarial and conflict-oriented politics is reflected in the recent rash of hate crimes: during 1996, a black male was murdered by three skinheads, and two black families had crosses burned in their front lawn by white teenagers. In April of 1996, two white officers from the county sheriff’s department were involved in the beating of two undocumented immigrants. One of the officers was fired and the other one was put on probation. In a poll conducted by one of the local newspapers a few weeks after the incident, approximately 90 percent of the respondents felt that the beatings were justified.

Another indication of voter conservatism in San Bernardino County is illustrated by the November 1996 election. Although registered voters in the county remained almost evenly split between Democrats and Republicans, and for a second time gave Bill Clinton a slim margin over his Republican opponent, Bob Dole, they overwhelmingly supported Republicans to repre-
sent them in national and state offices. One explanation is that the influx of conservative, white residents from Los Angeles and Orange counties in search of less expensive housing has contributed to the county’s conservatism. However, a growing minority population is countering with traditional liberalism. In contrast, elected officials in New Mexico are predominantly Chicano. For example, in Las Vegas the police chief, the city manager, the mayor, and six of the city council members are Chicano. Additionally, the five San Miguel County commissioners are Chicano, as well as the state representative and state senator. Subsequently, in comparison to Southern California, Chicanos and Latinos in New Mexico have not had to rely on conflict politics, because the political culture in that area is not controlled by Anglos.

Bilingual Education, Ethnic Identity, Region and Spanish Media

Gonzalez notes that Chicano children are usually perceived as the “foreigners,” “intruders,” and “immigrants,” who speak a different language and hold values significantly different from the American mainstream. The topic of bilingual education is an ongoing debate between those who see it as undesirable because it prevents immigrants from assimilating, and those who support it because the United States is a nation of immigrants where the various languages and cultures should be respected and retained. Subsequently, one of the questions that was asked of the respondents was “Do you support Bilingual Education?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support Bilingual Education</th>
<th>Selected Ethnic Identity</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>Chicano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern California (n=96)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>85.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100% *</td>
<td>100% *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern New Mexico (n=126)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>81.6%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100% *</td>
<td>100% *</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*chi square statistic significant at < .05
expected to find that supporting bilingual education was an indication that a
person was willing to be involved in conflict-oriented politics. In this sample
population, the consensus appears to be that it is important to support bilin-
gual education, regardless of where one lives or how one self-identifies (see
Table 5).

It can be argued that once new levels of empowerment are reached—as was
the case in Trujillos’ study of Chicanos in Crystal City, Texas—heightened ethnic
political awareness of issues such as bilingual education will continue be a factor
that increases cohesiveness among the majority of Chicanos and Latinos in the
Southwest. 

Political Practices, Class, and Region
Sanchez Jankowski characterized middle-class Chicanos as less likely to partici-
pate in radical politics, and more interested in becoming integrated into moder-
ate politics than working-class Chicanos. Calderon (1996) found that South-
ern California Chicano political leaders who have held elected positions, “. . .
have the characteristics of a politically ambivalent middle class.” He argues
that Monterey Park Mexican American leaders use ethnic identity situationally.
That is, they self-identify as “Hispanic” when they encounter a situation where
they need to appease mainstream political organizations and civic groups. Con-
versely, they rely on the less politically safe term, “Chicano,” as a means of
mobilization if they are in a potentially threatening political situation. To exam-
ine the relationship between standard political practices, class, and region, several
kinds of accepted political practices were included: 1) working toward getting
Latinos and Chicanos as a group to vote for a candidate, 2) writing letters to
political officials about Latino and Chicano issues, and 3) expressing opinions
by voting. As can be seen in Table 6, students from higher income levels are
more likely to express opinions by voting than are poorer students.

This is consistent with data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census showing
that people with higher levels of education and income are more likely to vote
than those with less education, and lower incomes. When regional differences
in voting are examined, we see that Southern California students are more likely
to vote than Northern New Mexico students. If we consider how many stu-
dents reported writing political letters, it can be seen that although the majority
of students from both regions said they had never written a political letter, stu-
dents from Southern California were more likely to have done so than students from Northern New Mexico. Additionally, the findings for class differences and writing political letters among Chicano and Latino Southern California students, are not consistent with Janskowski\textsuperscript{42} and Calderon's conclusions\textsuperscript{43} that middle-

Table 6
Political Activism, Income, and Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Activity</th>
<th>Income</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0-$19,999</td>
<td>$20,000-</td>
<td>$40,000+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Express Opinions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>55.9%</td>
<td>68.0%</td>
<td>81.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>39.0%</td>
<td>56.5%</td>
<td>51.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>44.1%</td>
<td>32.0%</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>61.0%</td>
<td>43.5%</td>
<td>48.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write Political Letters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>91.2%</td>
<td>76.0%</td>
<td>89.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>91.3%</td>
<td>88.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work for Candidates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>11.8%*</td>
<td>23.1%*</td>
<td>36.8%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>88.2%*</td>
<td>76.9%*</td>
<td>63.2%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>82.9%</td>
<td>83.0%</td>
<td>78.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Calif., n = 98 / NM, n = 127)

*chi square statistic significant at < .05
class Chicanos and Latinos are more likely to be involved assimilationist political activities: working-class students (8.8%) were just as likely to write political letters as middle- and upper-class students (10.5%); while middle-class students (24%) were more than twice as likely to write political letters.

Finally, if we examine income and regional differences, two interesting patterns emerge. Although the majority of students from both cities, from all income levels, reported that they had not worked for candidates, higher-income students (36.8%) from Southern California were more likely to have worked for a candidate than lower-income students (11.8%). In Northern New Mexico, the percentages were 21.6 percent and 17.1 percent, respectively. What can we conclude from these mixed findings? It is plausible that due to the anti-Latino political climate in California, Chcano and Latino college students are more likely to vote, write political letters, and work for candidates than their counterparts from Northern New Mexico. In short, knowing that Chicanos and Latinos do not occupy key political and economic positions in Southern California, it is possible that Chcano and Latino college students there are increasingly becoming motivated toward involvement in both conflict and conventional politics and activism, while simultaneously resisting assimilation and emphasizing their ethnic identity.

Perceptions of Political Influence/Power and Region
To assess perceptions of power and influence in American life and politics by region, Latino students were read the following statement: “Some people think that certain groups have too much power and influence in American life and politics, and that other groups don’t have as much influence as they deserve. How much power and influence do you think the following people have?” They were then asked to mark their responses on a four-item scale. As can be seen in Table 7, Latino students from Southern California are more likely than students from Northern New Mexico to perceive disadvantaged groups such as immigrants, Puerto Ricans, Mexican Americans, Central Americans, Native Americans, and Latino organizers as having too little power and influence.

Both sample regions rated the middle class as having too little or about the right amount of power. More Southern California college students rated businessmen (71.6%) and men (67.3%) as having too much power, compared to Northern New Mexico students (52.3% and 54.8%, respectively).
It is interesting that students from Northern New Mexico were more likely to say they did not know how much power and influence certain groups have than were students from Southern California. What can we surmise about these differences? One plausible explanation is that the population in Southern California is more heterogeneous than in Northern New Mexico. In North-

Table 7
Perceptions of Power and Geographical Location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Southern California (n=102)*</th>
<th>Northern New Mexico (n=126)*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Too Little</td>
<td>About Right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrant</td>
<td>81.4%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puerto Rican</td>
<td>74.5%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuban</td>
<td>52.9%</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American</td>
<td>46.1%</td>
<td>30.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexican American</td>
<td>91.2%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central American</td>
<td>74.5%</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>52.9%</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino Organizers</td>
<td>88.2%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Class</td>
<td>78.4%</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Businessmen</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Chi square statistic significant at < .05
ern New Mexico, Chicanos are the dominant culture, and as noted earlier, hold key political and economic positions. In Southern California, on the other hand, the power structure is controlled by Anglos. It therefore stands to reason that Chicano and Latino college students in Southern California are less likely to observe Chicanos and Latinos in positions of power, which in turn may affect their perceptions of power and influence in American society.

**Conclusion**

These findings confirm that compared to Chicano and Latino college students in Northern New Mexico, students in Southern California are more likely to: 1) utilize the Spanish media, which subsequently increases the likelihood that they will use it to address socio-political issues relevant to the Chicano and Latino community, 2) identify themselves as Chicano rather than Hispanic, 3) be involved in conflict politics, 4) concurrently engage in some conventional political activities, and 5) perceive minority groups as having less power than dominant groups. These patterns are attributed to several factors. First, the sociopolitical and economic climate in California has increasingly become anti-civil rights. Historically, immigrant groups have been blamed for economic and social problems. In California, this scapegoating reached an all-time high. In recent elections numerous politicians focused their campaigns on the evils of illegal immigration, and the need for national English-only legislation. For example, campaign commercials for both presidential candidates, Bill Clinton and Bob Dole, repeatedly featured “illegal aliens” running across the border, and emphasized that they were the cause of California’s economic problems because they increase the unemployment rates and fill up the prisons, schools, and welfare rolls.

Second, Chicanos and Latinos in Northern New Mexico occupy key economic and political positions, whereas California tends to be politically and economically dominated by Anglos. It was theorized that sociopolitical inequality increases conflict politics. And third, Chicano ethnic identity is more salient in California. The political and ideological implications of labels and ethnic consciousness are far-reaching. As noted by Mirande and Tanno “... the term Mexican American (and Hispanic as well) represents the more assimilationist end, rather than the midpoint, of a continuum of ethnic identity.” Chicano represents the more nationalist or separatist end. Gutierrez suggests that the development of “critical consciousness” involves 1) group identification—a preference
for Spanish-language media, living close to extended family members, and wanting children to carry on Mexican traditions, 2) stratum consciousness—understanding social inequality and how it affects Chicanos at the micro and macro level, and 3) self and collective efficacy—working to change the social structure.

In the case of Chicanos and Latinos, "ethnic identification and pride can be a supportive, rather than competing, sense of identity for the development of a political consciousness." Gutierrez also believes that immigrant Chicanos can more easily develop a sense of ethnic identity, critical consciousness, and political consciousness because of their substantial in-group contact. In comparison, native-born Chicanos are not as likely to be immersed in a Chicano community, and therefore may require some intentional intervention. In this sample of Chicano and Latino students, 99 percent of those from Northern New Mexico were born in the U.S. and tended to be from the fourth or later generation, whereas 29 percent of the students from Southern California were not born in the U.S. and tended to be from the first and second generations.

Participation in conflict politics emerges in response to a region's political culture, and perceptions of the erosion of civil rights. More specifically, in California initiatives such as Propositions 187, 209, and 227 have motivated students, working-class people, and immigrant workers to engage in resistance behavior. In contrast, Chicanos and Latinos in Northern New Mexico have been able to maintain their sociopolitical and economic advantage, and consequently, are not continually having to engage in conflict politics. The Chicano and Latino population represents the future of California's socioeconomic success, particularly due to their growing numbers. As noted by Hurtado, et. al., "California's unfolding demographic shifts will play a major role in shaping the state's policy agenda through the turn of the next century."

The state's policy makers must acknowledge these changing demographics. To a large extent this will determine Latino participation in conflict and consensus politics. Currently, organizations such as the Southwest Voter Registration Project (SWVRP), the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF), the United Farm Workers Union (UFW), the Mexican American Political Association (MAPA), and the National Council of La Raza Coalition (NCLR), are calling for sweeping reforms in education, immigration legislation (e.g. amnesty for immigrants), working conditions, economic disparities, and
political participation. If students, working-class people, immigrant workers and other groups continue to work collectively, there is no doubt that they will have a major impact on state and national politics.

NOTES
2 Ibid., p. 12.
3 Proposition 187 was approved by California voters in November 1994, however a subsequent lawsuit by the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF) resulted in a temporary injunction that did not permit the state of California to withhold educational and social services available to undocumented immigrants. In 1999, Proposition 187 met its demise when Governor Gray Davis ruled the initiative to be unconstitutional.
4 Proposition 209 was also contested by several organizations including the American Civil Liberties Union in Los Angeles. The ACLU and several other Latino organizations filed a lawsuit on November 1996, in federal court in San Francisco. Unfortunately, the higher court ruled in favor of enforcing the initiative.
5 Proposition 227 was also contested by various Latino Civil Rights Groups, but shamefully this initiative was ruled to be legal and was implemented within a few weeks.
6 Lindlaw, Scott. "Latino Vote a Record; Aids Democrats." The Sun (November 9, 1996): A3.
7 Ibid., p. A3.
12 Ibid., 1977.
14 Ibid., p. 161
15 Ibid., p. 173.
16 Sanchez Jankowski, 1986.
17 Ibid., p. 226.
18 Ibid., p. 23.
19 Ibid., p. 75.
20 Ibid.
22 Ibid., p. 181.
26 Ibid., p. 3.
27 I would like to thank Ann M. Cooper, Assistant Professor, for her assistance in conducting the interviews with students at New Mexico Highlands University.
28 Rios, 1996.
29 Ibid., p. 138.
31 Sanchez Jankowski, 1986.
32 Ibid., 1986.
33 Hirsch and Gutierrez 1977.
36 Sanchez Jankowski, 1986.
38 Trujillo, 1996.
42 Sanchez Jankowski, 1986.
43 Calderon, 1996.
46 Gutierrez, 1989, pp. 36-37.
47 Ibid., p. 50.
48 Gutierrez, 1989.
When the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ended hostilities between the United States and Mexico in the middle of the nineteenth century, a new relationship was created between the two countries that has had profound implications down to the present day. The United States and Mexico agreed to a new border, a new frontera, that physically, economically, culturally, politically, and symbolically both linked and separated the two countries. In the ensuing decades, economic and political forces in both countries gradually chipped away at the neatly arrayed concrete markers that demarcate the border and hold apart two quite different modos de vida (ways of living). What followed were large influxes of Mexican workers, first into the rapidly developing southwestern states and, by the first quarter of the twentieth century, into the very center of the industrial heartland in the Midwest. The large immigrant flows added to the historic Mexican settlements in the Southwest that had been originally established by Spanish settlers and missionaries. The unique mestizaje (race mixture) of Latin America thus came into direct contact with the North American melting pot, and the resulting pottage has yet to be digested by the “Colossus of the North.”

The presence of a large Mexican American population in the United States has redefined the reality of the U.S.-Mexico border. An obvious asset in the economic arena, this population also has experienced a variety of dislocations and challenges. One such challenge is in education, where Chicanos have fared poorly in relation to other groups for decades. While important initiatives have been launched to reduce or eliminate this educational attainment gap—through efforts such as Headstart, migrant education, and bilingual and English as a Second Language instruction—progress has been slow and the gap has persisted. The thesis presented here is that the Chicano educational attainment gap cannot be eradicated unless a Chicano pedagogy is created that takes into account the historical and cultural realities of the Chicano population along with the North
American context in which those realities must be reassessed and transformed. Four themes will be presented: 1) the border as a confluent region, 2) epistemology in a Chicano context, 3) the inadequacy of reformist education, and 4) a proposal for Chicano education based on the philosophy of transformational education. Collectively, these themes define the major components of a proposed Chicano pedagogy that will be able to eliminate the historic educational gap.

**The Border: Un Lugar Confluyente**

The border can be regarded as a place of confluence, un lugar confluyente. It is at the border that different peoples, cultures, economies, histories, traditions, aspirations, and ambitions, along with practices, challenges, and claims come together. Sometimes they come together smoothly, like a tart margarita that seems to know no borders, and sometimes they clash dramatically as when the dream of el Norte runs head on into la migra (the U.S. Border Patrol). Sometimes they blend together with great subtlety, like tejano music, or cowboy chili, where the source of the ingredients may no longer be recognized. And sometimes they don’t even take account of one another, each following its own patterns as if the other did not exist nearby. Nevertheless, the central feature of border life is its confluent nature, something that makes it distinctive and attractive. Like two great rivers, each an aggregation of numerous streams and arroyos, the cultures of the United States and Mexico come together at the border in a torrential encounter. Once they do so, it is impossible for the resulting great river of culture not to become reconfigured, re-energized, and transformed in its flow.

So, the border can be seen positively as an additive region. This perspective may be at odds with an earlier view of the border as a place of alienation, as well as with the more contemporary view of the border as a place that accentuates the Other, and that leads to the metaphorical mundo zurdo (left handed, i.e. absurd world) of social-cultural alienation in its many guises. But the border is not only a place of subtraction, divergence, and marginalization. It is also one of congregation, synthesis, and convergence. Juntos pero no revueltos (together but not blended) is not a significant ontological possibility at the border, at least in the long run. Juntos y revueltos (together and blended) is the inevitable ontological result of the confluence of cultures. To keep cultures completely separated at the border would imply the construction of a hermetic border that is difficult to
conceive and even more difficult to engineer and maintain. The better choice, it would seem, is to accept the ontological proposition that the border region is confluent in nature, primarily additive in its effects, and transformational in its character. If we accept this proposition, then the Chicano pedagogy that we seek should include this perspective.

**The Problem of Knowing**

Another theme that is important to the present discussion relates to the foundations of Western thought, which appear less certain now as a result of postmodernist critiques. Postmodernism challenges all knowledge claims based on universalist assumptions of objectivity and realism, which are typically embodied in positivist science. For the postmodernist, no current knowledge claims can be warranted absolutely; all knowledge is produced and is embedded within a matrix of race, gender, and class which binds such knowledge to a specific perspective or position. As Scheurich states: “... even though we researchers think or assume we are doing good works or creating useful knowledge or helping people or critiquing the status quo or opposing injustice, we are unknowingly enacting or being enacted by 'deep' civilizational or cultural biases, biases that are damaging to other cultures and to other people who are unable to make us hear them because they do not 'speak' in our cultural 'languages'.

Under these conditions, it is tempting to declare the end of knowing for Western culture, at least the end for the kind of knowing that claims to be objective and universal. And if this kind of knowing is at an end, or seriously undermined, how can one begin to fashion a Chicano pedagogy, or any pedagogy, which necessarily must take epistemology into account?

One solution is to think conflually. The current epistemological impasse can not be effectively addressed strictly in terms of the English language because in English to know is to know is to know. In fact, to know is to know positively and absolutely. But if we switch to Spanish we are able to open epistemological spaces that are difficult to think about in English alone. This point can be illustrated with an example.

Suppose that you were looking for someone named Juan García in one of the neighborhoods of Juárez and you did not know where he lived. You might get to the neighborhood, meet a vendor on the street, and ask: “¿Dónde vive Juan García?” (Where does Juan García live?) The answer might come back: “Se de él
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pero no lo conozco. ” Now what are we to make of this response if we translate it into English? Surely it would not be an accurate translation to say: “I know him but I do not know him.” What’s the problem here? The problem appears to be that in Spanish we recognize two quite different ways of knowing which are distinguished by the words saber and conocer. Saber is accurately translated into English by the verb “to know,” but what about conocer?

Conocer implies a more personal and interactive kind of knowing, a situated kind of knowing that depends on personal experience. To observe someone or something is to know (in the sense of saber) about the person or the thing, but it is not conocer. To know people or places interactively involves conocer. Conocer implies a contextualization or mutuality of knowing, a knowing that is achieved in a relationship that is reciprocal between the knowing parties. Thus, conocer can not be absolute knowing because it is premised on a relationship between the knower and the known and the relationship cannot be one of objectivity, rather, it must be one of interconnectivity and interactivity. Conocer thus opens a new epistemological space that is outside the postmodern critique of universal knowledge because conocer-type knowledge makes no claim to universality or to objectivist foundations. Universal (nomothetic) knowledge is outside the scope of conocer. Yet knowledge acquired through conocer-type knowing may be used to validate knowledge derived through saber-type knowing as in the expression: Se donde vive porque lo conozco. (I know where he lives because I am acquainted with him.)

The contemporary epistemological crisis thus acquires a different character when considered across languages and cultures. The border region need not be viewed as epistemologically determined strictly within the English “to know”. The presence of the Spanish language opens a bifurcated epistemological space: One should be able to know abstractly (saber) as well as to know relationally (conocer). This epistemological bifurcation, which English fails to make conceptually, has implications for creating a Chicano pedagogy. For surely it would not be wise to create a Chicano pedagogy that only attends to saber and that neglects conocer. A Chicano pedagogy that is responsive to its own cultural context should pay attention to both knowing in the abstract (saber) and to knowing relationally (conocer).

In summary, the situation along the border is conditioned by a confluent ontology and a bifurcated epistemology. This situation calls for a transforma-
transitional education that seeks to promote individual and collective transformation through engagement in dialogue to promote conocer-type knowing, through technological development that is driven by saber-type knowing, and through the discovery and use of new possibilities that result from the confluence of cultures in border regions. Before presenting the details of the transformational education approach, a brief critique of contemporary efforts to reform Chicano education is given below.

**The Limits of Affirmation and Reform**

Starting in the 1960s, efforts at educational change and improvement, especially those related to Chicano education, were premised on what may be called affirmational and reformational education. Affirmational education was a response to the history of educational neglect of Chicano students and others by the public schools. Affirmational education is characterized by the “education of the disadvantaged” that was the hallmark of the Johnson Administration’s War on Poverty that later, during the seventies and beyond, was transformed into multicultural education. The prime objective of affirmational education is to reinforce ego and self-image in the learner. Its primary technique is the presentation of role models which the learner can emulate and imitate. In practice, this approach examines the target community for cultural heroes and personalities who will be presented to the students as positive role models.

The selection of ethnic heroes is heavily affected by political bias, regardless of who makes the choices. Selections made according to middle-class values usually result in a stellar list of ethnic athletes, entertainers, businessmen and women, jurists, teachers, diplomats, inventors, minor historical figures, and accepted community activists. On the other hand, if ethnically conscious individuals make the selections, the list will be just as extensive, but include a diverse collection of ethnic anti-heroes, political dissidents, indigenous mythical figures, acclaimed activists, and a variety of international characters of greater or lesser fame. The first list finds its way into those public schools that are inclined toward affirmational education for Chicanos and other minority groups; the selections of the second group are promoted through Chicana/o Studies, campus activists, and certain Chicano intellectuals.

The fundamental strategy of affirmational education is to discover or invent charismatic ethnic figures in order to develop “ethnic pride” and “self-acceptance”
in a learner who presumably suffers from psychological disequilibrium. In this sense, affirmational education is an educational field strategy premised on psychological determinism. This viewpoint assumes that the basic educational problem of the Chicano and other minorities is his or her mental confusion and disorientation.

Placed within a historical framework, psychological determinism is a lineal descendent of other pathologic views of the Chicano, including the genetic determinism of the 1920s and the cultural determinism of the 1930s. In turn, these are lineal descendants of the racist attitudes characteristic of mid-19th century America during a period of westward expansion and "Manifest Destiny."

Since affirmational education is based on a pathologic model of the Chicano, it is not surprising that its basic approach is therapeutic and remedial. To the extent that ethnic groups have a need to remedy their self identification and pride because of oppressive social conditions and attitudes, affirmational education may serve a useful therapeutic purpose. But, like all remedies, affirmational education has multiple effects, some undesirable; therefore, great caution should be exercised in its use.

For example, affirmational education is implicitly elitist. By using a form of hero worship, it promotes caciquismo (loyalty to a local chieftain or strong man) and personalism. Young learners are not encouraged to look toward their own parents and family or neighbors for worthy role models. Many Chicano parents have endured great (often dramatic) hardships in order to provide better opportunities for their children. But these unknown Chicanas and Chicanos are seldom considered for inclusion on the "hero" list. Interestingly, various Chicano writers, poets, and dramatists have concentrated on the "common Chicano." In contrast, most Chicano educators and many political activists have adopted the hero worship approach.

For the advocates of hero worship, ordinary Chicanas and Chicanos exist as an indistinguishable lumpen Chicanada, unattractive to those who certify cultural heroes. Because of its elitist bias, affirmational education seeks to promote the notion of the ethnic jefe (boss) and to reinforce the social phenomenon of personalism.

Affirmational education also tends to create a narrow cultural nationalism, often with conservative tendencies. The temptation is to look backward in both time and geography. The game of substitution is encouraged. The Fourth of
July becomes *el dieciséis de septiembre*; May Day becomes *el cinco de mayo*; tacos and frijoles replace hamburgers and French fries; huaraches replace sandals; and tequila stands side-by-side with whiskey. The danger of an overly narrow cultural nationalism is that it puts more forward-looking activism into reverse gear. For this reason alone, it is necessary to go beyond affirmational education, media-certified heroes, and caciquismo.

In contrast to affirmational education, reformational education is a political strategy accenting public school structure, mainstreaming of previously marked populations, and economics. Much of the recent educational activism of minorities that is not affirmational is reformational or a combination of the two. As a political strategy, reformational education emphasizes the “increased representation of ethnic minorities” in all aspects of conventional educational institutions. In this sense, reformational education has shifted the pathologic assumption of affirmational education from the self to the environment, and more specifically to social institutions.

To improve the educational environment of school systems, minority faculty are hired, ethnic counselors are brought in, children are bused to promote integration, college admissions criteria are modified, support services are instituted, ethnic studies are incorporated into the curriculum, and bilingual education is introduced. In its positive aspects, reformational education tends to provide ethnic groups with greater access to educational institutions. For this very reason, however, reformational education should be viewed basically as a strategy for accommodating excluded groups. The objective of reformational education is to “make the system work” for those who otherwise are unable or not allowed to work the system. In this approach, the political and economic mainstreaming of the target group gains precedence over the group’s strictly educational needs (hence, the conservative counter-critique of “political correctness”).

Because reformational education focuses on organizational structures, practitioners of this strategy view the educational needs of the disenfranchised in a mechanistic way. The assumption is that if a Chicano or other ethnic counselor or teacher is hired by a barrio school the students corresponding to that ethnic group will learn more effectively whatever is being taught. Having learned more in school, the disenfranchised students will attend colleges and universities in ever-growing numbers. If more such students attend more colleges, there will be less poverty and less alienation in the minority communities.
The general idea is that when more minority personnel are hired by conventional schools, more minority students will be able to learn more of the conventional materials presented in such places. Hence, this approach sidesteps the most important concern of authentic education: What should be learned and how should it be taught? This is a question that reformational education often disregards or passes over lightly.

Reformational education is a truncated approach to the improvement of Chicano education, as well as to the improvement of education for other racial and ethnic minorities. It begins and ends with political exigencies and economic needs. Because of its emphasis on structure, reformational education can easily reach a premature saturation point. When conventional educational institutions have hired their informal (but nevertheless rigid) quotas of minorities, or admitted a more or less token number of minority students, they will no longer respond to the efforts of reformational educators for additional concessions. In fact, minorities will have their hands full responding to an institutional backlash premised on "reverse discrimination." Similarly, once minor curricular changes have been implemented, the tolerance for further and more basic changes is extremely small. In effect, this means that reformational education not only has a weak defense against co-optation by conventional educational institutions, but it also can be dismantled at will by those who favor the status quo. For these reasons, reformational education is self-limiting and can leave serious change agents stuck in first gear on the edge of the middle American mainstream. Even if successful, the presumed benefits of middle-class status would be enjoyed only by the privileged few minorities who were fortunate enough to gain access to the higher levels of the educational system. It is also worthwhile to note that during the eighties and nineties there has been a strong conservative reaction in the U.S. against the modest advances achieved by reformational educators. In fact, the very language of reformational education has been co-opted by the conservative right (for example, the progressive concept of empowerment is now used by conservatives to support parental choice) in pursuit of a program to further disenfranchise minorities and immigrants. The progressive notion of educational reform has turned into anti-reform in the hands of conservatives.

Transformational Education
Finally we get to the proposal for transformational education. The starting premise
is that on one side of the border Chicana/os need to evolve beyond the mendicant status of "disadvantaged" or the politically marginal category of "minority." On the other side of the border, Mexicans need to evolve beyond the chauvinistic designations of "developing," "underdeveloped," and "Third World." To achieve this goal, each person has to undertake an analysis of the yo y mis circunstancias (I and my circumstances) in order to achieve what Paulo Freire has called conscientization. 

An effective Chicano pedagogy will encourage personal and social transformation as the individual gains an ever-growing awareness of self and the environment. The transformation will be manifested by the ways in which Chicanas and Chicanos deal with the problems they experience and by the kinds of alternatives they create for themselves. At the collective level, Chicanas and Chicanos must address the issue of nosotros y nuestra condición (us and our conditions). Whatever the individual's understanding of the yo y mis circunstancias, there can be transformative social (i.e., collective) change only as the individual finds the means for transformation through the group. The group itself is strongly conditioned by environmental forces that have to be analyzed and understood by individuals acting in mutual agreement and within a common historical experience. The historical experience defines nuestra condición (our conditions, i.e., situation) and creates the generative themes that Chicanas and Chicanos must elaborate, master, and translate into skilled and concerted action. Confluence, knowing, reconfiguration, and transformation are some of the themes that need to receive attention from those who have gained critical consciousness of themselves and their conditions. As these themes gain ascendence in the border region and elsewhere, the groundwork will be laid for the objective transformation of the Chicano community through skilled collective action. Transformational education is a tool that can be used to lay that groundwork.

Components of Transformational Education

Only the general features of transformational education will be described here. Besides the ideas related to confluence and knowing that have been presented already, a central feature of transformational education is the idea of self-determination. Self-determination refers to a group of people individually and collectively exercising their fundamental right to construct their own lives, their own communities, and their own world view. This principle presupposes the
extrojection of superimposed and alienating cultural elements that reduce a group to a manipulated object. For Chicana/os, it also implies the need to transform those alienating social structures that pre-define their reality. At the same time, the principle of self-determination allows for self-directed and group-directed change. Self-determination is therefore a creative principle that permits individual growth and that fosters social reconfiguration.

All of the ideas presented thus far, and a few yet to be mentioned, can be combined into a general model of transformational education as shown in Figure 1. The model is especially germane to the postsecondary level, but with appropriate modifications, it is also applicable to the K-12 level. The major components of this model are:

1. An epistemological perspective
2. El globo de transformación (the sphere of transformation)
3. The self-determined study plan which guides student learning
4. Technology networks which encompass entire communities
5. Praxis, the joining of theory and practice

These interlocking components promote an essentially self-directed learn-
ing process. They create a learning structure that serves to guide the learner into higher levels of awareness and skilled action. Further details of each component are given below.

**El Globo de Transformación**

The centerpiece of transformational education is the *globo de transformación* (Figure 2). This component provides a process and a structure within which Chicana/os can collectively analyze and implement solutions to common problems and take advantage of unique opportunities. The *globo de transformación* engages the individual learner in a process of self-determined learning. The two functions harmonize collective needs with individual preferences. The *globo de transformación* is characterized by the following processes and structures:

1. *Los ciclos de trabajo* (cycles of work)
2. *Los subciclos de trabajo* (subcycles of work)
3. *La tarea* (the task)
4. Praxis in learning
5. *Documentación* (documentation)
6. *El globo de cultura* (the sphere of culture)

**Los Ciclos de Trabajo**

These are specific competencies or learning experiences important to a Chicano community that seeks to be self-determined. At the same time, *los ciclos de trabajo* provide a well-defined learning context within which individual learning preferences can be exercised. The specific competencies and learning experiences expressed by *los ciclos de trabajo* include: a) *comunicación* (communication), b) *descubrimiento* (discovery), c) *acción* (action), and d) *transformación* (transformation).

*Comunicación.* As used here, communication acquires a more general and comprehensive meaning best expressed by the Spanish translation of the indigenous expression: *Rostro y corazón.* This translated idea alludes to the public presentation of the self in a holistic way—the intellectual and the emotional, the “head and the heart.” Communication thus mediates between a unique individual reality and a shared, but constantly negotiated, community reality. Communication implies the basic exchange of information, but just as importantly, the exchange of feeling and insight that occurs in human interaction. Learners
are expected to achieve progressively higher levels of communication skills.

*Descubrimiento.* A learner who has experience and mastered communication as described above is ready for descubrimiento—an act of skill in discovering social reality through reflection and critical analysis. It entails problem setting and problem solving. Through problematizing of the world, specifically its social, political, and economic structures, the learner is able to unveil solutions to difficulties confronting him or her. Through the simultaneous problematizing of a specific area of knowledge, the learner is able to master technical information. The result is a comprehensive understanding of human knowledge and technology as well as social organization.

*Acción.* The knowledge and technology critically acquired in descubrimiento prepare the student to engage the social world through “skillful
action.” The learner’s skillful action occurs within a problem-solving context that links the individual’s need to master a particular technology or activity with the group’s need to contend with oppressive social structures or hostile environments. Skillful action based on descubrimiento is therefore action for liberation: At the social level, it is liberation from manipulation; at the technological level, it is liberation from ignorance and want. Acción is decisive self and group expression.

Transformación. Action upon the external environment implies the transformation of the world. Through comunicación, descubrimiento, and acción, the learner is able to transform his or her consciousness of the world and to contribute to a higher group consciousness as well. Hence, transformación entails both the replacement of oppressive social structures with more humanized and democratic ones and the enhancement of technical skills over the life span of the individual. On another level, transformación both derives from and ultimately results in an act of communication as the skilled learner interacts with other learners to share the transformational pedagogy. Thus, transformación requires from everyone a pedagogical commitment to learners who are engaged in the various stages of el globo de transformación; those who have successfully engaged el globo de transformación have the responsibility to assist others to do the same. All of this implies an ethic of caring for other human beings and taking action on their behalf.

Los Subciclos de Trabajo
Each ciclo de trabajo is divided into four subcycles of work. The purpose of the subcycles is to organize the major work cycles into smaller units of time or activity that provide well-defined learning structures and focused learning activities. The subciclos de trabajo include: a) preparación (preparation), b) siembra (planting), c) cultivo (cultivation), and d) cosecha (harvest).

Preparación. This subcycle includes the important idea of self-evaluation. It could also be understood as pre-planning. At the beginning of each major work cycle the student must assess his or her own goals, attitudes, experiences, and resources with respect to the major work cycle under consideration and the student’s individual study plan. This is a pre-planning phase that will permit the student to determine what the study plan might be and whether the student should proceed into the next subcycle of work or skip to the next major work
cycle. The subcycle of preparation is contemplative and exploratory as well as evaluative.

**Siembra.** This word means “planting” in English. This subcycle is concerned with planning activity. Specific plans are developed by the student with assistance from the *globo de cultura* (see below) to complete the task of a major work cycle and a given phase of the student’s individual study plan. Siembra involves developing tactics for dealing with specific problems the student experiences.

**Cultivo.** This is the subcycle of cultivation. Cultivation means action, the execution of plans made during siembra (although the plans are subject to continuous adjustment as new information or skills are acquired). It means care, attention, and critical, skillful action.

**Cosecha.** The harvest subcycle occurs at the end of each major work cycle. Cosecha, like preparación, includes the idea of self-evaluation. The student assesses what has been accomplished and what still needs to be done. Cosecha relates past performance (or nonperformance) to future expectations. Cosecha is a joyful subcycle. It allows the student to experience satisfaction with tasks well done and to contemplate future possibilities and accomplishments.

As presented here, the subciclos de trabajo have a strong ecological orientation because they relate the human learning process to the natural environment, especially as that environment is perceived by the agriculturalist. However, the labels that mark the subcycles of work may be changed to reflect other contexts, for example an urban environment. This approach encompasses a holistic and critical posture toward learning.

**La Tarea.** Tareas are specific learning tasks or projects that the learner undertakes within a subcycle of work. A tarea can be as short and simple as writing a paragraph or as long and complicated as organizing an agricultural cooperative. In principle, however, the tarea is a relatively short-term project that achieves a specific learning objective or that is a part of a larger project.

**Praxis in Learning.** The learning objectives presented by los ciclos and los subciclos de trabajo, as well as the Individual Self-Determined Study Plan, are meaningfully engaged by the student through the dialectical processes of critical analysis and skillful action. This dialectic constitutes “praxis” in transformational education. The learner achieves praxis by entering simultaneously into a *círculo analítico* (analytic circle) and a *círculo práctico* (circle of practice). These círculos are an outgrowth of the student’s *globo de cultura* (see below).
Through the círculo analítico, the student defines and critically analyzes a problem and synthesizes information to reach a conclusion. Through the círculo práctico, the student again defines the problem, diagnoses it, and undertakes skillful action to solve it. Hence, the círculo analítico and the círculo práctico represent two distinct but complementary processes that lead the student to praxis. Because of the dialectical relationship between the two círculos, the student is able to critically confront the problems that are posed by the individual or the group. At the same time, the student is able to master a specific, but individually selected, technology.

Documentación. Both the learning experiences the student undergoes by engaging el globo de transformación and the specific technologies each student masters are documented by means of a student portfolio. The portfolio is a learning biography that each student presents to the world in support of the claim that the student has acquired specific skills or competencies. In a larger sense, the portfolio is a composite record of the student’s learning experience as developed jointly by the student and his or her globo de cultura. Therefore, the portfolio is extremely important for evaluating the quality of both teaching and learning.

El Globo de Cultura. This is the focal structure for the student. It is within the globo de cultura that the student enjoys a dialogical learning experience. Members of the globo de cultura counsel and guide the student through the globo de transformación, the student’s chosen technology network, and other aspects of learning. In a real sense, the globo de cultura is a tool the student uses to unveil the world and to understand his or her relationships within that world. In this respect, the globo de cultura has an important instrumental function. The globo de cultura includes the student, a guía principal (staff resource person), another student, and one or more guías auxiliares (ad hoc resource persons). The latter provide the expertise in the student’s chosen technological field. The globo de cultura is a very important mechanism for evaluation and quality control in transformational education.

The Self-Determined Study Plan. One may look at the globo de transformación as a means though which the Chicano community can seek and carry out its own transformation—achieving self-determined growth and development. The specific components of the globo de transformación, however, represent only one possible configuration of elements that put into practice the
concept of self-determination. As the transformational education process is engaged, changes in specific components might be needed. In such cases, the new set of components, as well as their configuration, would have to be discovered by a collective transformational process. For the present, the globo de transformación represents one possible mechanism for the collective evolution of the Chicano community. As individual students engage the globo de transformación, they become links that can carry the transformational perspective to other communities on both sides of the international border.

The transformational view of self-determination is not limited to its collective expression. Individual self-determination is also very important. Indeed, the former implies the latter as a necessary, if insufficient, condition for its realization. In the context of transformational education, individual self-determination includes the belief that each learner has the right and the responsibility to choose the particular skills and competencies he or she wishes to acquire. Once these have been clearly stated, the learner, with the guidance of the globo de cultura, designs a plan for achieving the desired competencies. Clearly, the student’s plan is subject to revision as the student gains new skills, insights, or information. This critically revised student plan is called the “Individually Self-Determined Study Plan”. Since the self-determined study plan is developed and implemented through the globo de cultura (which, in turn is part of the globo de transformación), transformational education allows for individual preferences to be expressed within the context of collective self-determination.

Technology Networks. While the student may develop competence in any existing technology through the Individually Self-Determined Study Plan, those who formally practice transformational education need to develop their own technology networks. These networks will define those areas of know-how that are important for achieving self-determination for the Chicano community within a given historical moment. Examples of possible technology networks at the postsecondary and secondary levels include:

- agricultural technology network
- communications and arts technology network
- early childhood education technology network
- basic education technology network
- transformational education technology network
Other networks could be developed for grades K-8—for example, networks related to reading, science, and mathematics. The creation of technology networks, as opposed to traditional departments, is consistent with the indigenous philosophy of *el todo*—the holistic approach.\(^{23}\) By using technology networks, transformational education emphasizes the wholeness of human knowledge while focusing on the particular technology needs of the Chicano community. In general, technology networks have these features:

*Laboratorios* (laboratories) relevant to a specific technology. For example, the early childhood education technology network could operate one or more child care centers that would function as laboratories for students in early childhood education. The agricultural technology network would include basic science labs. Laboratories need not be campus-based, but should incorporate community resources whenever possible; it may even be desirable to develop such resources in the community at large rather than just on campus.

*Exploratorios* (explorations) in the appropriate subject areas. Exploratorios consist of all organized learning activities supported by a given educational program or institution. They include lectures, seminars, discussion groups, field trips, demonstrations, student and faculty projects, readings, performances, and internet sites.

*Utilization* of available resources from the community at large, especially skilled personnel, but also including physical facilities, technical assistance, funding, and so forth.

*Provision* of direct services to the surrounding community served by a given program or institution. Thus, the agricultural technology network should support agricultural cooperatives organized by farmers and farm workers, and the early childhood education technology network should provide child care to the community. Clearly, the extent of direct services provided to the community through the technology networks will be determined by the availability of resources.

**Summary**

Both affirmational and reformational education are inadequate approaches for developing an effective Chicano pedagogy. Affirmational education carries with it the discredited assumptions of an outmoded social science that viewed Chicanos and other minorities in a pathologic light. Image building and ego integration
are concepts that may deserve attention in an educational enterprise, but they can not be taken as the sole basis for a Chicano pedagogy. A truly effective Chicano pedagogy has to provide the community with more than simple psychological remedies.

The basic problem with reformational education—and the hostile reaction that it has engendered—is that it tends to concentrate on institutional structures at the expense of educational processes and self-determined learning goals. This approach has its roots in the American melting pot myth and its attendant folklore of legalistic equality, mechanical integration, and cultural assimilation. Reformational education takes its cues from the conventional educational system instead of responding to the exigencies of Chicano communities struggling to manage creatively the confluence of multiple cultural currents. Reformational education seeks primarily to achieve token mainstreaming even when what is needed is to redefine and reconfigure the mainstream.

Transformational education is a broad pedagogical strategy that attempts to go beyond simple psychological cures and the now debunked social science that viewed minorities within genetic, cultural, and psychological determinisms. Transformational education takes its cues from the realities of border life that argue for physical reconstruction, technological enhancement, cultural reconfiguration, and spiritual renewal. It is an educational approach that serves the needs of Chicano communities in the process of redevelopment and self definition. In fact, one could view transformational education as a significant tool for community development. As such, transformational education expands the boundaries of nosotros y nuestra condición (us and our conditions) and ultimately is concerned with la condición humana (the human condition).

NOTES

1 For the terms of the treaty, see B. Tate, Guadalupe Hidalgo, Treaty of Peace 1848 and The Gadsden Treaty with Mexico 1853 (Truchas, New Mexico, Tate Gallery, 1970).
4 Gilbert R. Cruz, Let There be Towns, Spanish Municipal Origins in the American Southwest, 1610 - 1810 (College Station, Texas A&M University Press, 1988).
5 Magnus Morner, Race Mixture in the History of Latin America (Boston, Little, Brown, 1967).


The recent spate of anti-minority education propositions in California and other states would seem to confirm this point. See, for example, Gary Orfield, “Politics Matters: Educational Policy and Chicano Students,” in José F. Moreno, ed., *The Elusive Quest for Equality, 150 Years of Chicanola Education* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard Educational Review, 1999), pp. 111-121.

A critique of the conservative educational agenda can be found in C. Newfield and R. Strickland, eds., *After Political Correctness: The Humanities and Society in the 1990s* (Boul-

For a discussion of critical consciousness and generative themes, see Paulo Freire, supra.

Paulo Freire, op. cit. In Freire's thought, the oppressed internalize the ideas, language, and culture of the oppressor, thus perpetuating the domination and control of the oppressor. Such oppressive cultural baggage must be expelled, or extrojected, from the oppressed as a step in gaining a more critical consciousness that can lead to liberation.

Fernando Díaz Infante, *La educación de los Aztecas, cómo se formó el carácter del pueblo mexica* (Mexico, Panorama Editorial, S. A., 1983).

See Paulo Freire, op cit., for a discussion of problematizing social situations as an act of learning.

See Fernando Díaz Infante, op. cit., for Aztec approaches to education.
MEXICANS IN NEW MEXICO: 
DECONSTRUCTING THE TRI-CULTURAL TROPE

Anne Fairbrother

If Coronado and Oñate were to meet, would they recognize their own people? What vestiges of the colonies created by Conquistadores would they find? What would they say of that riotous preoccupation about Spanish origins, recalling, with a smile, that none of the great leaders brought a wife or family with him? Arthur L. Campa

Arthur Campa, the renowned folklorist who wrote in the 1930s and 1940s, provides a refreshing response to the "preoccupation about Spanish origins" in New Mexico, and should be a key voice in the discourse around the tri-cultural trope that represents New Mexico today. That tri-cultural image is of the Indian, the Hispano, and the Anglo, and that image manifests itself in public enactments, in tourism publicity, and has penetrated the collective consciousness of the region.

The questions that must be asked in this region so recently severed from Mexico, and so long the outpost of an empire of colonized mestizos, are: Why is the mestizo, the mexicano, excluded from that iconic image? Why was the mestizo invisible and unheard from the time of the U.S. conquest in the mid-1800s through the 1930s, a subaltern without even the image-representation afforded the Hispano and the Indian? The answers must be pursued in historical and political territory, and into the labyrinth of colonization, internal and external, that was inflicted on the region by both the Spaniards and the Anglo Americans.

While still part of New Spain, New Mexico territory reflected the Spanish colonial social structure; essentially there were two classes: ricos and pobres, the rich and the poor. The ricos made up only two percent of the population but had all the political, social, and economic power, and were the beneficiaries of the large land grants.

The class system in play was also a caste system, since the wealthy were lighter skinned, and thus more "Spanish" than the majority of the population. There was a "mixing of blood" that occurred over the years, and as the population
increased, the proportionate amount of Spanish blood declined. By 1822 the population in New Mexico had risen to forty-two thousand with only a small portion being seen as Spanish in ancestry. Thus, the gap between the rich and the poor was maintained by class and caste distinctions, and Mexican Independence in 1821 primarily served the interests of the criollos, those of Spanish descent born in the colonies, and the upwardly mobile mestizos. The poor were driven into peonage.

The Spanish elites held the land, and thus the power, in the region. They were not prepared to give up that power when the United States took over the territory, and indeed, from all accounts, many did more than accommodate the Anglo Americans in the years of territorial government following the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848. The Anglo American opportunists who moved in, as early as the 1820s, “to enjoy the spoils of conquest,” made alliances with some of the wealthy Mexican class. Many of them became the middle class of that feudal society. In effect, “[t]he reality is that a small oligarchy of Anglo Americans, aided by a small group of ricos, established their privilege at the expense of the Mexican masses.”

That wealthy nuevomexicanos saw their darker mexicano brothers and sisters as inferior is clear, since to be Indian in Spanish colonial society was the lowest station. But we can also see how the incoming Anglo Americans perceived the mestizo population by the literature of the time. Impressions of this region reported by early travelers from the eastern U.S. varied. Some travelers experienced culture shock, finding the land and the people strange and repellant, some reported on the hospitality and the intelligence of the people. The Puritan abhorrence of Catholicism colored the perceptions of the Anglos who entered the region, and the written reports depicted the Mexicans as being on a continuum between “lazy, ignorant, and of course, vicious and dishonest” and “kind, gentle, hospitable, intelligent, benevolent and brave.” Some Americans spoke out against the injustice of the Mexican-American War, and called for a more balanced view of the people, but the war also fueled further denigration of Mexicans. One influential expedition chronicler, Frank S. Edwards, wrote in 1848 that Mexicans were “debased in all moral sense, [and comprised] the meanest, most contemptible set of swarthy thieves and liars to be found anywhere.” Subsequent travelers often reported what they expected to find from reading such reports, and negative images became entrenched. Stereotypes evolved: “the sinister, mes-
tizo scoundrel, and less frequently, the decadent ‘Castillian’ romantic.”

The reasons Raymund A. Paredes gives for these unjust negative images of Mexicans include the fear of the “other,” anti-Catholic sentiment, racial prejudice, and ethnocentrism. Also, as Anglo America took over the region, such perceptions of the people as debased and villainous served to justify the subsequent actions of the colonists—the taking of land and the destruction of culture. Whatever the reasons, many Anglo Americans entered the region with irrational prejudices and hatred against Mexicans already established.

The ricos could often adapt to the ways of the Anglo American. They, because of their wealth and education, adopted the fashions and lifestyles of a cosmopolitan society. They had often attended private Catholic academies, and had learned English, and “acquired a taste for Anglo food, politics, and status.”

The people who lived in small settlements in the New Mexico territory were more isolated and felt the new cultural influences less. In fact, until the coming of the railroad in the 1880s, the Anglo conquest had more positive than negative consequences for the Mexican villages in this northern territory. There was increased opportunity for trade, and access to seasonal work in Anglo industries. But the land encroachment and the discrimination that barred the Mexicans from free commerce came soon enough. According to Sarah Deutsch, the main disruption that occurred in the decades after 1848 was at the heart of communal village life. Communal land that bound the villagers together as a community was taken, leaving them without their traditional social foundation: the “plaza structure,” and there was pressure to replace that communality with a more individualistic economic system. Land was often taken by fraud, through default after excessive taxes were levied, and through extortionate payments to greedy lawyers. Once the land went to the public domain—used, for example for the railroad and for national forests, the villagers had insufficient land to continue their pastoral livelihood. Even the main income source, sheep ranching, suffered from intrusive Anglo business practices, making the Mexican villagers even more dependent on working as migrant labor in the mines, the fields, and on the railroad.

There was, of course, competition between the Mexican elite and the powerful and opportunity-seeking Anglo Americans. But it was the small landowners who suffered the most. Some powerful ricos joined with some of the Anglo Americans and formed the notorious Santa Fe Ring, that in the two decades
following the Civil War, grabbed an estimated 80 percent of the New Mexico land grants. Thus, the Mexican elite fought for its land, but it often meant alliances with the Anglo Americans to consolidate and increase land holdings.

There was mobilization along ethnic lines against the cultural, economic, and linguistic threats of Anglo American institutions. But to poor Mexicans in this northern region, there was often little difference between the Anglos and the ricos, and they mobilized to support such activists as Las Gorras Blancas (the White Caps) who rode at night to cut property fences and destroy railroad structures, symbolically and actually challenging the Anglo and Hispano power elites. They declared their purpose to be to protect the rights of all people and especially those of the "helpless classes." The choice was always resistance or accommodation, and resistance was widespread as the activity of "social bandits" and the many incidents of labor mobilization show. Many Anglos and establishment Mexicans saw such activity as anti-American and revolutionary, and indeed criminal. The widespread—and open—support for such acts of resistance, for the grassroots People's Party, and for the mutualistas (village-based mutual-aid societies), only served to separate the "Mexicans" from the Hispanos in popular consciousness. This insurgence was not the behavior of noble Spaniards, nor of those descended from them.

With the land base of the communal village life eroded, many of the men had to find work in industry, on the railroad, or in the fields. Working as a periodic migrant wage laborer was the preferred way to both support and maintain the cultural integrity of their home communities, and became an central part of life for the nuevomexicano villagers. These workers were described by a critic of the time as: "lacking in thrift, ambition, and strength, and filled only with listlessness, unsteadiness and violence." While acknowledging institutionalized racism that judged workers by their nationality rather than competence, the critic still saw a "lack of ambition . . . inherent in the race." This was mainly attributed to the fact that the Mexican worker remained "outside of American civilization." Ironically, of course, this was something that the Mexican villagers tried very hard to do, in order to protect their cultural integrity. So this cultural misreading further fueled the negative stereotypes of the working-class Mexican—and of all who so identified themselves.

The coming of the railroad ended New Mexico's isolation, and raised the inevitable question of statehood. Partisan political issues soon surfaced. The ricos,
who wielded significant political power in the region, did not want Anglo influence to increase. The Anglos and their supporters in Washington were delaying statehood until they had political control of the region, indeed until Americans were the numerically dominant group.

New Mexico was to be denied statehood for more than 60 years. There was an attempt to bring New Mexico, Arizona, and Oklahoma into the union through an omnibus bill brought before Congress by William S. Knox in 1902. Albert J. Beveridge, chair of the Senate Committee on Territories, objected to the plan, and went on a thirteen-day fact-finding tour of the Southwest. His subsequent report recommended against New Mexico becoming a state, listing as reasons: "... the territory's insufficient population, its high illiteracy, the aridity of its climate, the large number of Mexicans and Indians in the territory, and the fact that 'a large percentage of the population could only speak in their native tongue.'"

This report fueled a long debate. The disparaging comments were echoed in spirit by later proposals to unite Arizona and New Mexico into one potential state—so as to reduce the percentage of Mexicans. One topic that aroused Hispano pride was that of the suggested name for consolidación with Arizona. The intention was to abandon the name "New Mexico" and rename the consolidated state. The names Lincoln, Navajo, and Hamilton were suggested, and an article in El Independiente, a Las Vegas, New Mexico, Spanish-language newspaper, responded:

This action suggests something akin to hate and contempt toward the history and deeds of the people who colonized this territory and who, for centuries, have been the prime actor in the preservation and maintenance of a dominion obtained and defended at the cost of countless efforts and sacrifices.

The writer added that such a disregard for the import of the name and referential history showed "the direct and irreconcilable antagonism against the customs and origins of the people of New Mexico."

The issue of the name brought to the public arena the prevalent anti-Mexican prejudices and veiled racial attacks. The consolidation measure was put to the vote in 1906, and defeated in Arizona (where the residents apparently did not want to be ruled by Mexicans), and in the counties in New Mexico with high concentrations of Spanish speakers.

It is clear that Hispano power was being threatened by the growing dominance of the Anglo Americans, politically and economically. Indeed, even after consolidation was rejected, there was still the same discussion about changing
New Mexico's name. The editorials in *El Independiente* consistently expressed the fear of the loss of power and influence, and of the erosion of cultural integrity. \(^{26}\) Gabriel A. Meléndez writes that in the end, statehood was a political compromise for Hispanos, \(^{27}\) as they had to learn to play the Anglo game, as it were, in order to safeguard rights guaranteed in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848.

Hispanos fought for survival in the political arena, and as can be seen in state pageantry, in the Santa Fe Fiesta for example, the Hispano political presence is part of the tri-cultural trope. \(^{28}\) For New Mexico to become a state, a great deal of conscious public relations work appears to have been done to present tame natives reinventing the Pueblo world to make it an exotic commodity with value for the Anglo American, and to develop the Spanish Romance that was the benign and romantic picture of past Hispano grandeur. The mestizo had no place in this colorful creation.

Leah Dilworth presents the historical process that reinvented the Indian for the Anglo American imagination. One thing that fired the imagination of early Anglo travelers and anthropologists was the notion that in the Pueblo world they were seeing cultural primitivism, which was a romantic cure "for what ails modernity." \(^{29}\) At the close of the nineteenth century, in the face of growing technology and its attendant urban alienation, there were many people, especially artists and writers, who yearned for the purer, simpler and more natural values "thought to dwell in the primitive other." \(^{30}\) As the region was opened up by the railroad and the entrepreneurs, the Indians were reinvented as safe and commodified, as exotic and inspirational. Their arts and crafts were highly desired, and, as befitted the role of the subaltern, produced with the needs and tastes of the dominant culture in mind. Anglo American artists and writers were instrumental as cultural intermediaries for Indian creativity, and their imaginings of Indians helped form regional identities. \(^{31}\)

In the 1910s and 1920s, however, Hispanic life in the Southwest was rarely part of the tourist spectacle. \(^{32}\) A few crafts from the Mexican villages were sold, but the artisans were not depicted. The place that the Mexican had in the American imagination was very different from that of the Pueblo Indian. Thanks to such regionalists as Charles Lummis, there were stereotypes of the Mexican peasant already well established: "lazy, carefree, and dirty, with no thoughts for the future." \(^{33}\) Mexicans had been demonized during the Mexican-American War,
and now, during the Mexican Revolution, were easily stereotyped, evoking such images as that of Pancho Villa thieving and murdering innocent Americans—not good for the tourist trade. Unlike the tragic Pueblos, the Mexican was not vanishing, was not being studied by those who would record the last gasps of an edenic culture, and was engaged in menial work in the fields and on the railroads, and often causing labor strife there. Not a saleable image. Indeed, Sylvia Rodríguez, echoing Bodine, describes the Hispanos as being caught in a ‘tri-ethnic trap,’ caught between a growing Anglo economic and political power, and the “tourist engendered Anglo glorification of Indian culture.”

By the 1920s, there was some Anglo American interest in the Spanish colonial past in New Mexico, but Hispanos did not often figure as artisans in representations of the region and its people until the 1930s. At that point, the glory of Spanish colonial art was revived by Anglo Americans concerned that the conquistador heritage not be lost. Ironically, (or maybe not so ironic given the Anglo Americans' colonial role in the region), “Hispanic culture could be ‘seen’ only at the point certain aspects of it were perceived to be disappearing.” Thus the Hispano was now embraced in his Castillian glory, in his colonial elegance, in his European purity. The Anglo American artists and eager patrons, and the railroad entrepreneurs, were creating the romance of “uncontaminated sixteenth-century Spain reproducing itself ever purely in an isolated corner of the world.” Spanish Colonial Art was now commissioned from village artisans by Anglo American patrons willing to pay for what they determined to be authentic and marketable.

During the 1920s, Mary Austin, the grande dame of patronesses, “was largely responsible for shoring up the residue of the “Spanish” past, embellishing “Spanish” cultural fragments where necessary, and inventing “Spanish” cultural practices where there were visible gaps.” Austin was involved in the renaissance of Hispano cultural arts in northern New Mexico through the formation of the Spanish Colonial Arts Society. She raised the money needed to restore the Santuario at Chimayo, from friends in the eastern United States, ensuring its preservation under the guardianship of the society. She also felt the responsibility to bring Spanish dances and theater back to the plaza, stating, “(W)hat I am trying to do is to restore to the Spanish people the opportunity which they once made and we Americans stupidly destroyed.” Austin was, in her heartfelt defense and promotion of the region and its peoples, invoking New Mexico as Spain:
The colonists who came here originally came direct from Spain; they had not much tarrying in Mexico. They brought with them what they remembered, and as soon as they began to create, they made things in the likeness of the things of old Spain...41

To show the pervasive nature of this romanticized genealogy of New Mexico, we need look no further than Harper's Weekly in 1914, which carried an article entitled "Our Spanish-American Fellow Citizens," in which:

'Spanish' bloodlines in New Mexico were declared pure hundreds of years after the Spanish colonial enterprise. The Spanish people in New Mexico...are not of the mixed breed one finds south of the Rio Grande, or even in Arizona, where there is a small remnant of Spanish blood. Indeed, it is probable that there is no purer Spanish stock in Old Spain itself.42

What was the reality for mestizos, absent as they were from the public relations images? They were pobres within the feudal system that was New Spain. After Independence, which simply replaced peninsulares with criollos as the colonizers, the change must have had a minimal impact on the daily life of the peones who worked for the ricos or eked out a living in remote villages. When American Progress, the strident popular image, manifest in the national imagination and policy, descended on them in 1848, life changed, with the loss of lands and the modernization that came with the influx of Anglo Americans and their way of life. This change turned many paisanos into wage earners on the railroads, in the mines, or as agricultural workers on commercial farms.

While white America discovered the romance of the presence of Spanish greatness on American soil, Mexicans with roots deeper in the soil than any conquistador in glittering armor, were living as subsistence farmers, being flushed from their fields by the encroaching homesteaders, working in factories in the cities, or laboring in the mines. Perhaps, as Enrique R. Lamadrid writes, "They had to be rendered landless and powerless before the process of American-ization could proceed."43 In the towns and cities the Mexicans suffered from racial and cultural discrimination, were paid lower wages, and were branded with the stigma of inferiority to the Anglo American workers. Mexicans also fought for social justice in the education of their children. Mexican children were often segregated into "Mexican" schools, receiving an inferior education, discriminated against because of negative stereotypes and prevalent perceptions that because they were not white they couldn't learn.44
By 1920, approximately 12,500 New Mexicans were leaving the state each year for seasonal work. The Depression a decade later drastically reduced that number and brought great hardships. Carey McWilliams reports that during this crisis, a change began to occur in Anglo-Hispano relations. About this time, terms such as “Spanish-speaking,” “Spanish-American,” and “Spanish-Colonial” came into use in New Mexico,\(^45\) and in the early 1930s were noted to be more widespread, as the Spanish romance flourished. It was seen as an attempt by New Mexicans to distinguish themselves from immigrants and a desire, on their part, to avoid the subordinate status already attached to the name Mexican.\(^46\)

There is much to unpack here in trying to understand why nuevomexicanos would choose to identify only with their Spanish heritage. It seems clear, however, that they thought it necessary to avoid the stigma of being “Mexican.” It must have been easy and psychologically rewarding, not to mention safer, to buy into the romanticized version of one’s history.

It seems likely, too, that the rudimentary and Americanizing schooling that was available would be meting out the *Harper’s Weekly* version of American history, which did not instill pride in mestizaje. The first generation of mestizos to have been through a U.S. public school system was emerging by 1920, and whatever the shortcomings of their educations, they were ready to join the Anglo American and Anglicized middle class. The social stratification was clear, and having always been called ‘Spanish,’ the rico element had experienced little overt prejudice or discrimination.\(^47\) Thus, with this need to distinguish themselves from the “Mexican” lower class, their readiness to embrace a respected, reconstructed history is entirely understandable. “While the two upper-class groups had always hobnobbed together, exchanging compliments and courtesies and genuflecting before the ‘Spanish’ monuments of the past, the respective middle-class elements had not gotten along so well together.”\(^48\) Indeed, membership in service organizations, fraternal organizations, and other symbols of social status were routinely denied to Spanish Americans, then, and for decades to come, as Spanish Americans were threatening Anglo American privilege. Thus, the sociological concept of competition is evoked here, so that prejudice and its application, discrimination, are tools to ensure an advantage by excluding competitors.

Despite the problems that still afflicted them socially and economically, there were rational reasons, social and psychological, for mestizos to embrace the myth
of Spanish heritage, and to deny their Mexican identity. New Mexico had been labeled the “land of poco tiempo” in 1893, in a widely popular and influential book by Charles F. Lummis, a travel writer. He glorified the conquistadores “and in other ways opened the way for the thorough romantic hispanization of the people, culture, and history of New Mexico . . . By the 1920s and especially the 1930s, the myth of the Spanish Southwest had become so pervasive that often educators, scholars, and scholarly publications uncritically accepted the myth as fact.”

Phillip B. Gonzales has also chronicled the development of this determining myth. He asks, “Why did Spanish nomenclature attain hegemony at this time?” He first answers with the “rather standard, oft-repeated explanation” that Latinos adopted Spanish identity in defensive reaction to anti-Mexican prejudice, that “the newly emerging middle and upper class developed a Castillian consciousness to ward off the stigma of being Mexican.” During and after the Mexican Revolution, immigration from Mexico increased, and Mexicans were more noticeable in the region, and the Spanish-speaking citizen experienced a lowering of social status. Being “Spanish American” immediately signified that a person was Spanish and not Mexican, and was American, an important label for accommodation. To be Mexican could be seen as un-American during the Spanish-American War, when it was erroneously feared that Mexico might ally with Spain and begin border raids. To be Mexican was threatening to border regions, in the wake of the Mexican Revolution. Indeed, due to the Mexican involvement in labor confrontations, Mexicans were already labeled as anti-American revolutionaries. Therefore it was necessary to be Spanish-American. In the early decades of the twentieth century, especially after World War I, in the glow of policies of Americanization, it was better not to be foreign.

Gonzales states that to call oneself Spanish American “clearly accommodated American dominance . . . The problem is the suggestion that Latino self-labeling involved a minority group docilely conforming to an Anglo American dictate.” Gonzales suggests another reason for the adoption of Spanish American identity. He posits that the romantic view of Spanish heritage was not just embraced by the ricos, but that folklorists such as Aurelio Espinosa were exhorting the pobres to recognize their Castillian language and customs, “which had been humbly retained for three hundred years.” Espinosa presented scientific proof to support the claims of an extant Spanish culture in New Mexico. And this was not a
heritage preserved by the descendents of the splendid criollo, but by the noble poor. Nina Otero also wrote of this glorious heritage for the poor:

The Spanish descendent of the Conquistadores may be poor, but he takes his place in life with a noble bearing, for he can never forget that he is a descendent of the Conquerors.56

There were certainly political, sociological, and psychological reasons to adopt the label Spanish American, and its later popular variant, Hispano. Whether the Mexican villagers, the pobres, consciously took on the label, effectively buying into the tri-cultural symbology, because of genuine identification, or whether the master narrative was irresistible in the social and economic climate, or whether the anti-Mexican bias was internalized, are complex questions. The level and manner of the accommodation that did happen are explored by Genaro Padilla, who looks in depth at the work of one of Nina Otero’s contemporaries.

Genaro Padilla tells us of Cleofas Jaramillo, who wrote in the 1930s. It is clear Jaramillo had Anglo mentors, who were also admirers of her stories of New Mexican cultural life. Jaramillo saw herself “as a descendent of the Spanish pioneers,”57 and as an intermediary between the traditional culture and the encroaching and modern Anglo ways. She told her family stories as a way to share the folklore. Her father’s grandfather, Don José Manuel Martínez, petitioned the government in Mexico City for a land grant in 1832, and the Tierra Amarilla grant was given to the Martínez family. Her grandfather, Don Vicente, later bought part of the Arroyo Hondo grant, building a house in the old Spanish style.

Thus did this family come to the hidden valley of the Arroyo Hondo—another family to help, by means of bloody battle and peaceful law, to bring civilization to wilderness—another family to help adapt the old customs of Spain to a new land, adding something to the heritage of the Spanish Conquistadores who came before them.58

Padilla comments on the role of Jaramillo’s romantic writings in the development of the Spanish Romance:

This romance of the Southwest, installed by American intellectuals, writers and artists, and tourists who traveled to New Mexico at the turn of the century, deeply inscribed itself upon the popular and political consciousness, providing a master narrative that strategically concealed deforcement by superordinating a heroic Spanish colonial past that would salve a colonized people’s psychological wounds, even while they continued to surrender their land and social status.59
Padilla views Jaramillo's writing as a "discursive activity that was scripted for her by what she more than once refers to as the 'newcomers,' yet reappropriated by her when it became evident that her cultural knowledge was being plundered." In other words, Jaramillo was encouraged to write her romantic stories of her family's genteel Castillian heritage, and that prescripted discourse was co-opted selectively and used by her patrons to construct the stories they imagined.

Jaramillo did buy into the construct, becoming involved in the Santa Fe Fiesta and planning events "in which her people's history and culture were being stupidly carnivalized by Anglos," as she urged her people to take an active interest in the preservation of the old Spanish customs and traditions. Even if Jaramillo's stories were co-opted to serve the Spanish Romance, we have to acknowledge that she was not creating a fantasy in the telling of her familial story of Hispano privilege, remembering the days before the Anglo American invasion. It may be a monochromatic picture, but it was not altogether false—it was her reality, although couched in a romanticized history that "traversed the centuries in an unspoiled genetic and cultural line from De Vargas." Even though this vision was co-opted, there is still an authenticity to her recreated memories, especially of daily Spanish customs and traditions. The problem is that the romance was presented as the whole picture of New Mexico Spanish heritage, without reference to the conflicted history of the region, or to the ongoing struggle for social, cultural and linguistic survival. Yet the "reappropriation," of which Padilla wrote occurred: Jaramillo did counter Anglo American imposition with her writings, and she did wrest some civic organizations from the Anglos' control. And she did tell her stories that we can appreciate today as a part of the truth of the history of this region.

Tourists came to imbibe this safe, palatable, and commodified character of the Southwest. The Pueblos could be rendered as continuations of the picturesque, cliff-dwelling cultures, easily frozen into living tableaux, captured in picturesque dances, and packaged in colorful pottery, rugs and jewelry. Most of the art forms were modified by the tourist mongers, the artifact collectors and patrons, the hegemony wielders. So it was, too, for the Hispano by the 1930s: there was colonial art to make, a history to carve, to paint, in exotic but purchasable fancy. There were public dramas of that sanitized colonial history to watch. These representations became the master narrative, which the subalterns en-
acted, but seldom disrupted.

Padilla contends that a generation of New Mexican writers were effectively silenced as they internalized, and themselves reproduced, the master narrative created by the dominant Anglo American culture. The Jaramillos of the era did enact the romance, while also wresting the authority from the appropriators in the telling of their stories—albeit romanticized versions that eclipsed mestizo experience.

The folkways epitomized so colorfully in the Santa Fe Fiesta were creations of the zealous re-creators of Hispano culture. What had been a small-scale annual religious remembering of the Spanish reconquest in 1692, for example, was re-fashioned by Mary Austin and her Anglo compatriots into a spectacular cultural enactment that established the “dominant Spanish tradition.” Here again, the Anglo American benefactors helped to fashion a collective perspective of the past for the people of the region.

Of course there were many like Jaramillo who found voice to further the romance. Professor Aurelio M. Espinosa, a linguist, grammarian, and folklorist, “perpetuated the myth of Spanish New Mexico” with scholarly weight. In 1916 he claimed: “the character of all my New Mexican folklore material... is Spanish in every sense... The Indian and English elements have no importance whatever...” Espinosa believed that Spanish would survive, that New Mexico would continue to be bilingual, because Spanish was “the language of the descendants of conquerors and colonizers of noble Spanish blood, men and women conscious of their glorious past and of the spiritual force of their people.” Hispano culture as a whole would survive because Nuevomexicanos “are Spain in New Mexico. They have the power, the privilege and the duty to conserve, fortify and perpetuate all the beauty... of the great and glorious Spain of bygone centuries.”

But another scholar, whose reputation would surpass Espinosa’s, brought a different perspective to the discourse, and spoke against the romance of Spain in New Mexico. Arthur L. Campa argued that while Spain had been an important influence in New Mexico, that influence was actually filtered through Mexico. He interpreted the linguistic evidence, so compelling for Espinosa, differently, chiding scholars who were not thorough enough to recognize words that were of indigenous Mexican origin, not Spanish. He averred that it was meaningless to try to distinguish New Mexico from Mexico culturally: “In matters of origin
hardly any distinction can be made between Mexico and New Mexico. Culturally, these two regions are seldom separated by the Rio Grande . . .”

Campa’s humorous essays are still pertinent, and a delight to read, and he brings a balance to the picture: “We all have some Spanish in us, undoubtedly, but before we try to make this a thing of grandeur, it would be worthwhile to examine what sort of Spaniards our ancestors were and how we inherited their blood.” He shows an astute understanding of the traps of Anglo patronage: “Romantics, who have come among us in good faith, are capable of making us nobles so they can exploit our lineage afterwards while boasting of the purity of our blue blood.” In fact, he heralds the coming of people who will know themselves and not need the false succor of a falsified heritage, while lamenting those who do: “Today, due to the lack of true merit, many seek refuge in the myth of pure Spanishness, or of being real Spaniards.”

Campa credited Mary Austin with planting the seed of the revitalization of Hispanic folklore and popular art, but criticized the exploitation of the true artist by the “merchant of culture,” and the way the experts stifle genuine creativity by demanding “authenticity.” He wrote of a need to express a New Mexican popular art which would be based on both the Spanish and Mexican heritage, while avoiding becoming “only simple and blind imitators of colonial times.”

Campa asserts the Mexican heritage of New Mexicans in his essay “To become New Mexican he first had to be Mexican,” and raises the question that perhaps is at the core of the issue of the invisible Mexican in the tri-cultural trope: “The one who becomes embarrassed about the term ‘Mexican,’ because someone calls him that as a nickname, will have to decide what kind of Mexican it is that angers him.”

There are historical and political explanations for the invisibility of the Mexican in the creation and persistence of the tri-cultural trope. And certainly in the unfolding story we can see the processes and manifestations of rational and pragmatic decisions made by a people oppressed socially, politically, and economically. It was simply more acceptable to be Spanish or Hispano than to be Mexican. But why? What were the assumptions that created the need to make such a decision? The prevailing message in those earlier eras was that the Indian, the Mexican, was inferior. This internalized message became a critical part of the New Mexican psyche until it was challenged during the Chicano renaissance of the 1960s, when through the very label of Chicano, (Me)-Xicano, indio heritage
was reclaimed.

What was left out in the transition from Mexican to Spaniard was of course the mexica, the indio. In Spanish colonial society the social stratification hierarchy was clear. The peninsulares were the elite, followed by their nativo brothers, the criollos. Next were the mestizos, stratified by color and birth, and the lowest of the low were the indigenous peoples of Anahuac—the indios, the mexicanos as the Spaniards called them. Thus, for an enterprising mestizo to succeed within the system, he or she had to accept the dominant culture’s values and mores. And central to the dominant hegemony was the belief that to be indio was to be inferior. Here was and is the anguish of internalized colonization: believing oneself to be inferior, which engenders self-hate.

When America invaded the Southwest it too brought the attitude that to be Indian, black, Chinese... was to be inferior. And its policies and practices instituted white supremacy—as both coercive oppression and paternalistic patronage.

Selective and convenient amnesia has allowed many Americans to discount their own racially and ethnically mixed heritages, it would seem. Certainly it was acceptable to call oneself a “pure” European, a pure Englishman, a pure Spaniard. Spaniard was a little problematic because of the Moorish element, but the Castillian conquistador, bearing the sword and the cross, could invoke the requisite purity.

In fact, as Acuña explains, the New Mexicans who readily called themselves Hispanics argued that New Mexico had been isolated from the rest of the Southwest and Mexico during the colonial era, so they had remained racially pure and were thus Europeans, in contrast to the mestizo (half-breed) Mexicans. Campa makes an interesting and ironic comment on claims of Spanish purity, and berates those who were “ashamed that they were Mexicans before 1848.”

The Spaniard is a mixture of so many races that he never worried about absorbing additional bloods... Professor Joaquin Ortega gave the following opinion: “We the Spanish are an international cocktail.”... By being New Mexican we will be Mexican because of our undeniable culture and Spanish for never having denied ourselves.

But to be Hispano was to be puro español. And the “most primitive” Indian, the most isolated, was also the most culturally “pure”—still an inferior race, of course, but that could be remedied with assimilationist education. But to be Mexican was to be de facto impure—a mixture, therefore an abomination. Mestizos were seen to combine the savagery of the Indian with the bad traits of the
Spanish. In fact, the early travel accounts, by the likes of Charles F. Lummis, frequently depicted the Mexican in New Mexico as despicable. Lamadrid quotes longtime Kit Carson associate, George Brewerton, who captured the American conception of mestizaje when he wrote that the mixed bloods of New Mexico possessed: "... the cunning and deceit of the Indian, the politeness and the spirit of revenge of the Spaniard, and the imaginative temperament and fiery impulses of the Moor."80

"Of all the imagined character flaws of the Mexicanos," writes Lamadrid, "miscegenation was (and still is) the most primal and most indelible."81 This sentiment may be the key to understanding the attitude that created the social and political climate so injurious to Mexican identity in the Southwest.

In a critique of Mexican American literature from New Mexico during the 1930s, Paredes commented that "[i]t seems a literature created out of fear and intimidation, a defensive response to racial prejudice—particularly the Anglo distaste for miscegenation—and ethnocentrism."82 Such was the attitude in the decades before and after the Spanish Romance was crafted, before Spanish Americans separated themselves from Mexicans—an act that purified the blood. Paredes also explored the image of Mexicans in American travel literature from 1831-1869, and saw the birth of later negative stereotypes of Mexicans.83 There was much discussion about miscegenation, with the central theory that the superior race must be debased when it unites with the inferior, since the negative characteristics of each would emerge in the progeny. "As a mongrel, the Mexican was regarded . . . as the most contemptible denizen of the Southwest."84 Such judgements of mestizaje, permeated the literature of the time.

Mexicans appeared to be locked in a cultural limbo—partially civilized, but wholly corrupt—figures who simultaneously perverted both the purity of Indian savagery and that of European civilization. To many western writers, the Mexican was not only a racial mongrel but a cultural one as well and thus doubly to be abhorred.85

With the arrival of the Europeans, anti-miscegenation laws were created to prohibit marriage or sexual relations between white and non-white. No state has made laws to prevent such relationships between non-whites.86 Before Colorado repealed its anti-miscegenation statute in 1957, citizens of that state were only subject to the law if they lived in parts of the state not acquired from Mexico. "Clearly the application of the law in areas where the population was already
mixed would have been even more absurd—proceedings might have had to be taken against a majority of the people. The distinction between different parts of the state was upheld at law.”

This aversion to mixing races is clearly a social construct, and not present in all times or all places. But the rhetoric at the time shows us that it was the norm during the period being addressed here. Insofar as this proscription colored attitudes, the dominant culture’s fear of miscegenation was a major factor in the way Mexicans were seen, treated, and marginalized. The imposed Anglo American culture corresponded with and reinforced the Mexican self-concept, internalized through Spanish colonization, and led to the invisibility and denial of mestizaje.

There were sociological and political reasons for the exclusion of Mexicans from the public conversations from 1848 through the 1930s: the stigma of being a defeated enemy and revolutionaries; competition for jobs with Anglos; the struggle in the apportioning of political power; anti-Catholic sentiments; and the ongoing attempt to suppress Mexican American activism. There were also darker purposes to defraud a people of land and status. It is clear, too, that prejudice against the working class was at play, giving the ricos political voice and economic power (often in alliance with Anglos) over the pobres. Insidious fears of miscegenation provided the hegemonic rationale.

Mexicans were in New Mexico, clearly visible, but rendered invisible by the social realities being constructed. Mexicans were clearly present, but hidden by labels of self-defacement. Mexicans were here, clearly actors, but excluded then and now from representation in the tri-cultural image of New Mexico. This tri-cultural image, the publicly invoked tri-cultural trope, was historically and politically, as well as socially and psychologically constructed, and this paper has been an attempt to deconstruct that image to reveal a more realistic history. There already has been much discussion around identity politics in this region, and I hope that my analysis can enter and broaden that discussion.

NOTES


2 A trope is a cultural cliché. It refers to a notion such as, for example, “hearth and home,” that is invoked without much thought because it is so overused and unquestioned. Subtle—and sometimes derogatory—meanings have become so embedded in the commonly used phrase, word, or notion that they are usually ignored. New Mexico’s tri-cultural identity
has become just such a cliché, never questioned for what is left out. It is an assumption, a
notion, said to characterize this state. The purpose of this paper is to examine that very
embodied assumption, to deconstruct the comfortable and unquestioned tri-cultural trope,
with the hope of reconstructing a truer picture of this region.


Ibid.


Ibid., 55

1869.” *New Mexico Historical Review* 52, pp. 6-7.

Ibid., pp. 15-16.

Ibid., p. 17.

Ibid., p. 24.


Ibid., p. 18.

Ibid., p. 20.

Acuña, 1988, p. 61.


Ibid., p. 25.

Acuña, 1988, p. 72.

Deutsch, 1987, p. 35.

Ibid., p. 36. Quoted from Victor S. Clark, *Mexican Labor in the United States*. United States
Labor Bureau Bulletin no. 78, Sept. 1908

Ibid.

Meléndez, Gabriel A. 1998. “‘Nuevo México by any other name...’: Constructing a State
from an Ancestral Homeland” Working Paper, p. 5.

Ibid.

Ibid., p. 8.

Ibid.


Ibid., p. 18.

Ibid., p. 22.

See note 2


Ibid., p. 4.

Ibid., p. 20.

Ibid., p. 101.

Ibid., p. 102.

Culture: New Perspectives in Hispanic Land Grants*. Eds: Charles L. Briggs and John R. Van
Ness, pp. 313-403. The passage in question reads: “The tri-ethnic trap is a situation in which
Hispanos, unable to advance beyond clear-cut secondary economic status and faced with
the steady and irrevocable loss of their traditional land base, must abide by a tourism-
engendered Anglo glorification of Indian culture, as well as the federal protection and
even restoration of Indian lands, sometimes at the expense of Hispano ownership” (p. 321).

Dilworth, 1996, p. 130.

Ibid., p. 151.


Ibid., p. 216.


Ibid., pp. 211-212

Austin, Mary. 1932. Earth Horizon New York: The Literary Guild, p. 358.

Padilla, 1994, p. 216.


McWilliams, 1948, p. 80.

Ibid., p. 80.

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McWilliams, 1948, p. 96.


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Acuña, 1988, p. 38.


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Ibid., p. 15.


Ibid., p. 197.

Ibid., pp. 219-220.


Ibid., p. 222.

Ibid., p. 207.

Ibid., pp. 217-218.


Chávez, 1984, p. 99. (Chávez’s translation from Espinosa, España en Nuevo México pp. 70-73.)
Ibid., pp. 99-100.


Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid., p. 28.

Ibid., pp. 28-29.

Ibid., p. 44.

Ibid.

Acuña, 1988, p. 55.

Campa, in Arellano (Ed.), 1980, pp. 43-44.


Lamadrid 1992, p. 5.

Ibid.


Ibid., p. 22.

Ibid., p. 23.


Ibid., p. 34.

Richard Santillán

Introduction

Sports have been a major presence in the lives of Mexican Americans since the early 20th century. This has been particularly true of Mexican Americans in the Midwest, where sports such as baseball took on a special significance. More than merely games for boys and girls, the teams and contests involved nearly the entire community, and often had political and cultural objectives. Like the fiestas celebrating Cinco de Mayo and September 16, sports are a thread that unites the community.

Sometimes, a thousand people, representing dozens of small Mexican communities, would gather to watch baseball games in the years prior to World War II. People socialized and discussed community issues at the games, and strengthened their sense of racial and ethnic solidarity. In the post-war period sports continued to play a major part in the overall cultural and political agenda of the Mexican American population.

In addition to community unity, two other key benefits of athletics have been the leadership skills and survival tactics that young people developed by participating in team sports—skills that have been useful in the political arena and in the fight for social justice. Many parents, in fact, encouraged their children to join teams to develop such skills. Thus, besides the sheer fun of playing and competing, sports have served as a means of establishing community solidarity, developing leaders, and imparting a sense of fair play. Marselino Fernandez of Kansas City noted that sports were:

a means to take out our aggressiveness in a positive way rather than a bad way in fighting or drinking in the streets. Sports definitely helped me become more outgoing, competitive, responsible, articulate, and to take charge. These types of critical skills for success in the real world were not taught to Mexican children in schools or other public places.
**Background**

In the early part of the 20th century, a handful of Midwestern Anglo charitable organizations and churches offered recreational activities for Mexican youth. In addition, a few of the YMCA clubs permitted Mexicans to join and use their facilities as members. Nevertheless, Mexican American communities chose to build their own sports networks according to several individuals who came of age in the 1920s, ’30s and ’40s. They noted that the Mexican community established an elaborate web of athletic associations during the 1920s and 1930s. These included the Aztec Social Club, Los Gallos Athletic Association, *El Club Azteca*, and *El Club Deportivo Internacional*. The sports clubs of East Chicago and Gary, Indiana, *El Club Deportivo Internacional* and the Gary Athletic Club, sponsored a host of sporting events including tournaments in soccer, basketball, and baseball.

In Kansas City, the Mexican Athletic Club was established in 1922 and organized numerous boxing events, bowling tournaments, and track-and-field competitions. In the larger urban Mexican communities, parents pooled their meager finances and purchased buildings and converted the structures into recreational centers. The smaller Mexican communities generally rented buildings for sports activities. These centers and the land around them were the locations of weight rooms, boxing rings, basketball courts, and baseball diamonds.

A handful of Mexican athletic clubs even had swimming pools according to Lando Velandez of Des Moines, Iowa. Lando’s father was active with sports activities and tried unsuccessfully to build a gym for the Mexican community in Des Moines. The Anglo power structure prevented the Mexican community from developing a sports center in the early 1920s. His father, nevertheless, did establish the Mexican Athletic Club in Des Moines in 1925. Lando continued his father’s work, and in 1962, almost 40 years after his father’s efforts, spearheaded the creation of the Mexican American Recreation Club.

World War II disrupted the sports movement in the Midwest as young men and women defended the nation both on the battlefield and in defense plants. Nevertheless, the post-war period witnessed a movement to recapture the athletic spirit and superb talent of the community. Both the second generation of Mexican Americans and recent arrivals from Texas and Mexico enjoyed sports immensely in the Midwest. In retrospect, the pre-war sports activities
among Mexicans was only a prelude to far more significant sports participation between 1945 and 1965.

There was an incredible growth in organized sports in the Midwest Mexican community after 1945. Before the war, major sports were limited primarily to baseball, boxing, and basketball. Afterwards, however, more Mexican Americans began taking part in bowling, tennis, golf, soccer, football, and wrestling. Women's sports came of age during this period as well. Whereas women were mainly involved with softball prior to the war, they later became active in baseball and basketball leagues, and bowling tournaments. Women's teams in all sports sprung up all over the Midwest.

The Mexican American community followed its rich sports tradition by resurrecting several sports clubs and recreational centers after World War II, including El Club Deportivo Azteca, the Mexican American Youth Association, El Club de Deportivos de Joliet, the Azteca Club, the Wichita Mexican American Athletic Club, the Pan American Club, the Mexican American Athletic Club of North Platte, the Argentine Center, El Club Colonia Mexicana, and La Sociedad Deportivo. The Quad-Cities area of Iowa and Illinois formed several sports clubs, including the Quad-Cities Martial Arts Center, Pena's Boys Club, and the Silvis Youth Organization. In addition to developing their own clubs, Mexican Americans became active in various city sports and leagues, said Elmer Vega of Newton, Kansas:

Prior to the war, the Mexican community established its own sports network of clubs, centers, teams, and tournaments. The second and third generations have continued this rich tradition into the 1980s. There is, however, a significant difference. Unlike before, the second and third generations have become directly involved with Little League, Pop Warner, summer sports programs, high school sports, and other mainstream sports activities. We felt that, as taxpayers and citizens, our community and children were entitled to these recreational benefits.8

Thus, intergenerational cooperation was a powerful social adhesive that brought together people of all age groups playing sports. Alex Cruz of Parsons, Kansas, noted that:

I was the manager of the Parson's baseball team from 1952 to 1954. Our team was sponsored by several companies, including "Big Heated Red" and Coca-Cola. We played Chanute, Kansas City, Topeka, Coffyville, and Fredonia. . . . My father played baseball for the MKT railroad company
during the 1930s. It was not uncommon to have three generations of ballplayers from the same family in the Midwest.9

Baseball
The most popular sport among Mexicans in the U.S. has been baseball. The rise of baseball as a spectator sport in the Mexican community simply reflected the rise of mass spectator sports in the nation. Nearly every Midwest Mexican community, small or large, had baseball teams to represent it. The sport became one of the major forms of recreation, and was played before overflowing crowds. Most of the teams selected names from their rich historical past, such as the Aztecas, Mayans, Cuauhtemocs, and Aguilas. The political choice of these names was a way of respecting and reaffirming the Mexican culture.

There were Mexican teams in the Topeka area as early as 1916, and by 1919 several Mexican baseball teams in the Kansas City and East Chicago areas were already playing. Additional clubs were organized and various leagues formed during the 1920s. Some of the early Mexican teams included Los Obreros De San Jose of East Chicago; the Osage Indians of Kansas City; the Mexican All-Stars of Silvis; the Moline Estrellas; the East Chicago Zacatecas Indians; La Libertad and La Victoria of Horton, Kansas; Los Mayans of Lorain, Ohio; Las Aguilas Mexicanas and Los Cometas of Topeka; Los Lobos of Hutchinson, Kansas; Los Aztecas de Kansas City; and Los Nacionales of Wichita, Kansas.

In fact, there were several popular types of baseball leagues in the Mexican Middle West: industrial, Catholic, community, migrant, and women's leagues. It was not unusual for a remarkable player to participate in two or more of these different leagues. Moreover, being an outstanding player was oftentimes a ticket to employment for Mexicans, because businesses wanted to have winning baseball teams. Companies went out of their way to find outstanding Mexican players. Furthermore, many Catholic schools had baseball teams composed largely of Mexican players and called themselves the Guadulupanos. Likewise, most Mexican communities had their own teams that represented them in statewide competitions.

Migrants had their own baseball teams during the summer months. These migrant teams and leagues were found in Western Nebraska, for example, in Scottsbluff, Bayard, Bridgeport, Morrell, Lyman, and Minatare. Other migrant teams could be found in Kansas, Minnesota, South and North Dakota,
and Colorado. There were women’s teams that played prior to and after World War II as well. There was also an informal network of Mexicans who played pickup games between regular games and tournaments.

Unfortunately, for those trying to organize baseball games, it was often true that Mexican teams were not allowed to play on city diamonds or in parks owned by local businesses or cities. Elmer Vega of Newton, Kansas, considered one of the finest athletes to come out of the Newton area in both baseball and basketball, remembered:

Most public parks in the Midwest did not permit Mexicans to play organized sports. When we were allowed in the parks, we were given the worst diamonds and undesirable times to play. After World War II, the parks opened for us and we had few problems scheduling games and other recreational activities.¹⁰

Because they were barred from some public parks before the war, Mexicans made their own ball fields, frequently in vacant lots or in pastures near the railroad tracks, roundhouses, or steel factories. Players, coaches, and supporters constructed their own baseball diamonds. A location would be found, cleared of rocks and debris, and leveled. The women made the bases by sewing anew worn-out pillows. In North Platte, Nebraska, the games were played in a pasture during the 1930s. Dried cow chips were used as bases.¹¹

The Mexican communities constructed baseball fields with colorful names such as La Yardita, El Huache, and Devil’s Field. Another was known as Rabbit Field because players continuously had to chase rabbits off during games. Sometimes, cars were used in the outfield as bleachers, with people sitting on the hoods, trunks, and roofs, said Perfecto Torrez of Topeka.¹² Eva Hernandez of Hutchinson recalled, “Our baseball team . . . played near the National Armory. Both the Morton Salt and the Carey Salt Company had baseball teams with Mexican players. We played in the cow fields, which we affectionately called Las Vegas.”¹³ Hernandez’s husband, Matt, was an outstanding baseball player and she often watched him play before and after World War II.

El Parque Anahuac, for example, had a seating capacity for 500 people. It was not unusual for large crowds to show up to see the better Mexican teams. When Los Aztecas de Chicago came to play against the East Chicago team during the first week of June of 1927, the game drew a standing room only crowd of over 3,000 spectators. Large crowds were common in the Great Lakes area.
This beautiful baseball diamond in East Chicago was eventually destroyed during the Depression because the wooden seats were used as firewood during the cold winter months. Also, someone discovered that beneath the surface of the field were deposits of coal. Apparently a coal or railroad company had left it there. The news spread quickly, and soon the leveled, desolate field became a center of activity with men, women, and children digging for the precious fuel with shovels and sticks.

Sunday was baseball day in Mexican communities across the Middle West. Residents first went to church and then breakfast before heading to the game. The players, on the other hand, ran home after church changing quickly into their uniforms and hurried back to warm-up before the fans arrived, said Phillip Martinez of Dodge City, Kansas. The baseball games started around one in the afternoon. The people wore their Sunday best to the games.

Some of the games in Hutchinson drew better than a thousand people from in town and the surrounding communities said Bacho Rodriguez. Rodriguez was an outstanding pitcher for the Hutchinson team during the 1930s. He remembers games that usually drew 1000 to 1500 spectators. He noted that he and a few other players were scouted by the New York Yankees.

Frequently, admission was charged. Different teams had various methods of raising funds. The money was sometimes used to purchase bats, balls, uniforms, and gas for road games. Most teams charged one dollar for men, fifty cents for women, and five cents for children at the gate. Other teams passed a hat around and collected contributions.

Any money left over after the essentials were paid for was divided among the players. The winners usually received 60 percent of the gate; the losers took home 40 percent. The chance to collect a little money could increase players' energy levels. Ramon Padroza of Newton, Kansas, said that the zeal to win was fierce. He recalled that the Newton Mexican team played highly competitive games against teams from Wichita, Florence, Topeka, Emporia, Hutchinson, and Wellington:

The games were very intense. I was a pitcher and made it a habit to deliberately hit their first batter with a fastball in order to scare the rest of the lineup. Of course, the opposite pitcher did the same thing to our first batter, which sometimes led to brawls. After the game, however, we shook hands and drank beers together.
Kansas City native Marcelino Fernandez said:

Community teams in the Midwest were quite sophisticated when it came to business operations. The Kansas City teams had business agents who negotiated and arranged games with other community teams. We also took a percentage of the gate receipts, and sometimes asked for gas money, meals, and a place to stay from some of the other teams. The good teams generally agreed to our conditions because they also made good money at the gate.18

Some Midwest Mexican teams participated in numerous whirlwind tours, playing far away from home according to Abe Morales of East Chicago, and Ernesto Plaza of Omaha.19 On Saturday, the visiting team and its supporters gathered in the early morning, forming a huge caravan of cars moving along on country roads. It must have been an incredible sight to see dozens of cars packed with Mexican supporters following their teams down the road to the next game. As the line of cars of fans and their team approached, the cars honked their horns, signaling their arrival said Louis Sanchez of Dodge City.20 These types of sports activities clearly demonstrated community pride in baseball teams and helped establish important political links between Mexican communities.21 Frank Lujano of Newton, Kansas, recalled:

Sunday was always a big day for us back then. After working through the week, we always looked forward to the games, and the fans who followed us enjoyed them, too. This was a time for everyone to forget about work and problems and just have a good time. We had several hundred fans who came to the games each week, and when we made an error they let us know about it, but it was all in fun and we had a good time.22

Before the Sunday games, players from the two opposing teams would generally get together on Saturday night to party according to Salvador Gutierrez of Kansas City, Missouri, and Lupe Molina of Kansas City, Kansas.23 They noted that some teams would attempt to induce the best players on the opposing team to get drunk, so they would be ineffective the next day. Sometimes this ploy backfired because a few players actually seemed to play better with hangovers. Some teams imposed a 10 p.m. curfew before important games to prevent such shenanigans. Mexican men were often utilized as umpires in the Mexican leagues. Ann Antilano of Sterling, Illinois, recalled her father talking about his Midwest umpiring experiences in Gary, Indiana.24

Mexican teams from Texas and Mexico barnstormed the region and played exhibition games against local Mexican teams prior to the 1940s. Providing
competition for Mexican Midwest teams were *Los Cometas* from Morelos; *Carta Blanca* from Monterrey; *Los Aztecas*, *Los Cuauhtemocs*, and *La Junta* from Mexico City; and *La Fuerza* from Guanajuato. The best teams from Texas were the Navarro Club and the *Aztecas* from San Antonio.

Nearly all of the Mexican ballplayers were big fans of major league teams and players. Many Mexican players took the bus or hitchhiked to major league ballparks to see their favorite teams and idols at Wrigley Field and Comiskey Park in Chicago, Baker’s Field in Philadelphia, and Sportsmen’s Park in St. Louis. Art Morales of East Chicago said that he and other young men found creative ways to get to the big league games:

> I used to hitchhike to old Comiskey Park in Chicago. I tried to make the games when the New York Yankees were in town. My favorite player was Joe Dimaggio, the greatest player to wear a baseball uniform in my opinion. Many of my fondest memories as a boy [are of] the ballpark.

Ramon Padroza of Newton, Kansas fondly remembered:

> We all had our favorite ballplayers during that time. My favorite ballplayers were Lefty Gomez and Babe Ruth. I remember watching a game at Wrigley Field between the Cubs and Pirates. It was one of the biggest thrills in my life. Some of us on the industrial teams were scouted by some of the major league teams and received official invitations to attend spring training. But our families needed us as breadwinners at home.

Leo Barajas of Omaha, who was an outstanding ballplayer, remembers attending a World Series game:

> I attended the 1942 World Series between the St. Louis Cardinals and the New York Yankees. We waited nearly two days in line for tickets. The Cardinals’ “Gashouse Gang” was the most popular team among us because it was one of the few teams in the Midwest. Attending the World Series is one of the highlights of my life.

Ralph Rios of Sterling, Illinois, echoed these sentiments. Rios was born in Kansas City in 1927, and as a boy watched the Mexican baseball teams from Kansas and Missouri. Said Rios:

> Many of us loved listening to major league baseball during the 1930s and 1940s. My favorite team and player were the St. Louis Cardinals and Stan Musial. I read the boxscores every morning to see how the Cardinals and Musial had done the day before.
Victoria Quintana of Parsons, Kansas, recollected that her brothers attended many games in Philadelphia and New York, and were especially fond of Connie Mack's "A's":

Many of us in Kansas had friends and relatives living in Pennsylvania. During the summers, we would visit them and go shopping in New York. Our brothers, however, preferred going to the ballparks to watch the Dodgers, Giants, Yankees, and the Athletics. My brothers were always excited to go to the East Coast because of all the baseball teams, whereas there were no major league teams in Kansas.30

Matt Hernandez noted that several communities formed all-star teams showcasing the best Mexican players.31 He said that the all-star games were often reported in the sports sections of the local newspapers with complete boxscores. Hernandez played for the Hutchinson Mexican team from 1934 to 1936. His team played Mexican teams from Lyons, Dodge City, Newton, and Wichita.

A consequence of these all-star teams was that many players became local sports legends and some even had the thrill of being scouted by teams like the Chicago Cubs, St. Louis Cardinals, New York Yankees, and Cleveland Indians, according to Abraham Vela of Omaha.32 Sebastían Alvarez of Fort Madison, Iowa, talked about his own experience with the big league scouts:

We had an outstanding baseball team in Fort Madison. We played very good Mexican teams from the Quad-Cities area and several teams from Kansas and Missouri. In the stands were scouts from the various major league teams. I received two letters from the Chicago Cubs asking me to come to a tryout camp. My parents were opposed to it because I needed to work to help the family.33

Art Morales of East Chicago had a similar experience:

The Chicago Cub scouts saw me play and gave me a ticket to Chicago to try out for the team. But my parents wouldn't let me go because they believed that Chicago was a wild town and it would corrupt my morals.34

Women's Teams

In the years leading up to World War II, there were several Mexican women's teams in the Midwest. These teams were managed and coached by all-male staffs, and games were often played in small, nearby fields while the male teams were playing on the major diamond. The women's teams often traveled with the men's teams. In addition to concurrent games, there were sometimes double-
headers, with the women playing in the morning and the men playing afterwards.  

Carol Garcia Martinez, an outstanding pitcher, was born in Mexico in 1923, and later played first base for Las Gallinas of East Chicago. She remembers the green satin uniforms they purchased after taking a collection:

Some young women were active in all types of sports in school. We formed community teams because we enjoyed sports. Most of our parents were supportive as long as our older brothers and male friends were watching over us. We played nine innings and basically played by the same rules as the men. Our games were extremely competitive.

Before the war, the best-known women's teams were Las Gallinas of East Chicago; Las Cuauhtemocs of Newton, Kansas; Las Aztecas of Kansas City; and Las Amapolas of South Chicago. There were also Mexican women's teams in Chicago; Emporia, Kansas; and in Gary and Whitney, Indiana. The state of Nebraska had women's teams in Bayard, Grand Island, Omaha, and Lincoln. Mexican American Harbor Lights, an East Chicago publication, noted that the women's baseball teams

... performed with devotion, speed, and great skill. The audience loved every great play they made, especially a stolen base. The parents made sure the girls were on time for all games and practice. Hundreds of fans came to see them play.

According to several eyewitnesses, the women's teams were excellent, and exciting to watch. A few of the women might have been better players than some of their male counterparts according to Frederick R. Maravilla of East Chicago:

The Kansas City and East Chicago teams had several excellent players. Some of the women were gifted athletes, while others learned to play outstanding ball from their brothers. The coaches used to say that we wanted some of the women on our men's team, which nearly always brought laughter from the guys because they thought we were joking. We weren't kidding.

A handful of women became folk heroines because of their exploits on the diamond. As was the case with the men's teams, some of the women's teams had junior or "B" teams. Las Gallinas from East Chicago, for example, had a junior team called Las Gallinas Chicks. Some Mexican girls also played baseball with the Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) and in various city leagues and tournaments prior to World War II.
Post-War Baseball

Baseball had an amazing revitalization throughout the Midwest after 1945, and its popularity was directly linked to the political and civil rights activities of the Mexican American community. Alberto Muniz said:

Sports have been and continue to be an important part of our history. Prior to the war, the fiestas, politics, and sports were integrated and not viewed as separated activities. Our parents' generation clearly understood the social importance of combining culture, civil rights, and recreation as one enterprise. The second generation continued that strong tradition after the war.42

Al Lopez, manager of the Chicago White Sox during the late 1950s and early 1960s, for example, was a member of the Chicago chapter of the American G.I. Forum. In 1962, Lopez received his membership card in pre-game ceremonies at Comisky Park from G.I. Forum local officials. Also, the G.I. Forum National Convention sponsored a game at Wrigley Field in Chicago in 1963.43

There were other significant changes in sports that reflected the gains of the civil rights movement. The hiring of Mexican American umpires and league officials was a major breakthrough. For the first time, the post-war period witnessed the mass participation of Mexican American youth in Little Leagues, Pony and Colt teams, and high school teams. Youth were visible in all aspects of school and community sports whereas few Mexican American children played school sports or city-sanctioned teams prior to the 1940s. Ramon Pedroza of Newton, Kansas, said:

After the war, Mexican American teams played in city tournaments and leagues with white teams, which was different from when white teams refused to play Mexican teams in the 1920s and 1930s. We felt this was a step in the right direction. At the same time, we maintained our own community tournaments and leagues. The softball team of Newton, for example, took the city championship in the late 1940s.44

Another significant change was the skyrocketing popularity of softball after the war. Although there were some slow- and fast-pitch softball teams before the war, they were relatively few in number. The first softball games in the Mexican community in the Midwest were played in the 1930s. In 1937, there were a few softball teams such as Los Diablos of East Chicago. The Kansas City Star reported on a Mexican softball tournament which took place in Central
Kansas in 1938. The Mexican teams represented at this tournament included Wichita, Hutchinson, Salina, Newton, Kanapolis, and Lyons. The newspaper article further noted that there were big crowds and that the Bravos had won the championship.

Another key reason for the growing popularity of fast- and slow-pitch softball was that most veterans were raising families and getting older. The slower pace reflected their physical condition. They had to be careful not to get hurt and miss work because they had to pay the bills. Yet, these former players still played hard because they were competitive. Nevertheless, a few Mexican American hardball teams and leagues survived after the war, including the Topeka Aztecas and Aguilas.

Between the late 1940s and the early 1960s several Mexican American, Latin American, and Spanish American baseball leagues, as well as state and regional softball tournaments, were established. Many of these tournaments are still going. Tournament games could be found each weekend in places like Newton, Kansas City, Flint, Des Moines, Pontiac, Port Huron, Omaha, Chicago, Emily City, Detroit, Emporia, Capac, Cudahay, Milwaukee, and Bethlehem. A case in point was the Chanute Softball Tournament that was held from 1963 to 1979. Other Mexican communities in Kansas have sponsored their own tournaments, and Kansas City alone had five baseball teams. Something special that has emerged in some of these tournaments is the “old-timers” game, which precedes the championship game. Some of the players from the 1940s, 50s, 60s, and 70s compete for fun and friendship. These games have been sponsored, for example, in Scottsbluff, Nebraska, and in Newton, Kansas. This recognition is a tribute to these pioneers who faced discrimination and, in turn, fought prejudice so that future generations could play sports in public facilities and join mainstream leagues such as the Little League and Pop Warner football.

In fact, one of the oldest softball tournaments takes place each year in Newton. This tournament can be traced back to 1948, when the Latin American Club (formed in 1946) sponsored the first tournament. Dozens of teams throughout the Midwest, Texas, and other southwestern states have participated in the Newton competition during the last 50 years. One of the dominant teams after the war came from Oklahoma. Other championship teams include the Newton Mexican Catholics (1946), Newton McGee (1948), Wichita

The Newton Softball Tournament still plays the cultural role that pre-war baseball games promoted among Mexican Americans. The tournament events center around family, friendship, and community unity. The games are only one part of the weekend’s events. There are picnics, dances, games for the children, and an opportunity for renewing old friendships. In Omaha they have played the Mexican Softball Tournament for many years at Hitchcock and Upland Parks. Teams have come from Nebraska, Missouri, Iowa, Colorado, and Kansas. Here too, the tournaments have sponsored old-timers games with many former players, some who played during the 1940s and 1950s, competing against their grandchildren and other old-timers from surrounding communities.

Michigan had teams such as the Pontiac Mayans and Aztecs, the Adrian Pirates, and a team in Ecorse called the Latin American Club. Lalo Perez of Flint said proudly that:

The state of Michigan was a hotbed for Mexican baseball during the 1940s through the 1970s. We had a baseball team here in Ecorse sponsored by the Latin American Club. There were teams in Flint, Detroit, Lansing, Adrian, Emily City, Port Huron, and Pontiac. We also played Mexican teams from the state of Ohio.51

Over the years, Michigan has produced some outstanding baseball players. The Villareal brothers from Lansing were two of the best in the state. Flint has had its share, too, including one that pitched for Michigan State University. The Castanon brothers, Joe, Frank, Hank, and Marty, from the city of Alma were known for playing great baseball in the ‘60s and ‘70s. Steve Benavidez of Detroit played baseball at Eastern Michigan University in the 1980s. Saginaw had the Vasquez brothers, Joe and Tiburcio “Tovito,” in the 60s and 70s. Mexican American baseball in Saginaw goes back to the 1940s and 1950s when the Gallitos were playing.52

In 1958, the Spanish American League was formed in Flint.53 Other baseball tournaments have also been referred to as “Latin American” or “Hispanic.” The main reason for this ethnic designation was because players comprised diverse backgrounds, including Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and other Central and Latin Americans.54 Aurora, Illinois, for instance, established the Latin
American Baseball League.

Ohio and Pennsylvania likewise saw a dramatic increase of Mexican softball teams after the war. A Mexican American team was formed in Toledo as early as 1947. Eventually, teams were established in Bowling Green and Cleveland. Most of those in Ohio were industrial teams as opposed to community or league teams, and frequently traveled to Michigan, Indiana, and Illinois playing in Mexican American softball tournaments.

As was the case before the war, major league baseball scouts continued to visit the Midwest looking for future big league players. Both the Cleveland Indians and the Chicago White Sox sent team representatives to scout Mike Torrez, who was playing for the Topeka Nationals. Torrez later signed a major league contract and later played for the Boston Red Sox and New York Yankees during the 1970s. His brother, Richard Torrez, played with the Topeka basketball team in the Midwest Mexican American Basketball Association. Another great player was Julio Rodriguez from Saginaw, who played for Central Michigan University and later was drafted by the Kansas City Royals. Julio spent a few years in the minor leagues and eventually returned to Saginaw. He was a power hitter outfielder, one of the fastest players around, and had a major league arm. People in the stands were in awe of his tremendous throwing ability and accuracy from the outfield. One of the best fast-pitch softball players in recent memory was Martin “Marty” Castanon from both Alma and Lansing, Michigan. He played in a traveling league that included some of the worlds best pitchers and teams in fast-pitch softball.

Paul Sanchez of Wichita was an outstanding pitcher between 1964 and 1990, with a break for military service in Vietnam. In 1976, the “Big Brown Machine” had several prominent players who were scouted by both the St. Louis Cardinals and the San Francisco Giants, most notably the two Ontiveros brothers, Jose and George.

The Catholic Leagues continued to be popular after the war. There were Catholic Youth Organization leagues and St. Jude’s teams. Mexican Americans often played for both Catholic schools and Little League teams. Catholic softball tournaments flourished in several cities in Kansas. There were also city and independent leagues where Mexicans played baseball, but regardless of the level play, Mexican American teams and players were generally talented and competitive.

Mexican women’s softball teams began to flourish in the late 1940s and
early 1950s. There was a women’s softball team in East Chicago by 1949. Las Aztecas of Kansas City won the city championship about the same time. Newton, Kansas, also had established teams in the 1940s, and there were also outstanding women’s teams in Sterling, Illinois, and Lincoln, Nebraska, according to Dolores Rios and Marge Villanueva Lambert. Rios played in the summer baseball leagues in Illinois in 1947 and 1948, and noted that baseball was very popular among Mexican women after the war. Lambert also remembered that Nebraska had several women’s teams:

Mexican women played baseball before World War II. Many of them worked during the war but resumed playing after the war ended, along with younger women. The state of Nebraska appears to have had several women’s teams starting as early as 1946. There was also a team of women in the city of Lincoln.

Fifi Jasso of Newton, Kansas, who was born in Newton in 1932, recalled:

I played third base for the Mexican American women’s team of Newton in 1949 and 1950 . . . We had lots of fun and I have many wonderful memories of those days. Sadly, some of my former teammates have passed away.

The employment of women after the war resulted in their playing for industrial teams and leagues as well. Said Juanita Vasquez:

Most of the industrial teams prior to the war were for men. However, the growing number of women in the workplace after the war resulted in the formation of women’s sports in baseball, basketball, and bowling. At the time, we did not realize that our entering factories represented the benefits of industrial sports.

In the 1980s and 1990s the growth of baseball throughout the Midwest continued. Some Mexican communities have both fast-pitch and slow-pitch teams. Saginaw for example, was the host of the Annual Latino State Fast Pitch Tournament during the 1980s. There was also a Mexican American Slow Pitch Softball league in Saginaw that used to take over Hoyt Park and Wickes Park with 16 teams playing every Sunday. Pontiac and Detroit had some great teams during this period, when Pontiac hosted the Annual State Latino Tournament.

Oklahoma City has recently established a ten-team Liga de Beisbol Mexicana, while Chicago has formed the Aztec and Mayan Leagues. Southeast Kansas, the Quad-Cities, and the Fox Valley of Illinois is experiencing a rise in the number
of new baseball teams, leagues, and tournaments. Saginaw, Lansing, and Pontiac had excellent women’s softball teams in the ’70s and ’80s. The Saginaw team, coached by Chan Flores and sponsored by Casa del Rey, was dominant and won the Michigan Hispanic Women’s State Tournament for years.64

Summary
Midwestern Mexican American communities, for the better part of 70 years, have produced many talented athletes, as well as numerous teams, leagues, and tournaments. This occurred because of the numerous individuals who put so much effort into developing youth sports programs and other organized sports activities.

These sports—especially baseball, but also boxing, basketball, and other contests—played multiple roles in the life of the community. Involvement in sports taught young people the rules of fair play, helped develop their physical and organizational skills, and helped them channel their competitiveness in a positive way. These activities brought Midwestern Mexican people together across miles and circumstances, and brought joy to competitors and spectators alike.

With sports, Midwestern Mexicans had heroes to congratulate, teams to rally around, positive activities for their children, and shared experiences with which they could build a stronger sense of cultural unity and common purpose. To these people, sports were not just games; they were important elements of community identity and political empowerment.

NOTES
1 This article is an excerpt from an unpublished manuscript entitled, “Cuentos y Encuentros: An Oral History of Mexicans in the Midwestern United States, 1900-1979.” The majority of interviews were conducted during my sabbatical leave between 1987 and 1988. Many of the people interviewed resided in Kansas, a state that had the dubious reputation of being the most racist state with respect to Mexicans. This helps to explain, in large part, the long history of Mexican organizational resistance there. Many of the individuals cited are now deceased. This article is dedicated to them.

2 There is a growing number of books, articles, and videos on the history of Latino baseball in the U.S. A sample of these works includes James D. Cockcroft, Latinos en el béisbol de los Estados Unidos, Siglo Veintiuno Editores, México, D.F., 1999; Michael M. Oleksak, Béisbol, Latin Americans, and the Grand Old Game, High Top Sports Production, Inc., Hollywood, CA, 1992; USA Home Entertainment, MLB Latin Superstars, M.L.B Home

Interview with Marcelino Fernandez, Kansas City, Missouri, February 26, 1987. Fernandez was an outstanding athlete in the Kansas City area and excelled in several sports. He is also a prominent sports historian regarding the Mexican American communities in Kansas and Missouri. Fernandez was inducted into the Kansas City Mexican American Sports Hall of Fame in the early 1980s.

Interviews with Blas Esquivel, Kansas City, Missouri, March 1, 1987; Josephina Jaramillo Martinez, Los Angeles, California, April 17, 1995; and Joseph D. Gonzalez, October 16, 1987, author’s files. Esquivel was born in Mexico in 1910 and came to the U.S. in 1926 and has an excellent knowledge of sports in the Kansas City area. Martinez was born in Mexico in 1901 and remembers Justine Cordero and Louis Garcia, who were active with youth sports in South Chicago during the 1920s. Gonzalez played baseball for Los Gallos baseball team in East Chicago between 1938-1941.


Interview with Lando Velandez, Des Moines, Iowa, June 17, 1986.

Written correspondence with Ricardo Medina, Blyth, California, March 2, 1995, and Ricardo Parra, Indianapolis, Indiana, author’s files.

Interview with Elmer Vega, Newton, Kansas, June 10, 1987.

Interview with Alex Cruz, Parsons, Kansas, June 9, 1987.

Interview with Elmer Vega, Newton, Kansas, June 18, 1987.

Written correspondence with Porfy Nila, North Platte, Nebraska, January 11, 1999.

Interview with Perfecto Torrez, Topeka, Kansas, February 10, 1987. Torrez was an outstanding player in the Topeka area, especially between the years 1931-1937. He pitched for the *Piratas, Nacionales, Cometas*, and the Bakers. Torrez pitched a perfect game against the Mexican team from Emporia during the 1930-31 season.

Interview with Eva Hernandez, Hutchinson, Kansas, March 21, 1988. Some Mexican Midwest baseball teams were allowed to play in public parks, including Block Park, Washington Park, Blackhawk Park, Beaver Park, Credit Inland Park, Burke’s Park, Southeast Recreation Center, Sunday Park, Athletic Park, Union Pacific Park, Sinnissippi Park, John Deere Diamond, Douglas Park, Barstow City Park, and Levings Park.

Interview with Phillip Martinez, Dodge City, Kansas, June 24, 1988. Martinez played baseball for the Dodge City *Aztecas* during the 1930s. He played third-base and noted that this decade witnessed some of the best Mexican ballplayers and teams throughout Kansas. These Kansas teams included Chanute (*Los Toreros* and the Eagles), Independence, Coffeyville, Pittsburgh, Garden City (Latin Americans), Dodge City (Mexican Eagles and the *Aztecas*), Deerfield, Florence, Emporia (*Los Morelos*), Parsons, Atchison, Peabody, Iola, Fredonia, Argentine (Eagles), Hutchinson (*Lobos*), Newton (*Guanhitemocs*), Wichita (*Aztecas*), Horton, Lyons, Wellington (Mayans), Syracuse (Merchants), Topeka (*Aguilas* and Nationals) Nixon, and Herington.

Interview with Frank Lujano, Newton, Kansas, June 18, 1987. Lujano was born in 1913 and later played baseball for the Newton Cuauhtemocs. He noted that the 1920s and 1930s saw outstanding teams in Topeka, Wichita, and Wellington, Kansas. His wife still has his cotton uniform from the 1930s. Almost everyone agrees in Newton that Lujano was one of the best ballplayers of all time.

Interview with Ramon Pedroza, Newton, Kansas, June 18, 1987. Like so many young men of his generation, Pedroza served during World War II and saw action in Africa and Italy. Pedroza was born in Newton in 1913. He was an outstanding baseball player in the community of Newton and played pitcher and first base in 1931 for the Cuauhtemocs. Also, interview with Jose G. Calvillo, Hutchinson, Kansas, author's files.

Interview with Marselino Fernandez, Kansas City, Missouri, February 26, 1987.

Interviews with Abe Morales, East Chicago, Indiana, May 19, 1987, and with Ernesto Plaza, Omaha, Nebraska, May 30, 1987. Morales was active with sports in the Gary, Indiana area. He noted that Gary had an outstanding baseball and basketball teams prior to World War II. Morales added that most of the sports activities were sponsored either by companies or the Catholic Church. Plaza played baseball in the western part of Nebraska prior to the 1940s. He added that there were several outstanding Mexican teams in this region including teams in Scottsbluff, Mitchell, Morrill, Lyman, Alliance, and Bayard.

Interview with Louis Sanchez, Dodge City, Kansas, January 21, 1987. As a young boy during the 1920s, Sanchez was the batboy for the Mexican teams. Later, Sanchez played for the Santa Fe Railroad baseball team during the 1930s and 1940s. They played several local Mexican teams including the Aztecas from Dodge City and the Garden City Latin Americans.

Interview with Marselino Fernandez, Kansas City, February 26, 1987. Fernandez was born in Arizona in 1913. He noted that there were Mexican baseball teams in the Kansas City area as early as 1923. Fernandez eventually joined the Kansas City Aztecas as a star pitcher and first baseman during the 1933-1936 seasons. Some of the players on the 1936 Aztecas included Manuel Zuniga, Lupe Molina, Felipe Camacho, Charlie Mendez, Juan Rodriguez, Meno Hernandez, Caderino Montoya, Milo Hernandez, Carlos Montez, Lalo Nieto, Chico Barbosa, Fidencio Paz, and Fred and Paul Sauceda.

Interview with Frank Lujano of Newton, Kansas, June 18, 1987.

Interview with Salvador Gutierrez, Kansas City, Missouri, February 25, 1987. Also see Latin Baseball 50 Years Ago, author's files. Interview with Lupe Molina, Kansas City, Kansas, June 5, 1987. Gutierrez was a promoter of baseball games in the Kansas City area during the 1930s, and also helped establish Mexican baseball leagues. Molina was born in Mexico in 1902 and has a rich history of playing baseball both in the Southwest and Midwest. In 1924, he organized the Azteca baseball team in Kansas City.


Interviews with Federico Hernandez, Parsons, Kansas, July 9, 1988, and Robert Segovia, East Chicago, Indiana, May 19, 1987. Segovia was an outstanding player in East Chicago. Also interview with Salvador Gutierrez, Kansas City, Missouri, February 26, 1987. Gutierrez was born in Mexico in 1911 and came to Kansas City in 1920 working for a packinghouse. He later served in Europe during World War II. He noted that Mexican players were very dominant in the Catholic leagues. These players were known affectionately as the "Guadalupanas." Also see Jan Wahl, Mexican and Mexican American Fiestas and Celebrations in Scottsbluff, Nebraska, The Nebraska Committee for the Humanities,
1988, p.15. Wahl found that the earlier Mexican teams formed the Mission League, since most of the teams were sponsored by the Catholic Churches.

Interview with Art Morales, East Chicago, Indiana, May 1, 1987. Also interview with Joseph P. Gonzalez, Gary, Indiana, October 16, 1987. Gonzalez played for Los Gallos baseball team from 1938 through 1941, before serving in the aviation corps during World War II. The Midwest had several outstanding teams and players besides those in Kansas. These popular teams included Los Aguilas of Sterling, Illinois; Los Tigres of Rockford, Illinois; the Aztecas of Joliet, Illinois; La Flor de Mayo of St. Joseph, Missouri; Los Diablos and Los Gallos of East Chicago, Indiana; the Aztecs of Gary, Indiana; El Club Mexicano, and Los Aztecas from Milwaukee, Wisconsin; the South Chicago Excelsiors; Los Estrellas de Toledo; and Los Mexicanos of Des Moines, Iowa.

Interview with Ramon Pedroza, Newton, Kansas, June 18, 1987. Telephone interview with George Robles, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, June 24, 1994. Robles has been very involved with Mexican American sports in Wisconsin, and was an outstanding athlete in several sports.

Interview with Leo Barajas, Omaha, Nebraska, June 3, 1987.


Interview with Victoria (Vicki) Quintana, Parsons, Kansas, July 9, 1988. Interview with Anthony (Tony) Navarro, Davenport, Iowa, June 25, 1986. In the 1980s, several Midwest communities paid tribute to the old-time baseball players. The 1923 Mexican All-Stars team was saluted, for example, by the Quad-Cities Mexican American communities in 1981. The eight surviving members included Cruz Sierra, 78; Socorro Nache, 77; Isaac Rangel, 77; Augie Martel, 77; Joseph Ybarra, 73; Lewis Sierra, 72; and Eleuterio Martel and Jess Castillas, both 70. The community of Horton, Kansas, recognized several players from the 1930s, including Nate Vallejo, Gilbert Martinez, Julio Vallejo, Lolo Vallejo, Nick De La Cruz, Benito De La Cruz, Lupe Espinosa, Phillip Picon, and Fidel Cortez.


Interview with Bacho Rodriguez, Hutchinson, January 28. 1987. Also interview with Abraham Vela, Omaha, Nebraska, June 1, 1987. He was born in Horton, Kansas in 1917. His father arrived in 1904 to work on the railroad. Vela played baseball in Nebraska during the 1930s.

Interview with Sebastian Alvarez, Fort Madison, Iowa, June 19, 1986. Alvarez was one of the best all-around athletes in Fort Madison during the 1920s and 1930s. He played baseball, basketball, and football in high school. Alvarez played on several Mexican baseball teams and he was later scouted by the Chicago Cubs. Also interview with Antonio (Tony) Rojas, Garden City, Kansas, January 10, 1987. Rojas noted that Margarito “Maggie” Gomez of Newton, Kansas received a letter from the New York Yankees for a try-out as a right-fielder. After World War II, Gomez later received a letter from the St. Louis Cardinals about a try-out.

Interview with Art Morales, East Chicago, Indiana, May 1, 1987. Morales noted that nearly 98% of Mexican American players in East Chicago either volunteered or were drafted when the war broke out. Morales played for the service team along with some professional players of the Chicago White Sox. He said it was a great thrill to play with some of the players that he had watched at Comiskey Park. Morales also stated that some of the armed forces baseball teams had Mexican American players.

Interview with Carol Garcia Martinez, East Chicago, Indiana, May 18, 1987. Garcia's sister was a professional singer and performed at Chicago hotels. Her father had a band in East Chicago during the 1930s. The 1942 Las Aztecas of Kansas City, for example, was organized by Mariano Guereca and Nieves Lombrano. Some of the players included Mary and Sarah Fernandez, Vicki Franco, Chona Martinez, Epifinia Carpeo, Nacha Barbosa, Santos Olivia, Lola Oliva, Margarite Rodriguez, Grace Briones, Irene and "Choppy" Ibarra, and Annie Molina.

Interview with Lola Aguilar, Emporia, Kansas, July 2, 1988. Also interview with Lali Garcia, Kansas City, Kansas, June 5, 1987. She has an excellent history of the women's baseball team in Kansas City.

Interview with Mary Sousa, Omaha, Nebraska, September 17, 1987. Sousa was born in 1918 and later played baseball with the Our Lady of Guadalupe Church girl's team between 1938-1940.

Mexican American Harbor Lights, East Chicago, Indiana, 1992, p. 80. This book was published by a group of Mexican American women known as Señoras of Yesteryear (SOY). The East Chicago Mexican women's team played against South Chicago, Whiting, Gary, Hessville, and other local teams.

Interviews with Frederick R. Maravilla, East Chicago, October 16, 1987. Maravilla was the team manager of Las Gallinas starting in 1937 and also played on the men's baseball team.

These teams were primarily concentrated in the states of Kansas and Nebraska.


Both the G.I. Forum and LULAC chapters had several baseball teams, which entered tournament play in the Midwest. One of the better teams was the Topeka G.I. Forum. In addition, there were other sponsors of Mexican softball teams including the Elks, Lions, Kiwanis and other Lodge sponsorship.

Interview with Ramon Pedroza, Newton, Kansas, June 18, 1987.


Interview with Harley Ponce, Chanute, Kansas, June 10, 1987. Ponce was born in Chanute in 1939.

Interview with Lalo Perez, Flint, Michigan, May 6, 1987. Perez was born in San Antonio, Texas in 1920 and came to Flint in 1937. Several of his brothers served in the military. To cut costs, teams generally stayed with members of the opposition. The Wichita Aztecs often stayed in the homes of opposing team members because it was one way of saving money.


Fiesta Program's Tribute to Softball Tournaments, 1948-1988, author's files.


Interview with Lalo Perez, Flint, Michigan, May 6, 1987.


Interview with Irene Campos Carr, Aurora, Illinois, author's files.


Interview with Robert Gomez, Topeka, Kansas, author's files.


Interview with Paul "Buster" Sanchez, Wichita, Kansas, September 15, 1998.


Interview with Fifi Jasso, Newton, Kansas, March 25, 1987. Her grandparents and parents came from Mexico to Newton in 1907. Interview with Ila Placencia, Los Angeles, California, December 30, 1994. Placencia shared an incredible amount of history regarding the Mexican community in Des Moines, Iowa. As a young woman, she was active with sports.


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