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Comprising the second largest minority group in the United States, 87% of the Mexican American population live in five states in the Southwest. Characterized by a high birth rate, continuous immigration, and low income, the Mexicqn American population is an increasing source of concern in a welfare-oriented society. Educational attainment levels reveal significant differences between Mexican Americans and Anglo Americans, between rural and urban Mexican Americans, and between the native-born and foreign-born. State statistics conceal important local variations in schooling. Problems of the Mexican American are poverty, a high dependency ratio, unemployment, poor housing, inadequate public services, segregated schools, nonparticipation in political life, and a high rate of school delinquency. Policy implications include increasing communication between Mexican Americans and other poverty segments, designing programs of local distinctiveness to overcome local isolation, and training and retraining of non-Mexican American personnel working with this population. (JH)

INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH ON POVERTY

MEXICAN-AMERICANS:

PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

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MEXICAN-AMERICANS: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

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Preface

Despite their large numbers and long residence in the United States, Mexican-Americans have generally been ignored in both national and state-level policy considerations. In recent years, however, their increasing political participation has brought their very serious problems to the attention of national policy-makers, and the reaching-out structures of OEO have unquestionably accelerated the process. The need for information and definition regarding Mexican-Americans and their problems is increasingly evident, as the Cabinet-level hearings in El Paso in late 1967 attested. This study presents background information and perspectives relevant to the new policy-oriented look at the Mexican-American minority.

INTRODUCTION

Mexican-Americans are the second largest minority in the United States--a largely Spanish-speaking sub-population of vast and growing size inside five large southwestern states. In this immense area, their traditional home, it is customary to ignore their poverty, segregation, and bad schooling and to emphasize the traditional--and mythical--"Western tolerance." Too often their isolation is sustained and perpetuated both by romantic anthropological nonsense about a poor and proud people who want to remain Mexican and by liberal notions of "cultural pluralism." Frequently, and erroneously, they are lumped with other Hispanic immigrants--Puerto Ricans and Cubans--with whom they share neither customs, geography, nor history--in fact, little more than the rudiments of communication. Once dismissed as a useful, passive labor force for agriculture, mining, and the railroads, their extraordinary fertility, continued immigration, growing political awareness, and the role they play in the problems of the large southwestern cities make Mexican-Americans an increasing source of concern in a welfare-oriented dominant society.

I THE POPULATION

The SIZE of the Mexican-American population is considerable--five million persons is a reasonable 1966 U. S. projection from the 3,800,000 Spanish-surname persons of 1960. This is twice the entire population of Puerto Rico and five times the number of Puerto Ricans in the U. S. Eighty-seven percent of the Mexican-Americans live in the five states of Arizona, California, New Mexico, Texas, and Colorado, a large area that contains only 16 percent of the nation's population, typically concentrated in widely dispersed populated areas. Negroes (18.9 million in 1960) outnumber persons of Mexican ancestry in the country as a whole, but not in the southwestern states. In 1960, 11.8 percent of the Southwest's population was Mexican-American, while Negroes comprised less than 10 percent. Together these two "visible" minorities are more than a fifth of the population of the American Southwest.

In terms of GROWTH, with a very high birth rate and continuous immigration, this group is increasing much faster than either native whites or Negroes. The average annual increase between 1950 and 1960 was 5.1 percent, against 3.7 for Anglos* and 4.9 percent for nonwhites. (In these states the growth rate of the general population is about twice that of the nation as a whole.)

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*A term used to refer to white Americans other than those of Spanish surname.

Each of the five states has some distinctive characteristics in the relative concentration of Mexican-Americans. In 1960 Colorado held the smallest percentage--9.0 percent of its total population; 9.1 percent of California's population was Mexican-American; 28.3 percent of New Mexico's; and nearly 15 percent of Arizona's and Texas'. The largest increase during 1950-1960 was in California, where the Mexican-American population is growing twice as fast as the Anglo population, even in this state of rapid growth (Table 1 and Figure 1).

Behind these figures are some important SHIFTS IN POPULATION. Overshadowing all other movements at this time is a massive shift westward from Texas and the smaller states to California, as Mexican-Americans seek better social and economic opportunities. Thus in New Mexico, Arizona, and Colorado they are tending to become a somewhat smaller proportion of the total population.

In spite of widespread notions to the contrary, Mexican-Americans are a highly urbanized group and are, in fact, moving into cities faster than either nonwhites or Anglos. The stereotype of the Mexican-American as a rural or migrant worker is completely out of date. The process of urbanization is most advanced in Texas and in California, where most Mexican-Americans live. In New Mexico they are less concentrated in cities than Anglos but are more urbanized than nonwhites, who are for the most part Indians. Anglos are only slightly more urbanized in Arizona and in Colorado. Moreover the rate of urbanization is higher for Mexican-Americans than for Anglos. Some rural areas show a net decline of Spanish surnames between 1950 and 1960. In rural New

TABLE 1

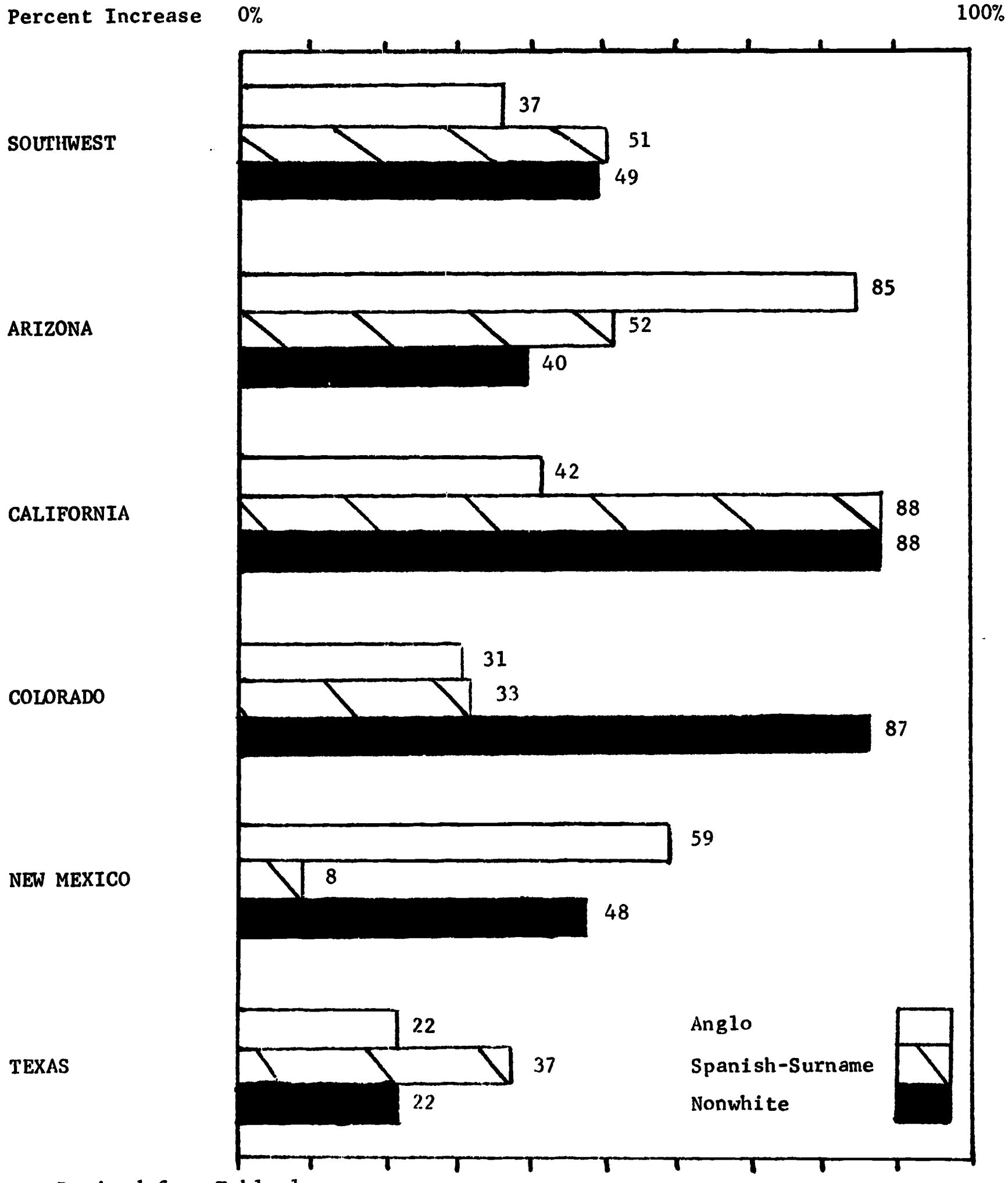
Spanish-Surname and Nonwhite Population
as a Percent of Total Population, 1950 and 1960
Five Southwest States

Location	1950			1960		
	White			White		
	Anglo	Spanish Surname	Non-white	Anglo	Spanish Surname	Non-white
SOUTHWEST	80.4	10.9	8.7	78.9	11.8	9.3
Arizona	70.2	17.1	12.7	74.9	14.9	10.2
California	86.5	7.2	6.3	82.9	9.1	8.0
Colorado	89.0	8.9	2.1	88.0	9.0	3.0
New Mexico	56.0	36.5	7.5	63.8	28.3	7.9
Texas	73.8	13.4	12.8	72.6	14.8	12.6
UNITED STATES	89.5		10.5	88.8		11.2

Source: 1960 U. S. Census of Population, Vol. I, Part 1, Table 15B; Parts 4, 6, 7, 33, 45, Table 15; PC (2) 1B, Table 1. 1950 U S. Census of Population, PE No. 3C, Table 1.

FIGURE 1

GROWTH OF THE SPANISH-SURNAME POPULATION
IN THE FIVE SOUTHWESTERN STATES
COMPARED WITH OTHER POPULATION GROUPS



Source: Derived from Table 1.

Mexico, notably, in ten years there was a drop of 74 percent, leaving many of the traditional and isolated communities in the northern section of the state virtual ghost towns. Younger people tend to move to Albuquerque, Denver, and out of state, especially to California.

Within large cities of the Southwest Mexican-Americans show distinctive RESIDENTIAL PATTERNS. They neither participated in the massive exodus to the suburbs after World War II nor are they universally a "downtown" problem. Mexican-American ghettos, or barrios, reflect instead a varied and complex historical pattern rather than the typical Negro or eastern and midwestern ethnic push into cheap housing near the center of the city. There are exceptions, as in parts of east Los Angeles, where the huge Spanish-surname population lives in several pockets of poverty. In many cases Mexican settlements preceded the major growth of southwestern cities and their plazas became bypassed pockets as in Albuquerque. Other barrios are "swallowed" remnants of former labor camps. But whatever the origin, this great variety means that the "Mexican-American area" in many southwestern communities is, in reality, several areas. It is quite wrong, therefore, to consider the barrios as another aspect of the problem of the "central city," as an adjunct to the Negro population, or as confined to any single level or area of governmental jurisdiction. This makes Mexican-Americans particularly difficult to "reach" administratively.

There is marked variation from city to city in the general degree of residential segregation of Mexican-Americans from the dominant Anglo population and in the segregation of Negroes and Mexican-Americans from each other. In general, Mexican Americans are sharply

segregated from Anglos (Table 2). Such segregation ranges from a high point in Odessa, Texas, to a low point in Sacramento, California. The range between is great, and there are surprising variations. A high degree of segregation from Anglos is associated with a relatively small Mexican-American population and a relatively large nonwhite population. In general, the larger the city the greater the degree of segregation. The amount of segregation also seems related to the size of the Mexican-American household, a characteristic that probably reflects a lack of acculturation rather than economic deprivation. The degree of residential segregation of Mexican-Americans in the urban Southwest is not very closely associated with their relative income level compared to that of Anglos, the percentage of foreign-born among Mexican-Americans, the number of housing vacancies, population density, or the concentration of Mexican-Americans in the central area of the city.

Negroes are also largely segregated from Mexican-Americans. Here again the range is great, from a low in Odessa to a high in Lubbock, both cities in Texas. Basically, however, Mexican-Americans are less rigidly segregated from Anglos than are Negroes in southwestern cities. Nonetheless, because of continuous immigration, it is likely that Mexican lower-class areas will retain their identity in the future and not thin out to groups of older people.

NATIVITY STATUS and IMMIGRATION are exceedingly important in any consideration of the Mexican-American population. They affect directly a host of social and cultural factors, including intermarriage, economic

TABLE 2

Indexes of Residential Dissimilarity* for 35 Southwest Central Cities, 1960

City	Anglo vs. All Others[a]	WPSS[b] vs. Anglo[c]	Negro vs. Anglo[c]	WPSS[b] vs. Negro	WPSS vs. Other NW[d]	WPSS[b] FBvs. NB[e]
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1. Abilene, Texas.....	68.3	57.6	85.1	55.7	64.8	28.1
2. Albuquerque, New Mexico...	53.0	53.0	81.7	62.4	34.9	26.2
3. Austin, Texas.....	62.9	63.3	72.1	66.1	69.9	9.5
4. Bakersfield, California...	72.4	53.7	87.7	61.4	49.3	24.6
5. Colorado Springs, Colorado	55.4	44.8	74.0	53.8	32.6	50.5
6. Corpus Christi, Texas.....	73.7	72.2	91.3	51.0	46.9	13.2
7. Dallas, Texas.....	83.2	66.8	90.2	76.1	63.4	23.9
8. Denver, Colorado.....	64.9	60.0	86.8	68.0	39.9	32.9
9. El Paso, Texas.....	52.9	52.9	79.2	59.5	52.8	17.9
10. Fort Worth, Texas.....	74.8	56.5	85.4	78.1	58.8	29.7
11. Fresno, California.....	64.4	49.0	92.0	55.2	38.8	19.5
12. Galveston, Texas.....	58.1	33.3	73.8	52.1	42.3	10.8
13. Houston, Texas.....	73.2	65.2	81.2	70.9	52.1	14.0
14. Laredo, Texas.....	39.3	39.4	60.1	43.9	44.7	12.7
15. Los Angeles, California...	68.7	57.4	87.6	75.7	50.3	23.8
16. Lubbock, Texas.....	74.4	66.0	94.4	89.0	65.8	16.3
17. Oakland, California.....	60.0	41.5	72.2	56.4	40.5	21.0
18. Odessa, Texas.....	81.8	75.8	90.5	29.2	68.2	11.8
19. Ontario, California.....	52.6	50.6	80.1	32.6	44.3	27.0
20. Phoenix, Arizona.....	62.8	57.8	90.0	60.7	40.6	21.6
21. Port Arthur, Texas.....	81.7	45.9	89.7	76.3	50.3	26.6
22. Pueblo, Colorado.....	39.9	40.2	57.0	44.1	44.5	39.4
23. Riverside, California.....	67.7	64.9	80.8	45.6	48.9	33.8
24. Sacramento, California....	39.5	30.2	61.9	47.8	38.8	31.4
25. San Angelo, Texas.....	67.2	65.7	77.5	75.6	70.6	12.9
26. San Antonio, Texas.....	63.7	63.6	84.5	77.4	49.9	17.0
27. San Bernardino, California	70.6	67.9	83.5	35.2	44.6	20.9
28. San Diego, California.....	55.9	43.6	81.1	55.2	34.6	27.5
29. San Francisco, California.	46.8	38.1	71.5	65.9	60.0	18.8
30. San Jose, California.....	42.5	43.0	64.7	44.4	42.7	17.0
31. Santa Barbara, California.	48.6	46.5	76.7	37.6	9.8	17.8
32. Stockton, California.....	59.3	52.6	73.0	31.0	39.8	22.0
33. Tucson, Arizona.....	63.9	62.7	84.5	64.1	39.0	18.2
34. Waco, Texas.....	65.7	59.7	74.3	60.6	53.4	20.7
35. Wichita Falls, Texas.....	76.8	64.8	86.1	47.6	67.8	30.8

TABLE 2 (Contd)

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[a]White persons of Spanish surname plus nonwhites

[b]White persons of Spanish surname

[c]Anglo whites, i.e., whites other than Spanish surname

[d]Nonwhites other than Negroes

[e]FB = Foreign born; NB = Native born

*The index of dissimilarity is a measure of the extent to which two populations are evenly distributed throughout the city; it refers to the proportion of the population that would have to move to equalize the distribution. Crudely, a "score" of 0 means no segregation and a "score" of 100 means total segregation.

Source: Joan W. Moore and Frank G. Mittelbach, "Residential Segregation in the Urban Southwest" (Los Angeles: University of California, Graduate School of Business Administration, Mexican-American Study Project, Advance Report 4, 1966), Table 2.

achievement, and general penetration into the dominant Anglo communities. Most Mexican-Americans, contrary to general belief, are native-born U. S. citizens. In 1960, 85 percent were native-born, although their distribution throughout the Southwest shows significant interstate variation. California, as a favorite goal of immigrants, has the most foreign born. Colorado, reflecting a stable population and certain historical and economic factors, has the fewest. Most "Spanish-Americans" in New Mexico and Colorado greatly antedate even the earliest white settlers. Few twentieth-century immigrants from Mexico went to those states because of a relative lack of opportunity and a considerable resentment toward the newcomers expressed by the old-settler "Spanish-Americans." The proportion of foreign stock (first and second generation) in the Southwest is declining and probably will continue to do so. Foreign stock in 1960 totaled 54 percent in California, about 50 percent in Arizona, and nearly 45 percent in Texas.

Mexicans almost never (only 13 percent in 1960) go to areas of the U. S. outside the Southwest. The concentration of newer immigrants in the Southwest, chiefly in cities and particularly in Southern California, adds urgency to the Mexican-American problem. This problem involves both the "old residents"--some acculturated to American ways, some trapped in near-permanent marginality--and the "new arrivals"--with few skills, little education, little knowledge of English, and Mexican fertility and social patterns.

Massive immigration from Mexico began in the 1920s and peaked again in the period immediately after World War II. The driving force

is the enormous per capita income difference between the U. S. and Mexico. The immigrants have been predominantly male, young, rural, and unskilled, even by Mexican standards; they have always tended to concentrate in unskilled work.

In eight of the eleven years from 1954 to 1964 more people came on immigrant visas from Mexico than from any other country--15 percent of all U. S. immigrants (Table 3). It seems very likely that a substantial proportion of this immigration will continue, and the actual recent figures on legal entry are 55,253 in 1963, 32,967 in 1964, and 37,969 in 1965. Important changes in legal immigration from Mexico were made in the 1965 amendments to the Immigration and Nationality Act (P. L. 89-236). At the moment, unless a Senate-established Commission on Western Hemisphere Immigration suggests otherwise, a ceiling of 120,000 immigrants a year from all New World countries will take effect in 1968. Final action depends on Congress, but it is highly likely that some kind of ceiling will prevail. Such a limit, however, will exclude immediate relatives of Mexicans already in this country who are to be placed in a preference category. No legislative standards are provided for apportioning the overall maximum among either the Western Hemisphere countries or individual applicants.

Although the job certification procedure tends to favor Mexicans, the overall effect is believed to be restrictive, probably blocking any sustained increase in Mexican immigration over the annual average of 40,000 in the past ten years, and possibly reducing the volume even below this figure. All this, of course, is contingent on its not

TABLE 3

Number of Mexican Immigrants Compared with All Immigrants, Five-Year Periods, 1900-1964

Period[a]	Mexican[b]	Total	Mexican as % of Total
1900-1904	2,259	3,255,149	.07
1905-1909	21,732	4,947,239	.44
1910-1914	82,588	5,174,701	1.60
1915-1919	91,075	1,172,679	7.77
1920-1924	249,248	2,774,600	8.98
1925-1929	238,527	1,520,910	15.68
1930-1934	19,200	426,953	4.50
1935-1939	8,737	272,422	3.21
1940-1944	16,548	203,589	8.13
1945-1949	37,742	653,019	5.78
1950-1954	78,723	1,099,035	7.16
1955-1959	214,746	1,400,233	15.34
1960-1964	217,827	1,419,013	15.35

[a]Fiscal Years

[b]Classified by country of birth, except for the periods 1935-1939 and 1940-1944 in which the data refer to Mexico as the country of last permanent residence. This classification had to be adopted because the reports for several years in these periods do not furnish data by country of birth. The statistics for periods for which both classifications are reported indicate that numerical differences are relatively small. The "country of birth" classification was adopted here as the basic one not only because it is definitionally superior but also because detailed characteristics of immigrants are reported on this basis.

Source: Annual Reports of the U. S. Immigration and Naturalization Service and its predecessor agencies.

inducing a massive movement of illegal immigrants. Recently Immigration and Naturalization reported some increase in illegal border crossings in 1965.

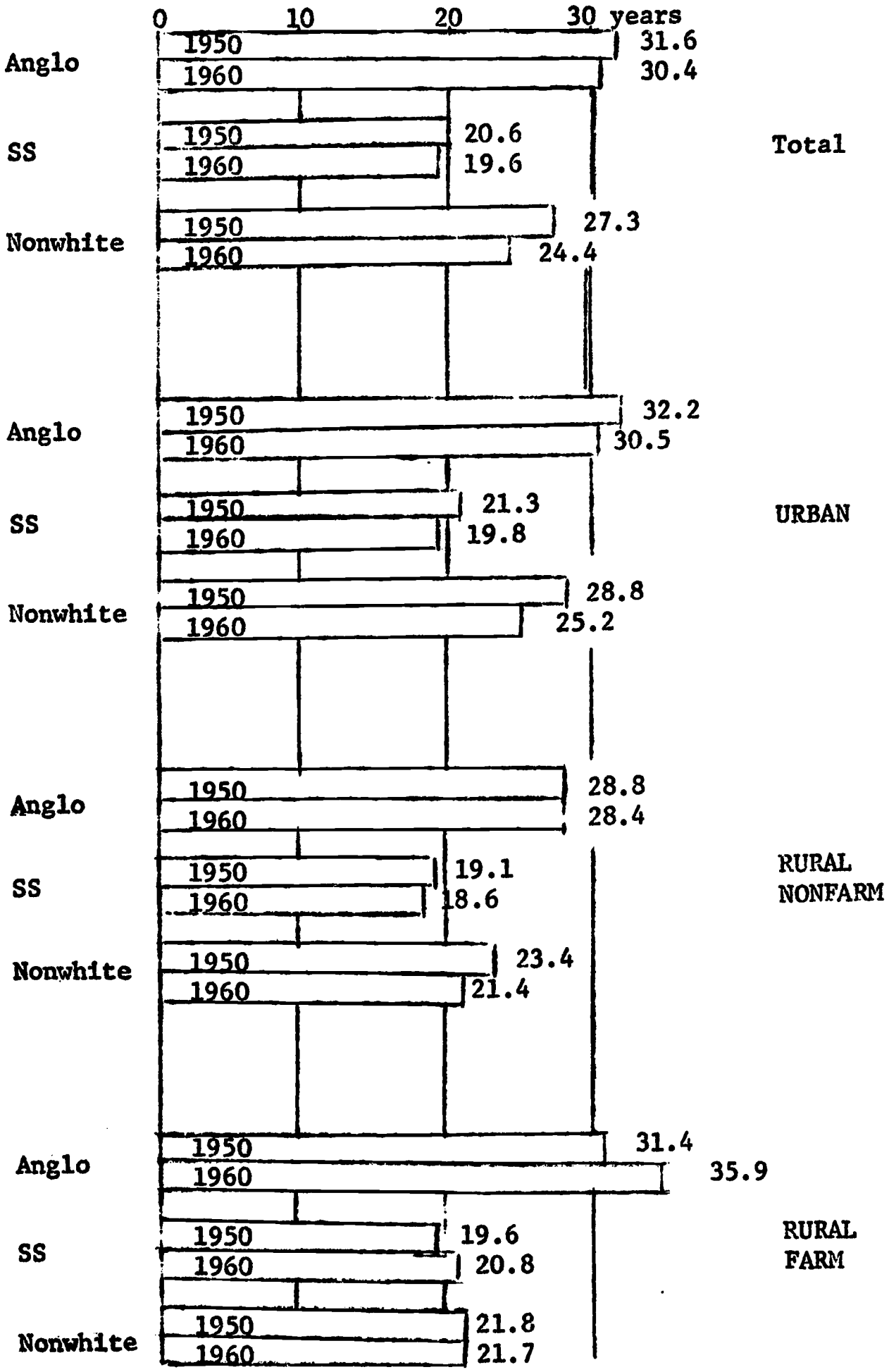
Meanwhile, the curious anomaly of the "green card" commuters remains. Under a convenient fiction day workers commute across the border into south Texas and other areas without meeting the criterion of continuous residence in the U. S. required of regular immigrants. This practice seriously undercuts both employment and wage standards of neighboring U. S. cities, most notably San Diego, Brownsville, and El Paso. No reliable numerical estimate is available, but most sources agree that at least 60,000 persons (1965), both U. S. citizens and aliens, are involved, and that the number is increasing. The impact on the local labor market is enormous: 17 percent of the work force employed in El Paso, 23 percent in Brownsville, 5 percent in San Diego, according to the U. S. Department of Labor. Their presence is significantly correlated with high unemployment rates in all U. S. border areas.

The Mexican-American population differs importantly in AGE COMPOSITION from Negroes and from the dominant Anglos. It differs, in fact, in practically all salient demographic characteristics. It is now much younger and is getting younger still. There are more children of school age relative to adults, and their share in the total child population of the Southwest is substantially greater than the overall share of Mexican-Americans in the region's total population. Median age differences are startling--eleven years younger than other whites and six years younger than nonwhites (Figure 2).

FIGURE 2

MEDIAN AGE OF THE SPANISH-SURNAME POPULATION
COMPARED WITH OTHER POPULATION GROUPS

1950 and 1960, Five Southwest States Combined,
Urban and Rural Areas



Source: 1950 U. S. Census of Population, Vol. II, Parts 3, 5, 6, 31, 43, Table 15; PE No. 3C, Table 3; 1960 U. S. Census of Population, Vol. I, Parts 4, 6, 7, 33, 45, Table 96; PC (2) 1B, Table 2.

This drastic age difference holds in both urban and rural areas.* Anglos living on farms in the southwestern states average fifteen years older than the Spanish-surname groups. Most important is the large percentage of children under fifteen years of age: 41.9 percent against 29.7 percent for Anglos and 36.6 percent for nonwhites. There were nearly 1,500,000 Mexican-American children under fifteen in 1960. Thus while the overall ratio is about one Mexican to seven Anglos, the child ratio was one Mexican child for every five Anglos. The impact of this minority on the school system and other youth-serving agencies of these states therefore is far greater than ordinary population ratios imply. Historically, the schools have failed to cope with the educational problems of these minority children. On the other hand, the Mexican-American population has far less than its share of people in the age brackets beyond twenty-five and particularly of aged persons. In summary, the age distribution of Mexicans resembles the population of the Republic of Mexico far more than it resembles the population of the American Southwest.

Of immense importance in terms of economic welfare is the high DEPENDENCY RATIO of this group. Such a ratio is a statistical relationship between those who can earn a living and those who are more likely to depend on others for support. The ratio of Mexican-Americans under twenty and sixty-five and over to those twenty to sixty-four shows an

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*The 1960 U.S. Census included braceros (farm workers imported by treaty) in this count. Correction for this slight bias is made whenever possible in this essay.

extraordinarily high rate of dependency. It is higher than the rate for either Anglos or Negroes. In fact, only in rural farm areas do nonwhite groups show a higher ratio. It reflects, of course, the disproportionately large number of children and adolescents which is so great that it swamps the underrepresentation of aged. In summary: in the Southwest as a whole there were 121 dependents in 1960 for every 100 Mexican-Americans twenty to sixty-four years old, 85 dependents for every 100 Anglos in the same age group, and 98 dependents for every 100 nonwhites of comparable age. Of all five states, California has the most favorable ratio and Colorado the least favorable (Table 4 and Figure 3). Dependency ratios are highest in rural-nonfarm areas where the child population is highest, considerably magnifying regional and local differences in the socioeconomic status of this particular minority.

The Mexican-American population differs also in its SEX RATIO. Generally, males are more numerous than females, in contrast to all other groups in this area. In rural-farm segments of the population the difference is extreme: a ratio of 138 Spanish-surname males to every 100 females in 1960. (While this pattern holds for the general U. S. population, it is extreme in the case of Spanish-surname groups, and is almost surely biased by the Census count of braceros and other migratory farm workers.) Nonetheless the urban sex ratios of Spanish-surname men to women are still higher than those of other groups. Again, in contrast to other subpopulations, even the older age groups include men and women in about equal numbers. (We have no direct data on the longevity of Mexican-Americans, so we can make no firm statements as to

TABLE 4

Dependency Ratios for Five Southwestern States and by Urban and Rural Areas in the Southwest, 1960

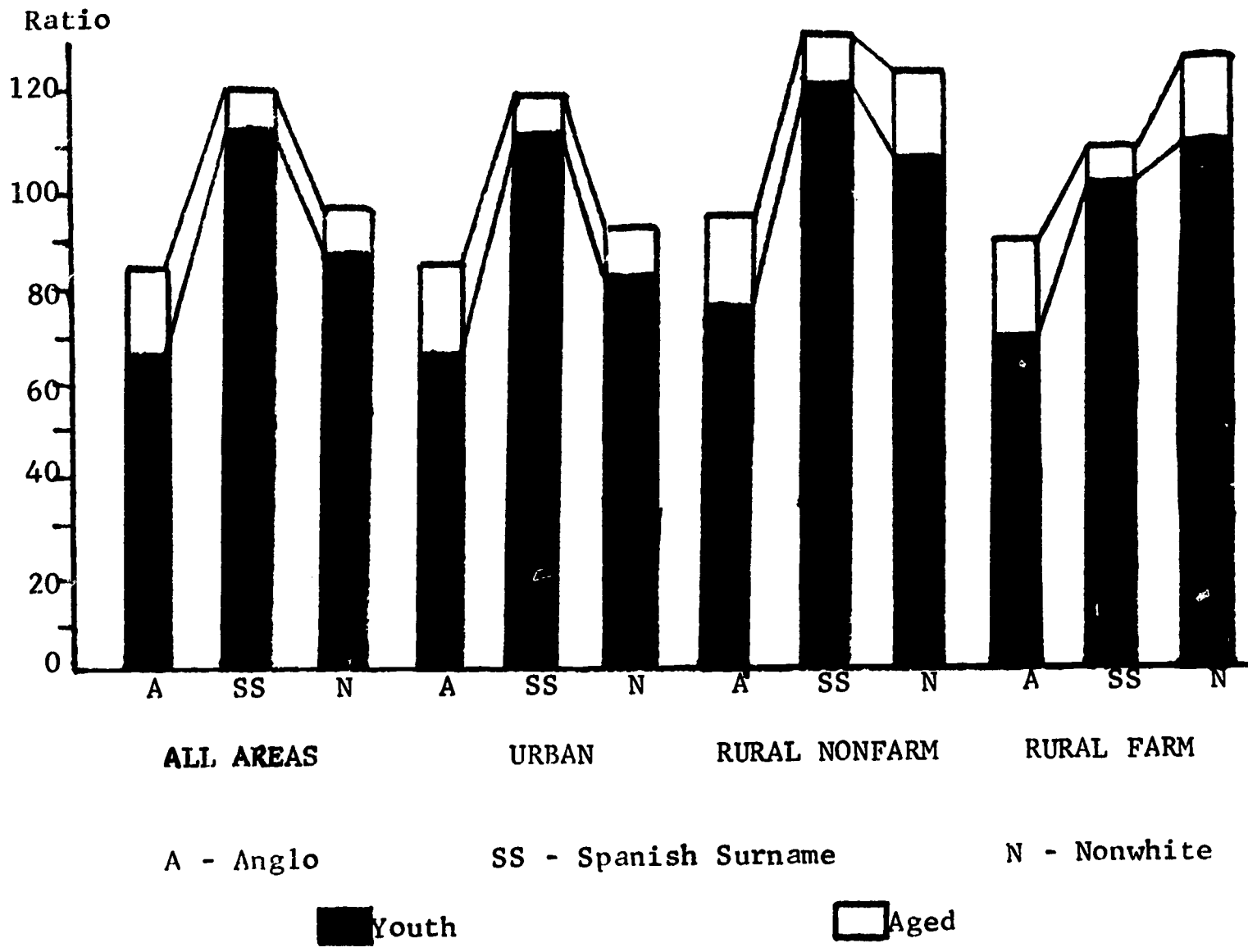
Rank

Location	Anglo	Spanish Surname	Nonwhite
Arizona	3 (88.9%)	4 (122.2%)	1 (136.9%)
California	5 (83.1%)	5 (103.7%)	5 (84.9%)
Colorado	1 (92.0%)	1 (139.3%)	4 (93.4%)
New Mexico	2 (90.6%)	2 (137.9%)	2 (134.6%)
Texas	4 (85.7%)	3 (135.3%)	3 (108.5%)
Urban	3 (83.1%)	2 (119.5%)	3 (92.4%)
Rural-nonfarm	1 (94.0%)	1 (132.1%)	2 (125.1%)
Rural-farm	2 (89.1%)	3 (108.8%)	1 (127.3%)

Source: 1960 U. S. Census of Population, Vol. I, Parts 4, 6, 7, 33, 45, Table 95; and PC (2) IB, Table 2.

FIGURE 3

DEPENDENCY RATIOS IN
FIVE SOUTHWEST STATES COMBINED, 1960
URBAN AND RURAL AREAS



Source: Derived from Table 4.

sources of this unusual sex ratio among the aged.)

The Mexican-American population has distinctive FAMILY PATTERNS. The families are astonishingly large, far larger than any other population group in the U. S. The incidence of large families (six persons or more) is about three times that of Anglos and one and one-half times that of nonwhites in the Southwest as a whole (Table 5; it should be borne in mind that "nonwhite" in Arizona and New Mexico includes many American Indian families). California has the fewest large families, Texas the most. There tend (with variations) to be more large families in rural areas and fewer in urban areas.

There are also important differences in MARITAL STATUS: more single men and women over fourteen, fewer divorced men and women, fewer widows, but a fair number of separated and also of remarried men and women in comparison to other groups. Native-born men and women show increasing similarity to Anglo divorce patterns.

A good indicator of subgroup family stability is the number of households headed by a person other than the father (Table 6). Here again, we discover that the Mexican-American family is actually relatively "unstable." There are fewer such households than among nonwhites but far more than among Anglos, and this disparity exists throughout the Southwest in 1960 regardless of state or size of city.

But no other characteristic of the Mexican-American population is quite as significant for the future as its huge FERTILITY. This extraordinary rate (Table 7) is reflected in the age composition and in the large family size, but it is most evident in the crude fertility rate--709 per 1,000 of women aged fifteen to forty-nine--compared to

TABLE 5

Family Size, 1960,
As A Percent of All Families in Each Population Group

State and Population Group	Number of Persons in Family					
	2	3	4	5	6	7 or more
SOUTHWEST						
Anglo	35.9	21.5	20.6	12.5	5.7	3.8
Spanish Surname	17.9	17.4	18.4	15.5	11.6	19.2
Nonwhite	30.1	20.4	16.4	12.2	8.4	12.5
ARIZONA						
Anglo	34.6	20.4	20.2	13.1	6.8	4.9
Spanish Surname	15.5	16.2	17.4	15.9	13.2	21.8
Nonwhite	21.2	16.3	14.1	13.1	10.4	24.8
CALIFORNIA						
Anglo	37.2	21.3	20.5	12.2	5.5	3.3
Spanish Surname	21.1	18.6	20.0	16.2	10.6	13.5
Nonwhite	29.7	21.0	17.8	12.9	8.3	10.3
COLORADO						
Anglo	34.8	20.3	20.6	13.3	6.7	4.3
Spanish Surname	17.1	16.8	18.4	15.4	12.2	20.1
Nonwhite	30.7	20.6	18.2	13.1	7.6	9.8
NEW MEXICO						
Anglo	30.0	21.2	21.7	14.7	7.3	5.1
Spanish Surname	17.0	17.8	17.5	15.1	12.1	20.5
Nonwhite	19.2	16.0	15.4	13.5	12.0	23.9
TEXAS						
Anglo	64.7	22.3	20.7	12.4	5.7	4.2
Spanish Surname	15.0	16.3	16.8	14.8	12.3	24.8
Nonwhite	32.4	20.2	14.9	11.0	8.1	13.4

Source: 1960 U. S. Census of Population, Vol. I, Parts 4, 6, 7, 33, 45, Table 110; (PC(2) 1B, Table 5.

TABLE 6

Families Other Than Husband-Wife as a Percent of All Families, 1960

Location and Family Head	Anglo	Spanish Surname	Nonwhite
Southwest, All Areas			
Female head	7.7	11.9	18.1
"Other male" head[a]	2.2	3.8	3.8
Female and other male	9.9	15.7	21.9
Southwest, Urban Areas			
Female head	8.4	12.8	18.9
"Other male" head[a]	2.2	3.7	3.7
Female and other male	10.6	16.5	22.6
Arizona			
Female head	7.1	12.8	16.5
"Other male" head[a]	1.8	3.4	3.9
Female and other male	8.9	16.2	20.4
California			
Female head	8.4	11.1	16.8
"Other male" head[a]	2.3	3.7	4.1
Female and other male	10.7	14.8	20.9
Colorado			
Female head	7.2	12.3	16.4
"Other male" head[a]	2.2	3.3	3.1
Female and other male	9.4	15.6	19.5
New Mexico			
Female head	6.1	12.7	15.1
"Other male" head[a]	1.8	3.9	4.0
Female and other male	7.9	16.6	19.1
Texas			
Female head	6.9	12.4	19.8
"Other male" head[a]	2.0	4.0	3.6
Female and other male	8.9	16.4	23.4

[a]Other than husband with wife present

Source: 1960 U. S. Census of Population, Vol. 1, Parts 4, 6, 7, 33 and 45, Tables 50, 109, 111; and PC (2) 1B, Table 3.

TABLE 7

Crude Fertility Ratio, 1950 and 1960[a]

State and Population Group	1950	1960	Percent Changes 1950-1960
ARIZONA			
All	488	554	13.5
Anglo	422	481	14.0
Spanish Surname	660	753	14.1
Nonwhite	661	846	28.0
CALIFORNIA			
All	401	472	17.7
Anglo	386	442	14.5
Spanish Surname	574	657	14.5
Nonwhite	422	569	34.8
COLORADO			
All	448	516	15.2
Anglo	420	491	16.9
Spanish Surname	762	738	-3.1
Nonwhite	416	621	49.3
NEW MEXICO			
All	561	618	10.2
Anglo	464	543	17.0
Spanish Surname	713	754	5.8
Nonwhite	664	793	19.4
TEXAS			
All	449	520	15.8
Anglo	410	459	12.0
Spanish Surname	691	745	7.8
Nonwhite	445	624	40.2
SOUTHWEST			
All	430	499	16.0
Anglo	399	455	14.0
Spanish Surname	655	709	8.2
Nonwhite	451	612	35.7

[a]The crude fertility ratio is the number of children under 5 divided by the number of women aged 15-49, multiplied by 1,000.

Source: Spanish Surname - 1960 PC (2) 1B, Table 2; 1950 P-E No. 3C, Table 5.
Total - 1960 Census of Population, 1960 state volumes, Table 17, 1950 Census of Population, 1960 state volumes, Table 17.
Nonwhite - Same as for Total 1950 and 1960

612 for nonwhites and 455 for Anglos. California, again, shows the lowest rate, but it is still extremely high. Interestingly, in the group of women aged forty-five to forty-nine, fertility is enormous, running 107 percent higher than among the dominant Anglos, who, by this age usually cease bearing children. Even Puerto Rican women were substantially less fertile in the same years in both rural and urban areas in Puerto Rico itself. This birth rate is considerably higher than that of any portion of the foreign stock population of the United States, including other predominantly Catholic groups.

II EDUCATION

With this background it is possible to gain some perspective on the educational environment, accomplishment, and prospects of the Mexican-Americans.

Statistics about education are based on certain assumptions, some of them pernicious. One is that six years of school in Laredo, Texas, is as good as six years of school in San Francisco. Another is that in the same city segregated ghetto schools can match schools in better neighborhoods. Education statistics also omit self-education, but then, employers disregard this also.

The reality of educational deprivation for Mexican-Americans is unmistakable. Mexican-American leaders without exception consider educational disadvantage an outstanding handicap. Throughout the Southwest Mexican-Americans average 7.1 median years of schooling against 12.1 for Anglos and 9.0 for nonwhites. In contrast to Anglos, the gap

is a shocking 5 years. In Texas, considered separately, the record is even worse: the median attainment is 4.8 years, a tiny fraction above the four-year cutoff for functional illiteracy. These medians are based on adults over twenty-five years of age (Table 8). However, the extreme youth of the Mexican population disguises an important trend. When only younger Mexicans are considered (fourteen to twenty-four years) we find the median at 9.2 years, a significant gain. And contrary to conservative notions about the role of women in Mexican culture, the girls average about as much schooling as the young men.

Above the junior high school level there is a serious gap. Only 13 percent of the Mexican-Americans graduated from college in 1960 against 23 percent of the Anglos. The discrepancy gets worse in college--only one-fourth as many Mexican-Americans reach or complete college. Twice as many nonwhites reach this level (Table 9). Roughly half as many Mexican-American young women attend--or complete--college as do men. College-educated Mexican-Americans are heavily concentrated in California, other southwestern states falling somewhere between Texas and California.

State figures again are likely to conceal important local variations in schooling. We note offhand a 1960 median of 3.1 years in Lubbock, Texas, and 10.1 in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Schooling of Mexican-Americans is a relatively slight 19 percent below that of Anglos in Colorado Springs and a dreadful 74 percent in Lubbock. Furthermore, the disparities were smaller for the nonwhites, who in Lubbock are almost entirely Negro. But there are clear signs of progress during the ten years between 1950 and 1960--even in Lubbock, which nearly

TABLE 8

Median Years of School Completed by Persons 25 Years and Over, 1950 and 1960

Population Group	Median Years Completed		Schooling Gap			
			1950		1960	
	1950	1960	Years[a]	Percent[b]	Years[a]	Percent[b]
SOUTHWEST, total	10.6	11.6	---	--	---	--
Anglo	11.3	12.1	---	--	---	--
Nonwhite	7.8	9.0	3.5	31	3.1	26
Sp. Surname	5.4	7.1	5.9	52	5.0	41
ARIZONA, total	10.0	11.2	---	--	---	--
Anglo	11.6	12.1	---	--	---	--
Nonwhite	5.5	7.0	6.1	53	5.1	42
Sp. Surname	6.0	7.0	5.6	48	5.1	42
CALIFORNIA, total	11.6	12.1	---	--	---	--
Anglo	12.0	12.2	---	--	---	--
Nonwhite	8.9	10.6	3.1	26	1.6	13
Sp. Surname	7.8	8.6	4.2	35	3.6	30
COLORADO, total	10.9	12.1	---	--	---	--
Anglo	11.3	12.2	---	--	---	--
Nonwhite	9.8	11.2	1.5	13	1.0	8
Sp. Surname	6.5	8.2	4.8	42	4.0	33
NEW MEXICO, total	9.3	11.2	---	--	---	--
Anglo	11.3	12.2	---	--	---	--
Nonwhite	5.8	7.1	6.0	51	5.1	42
Sp. Surname	6.1	7.4	5.7	48	4.8	40
TEXAS, total	9.3	10.4	---	--	---	--
Anglo	10.3	11.5	---	--	---	--
Nonwhite	7.0	8.1	3.3	32	3.4	30
Sp. Surname	3.5	4.8	6.8	66	6.7	58

TABLE 8 (Contd)

[a]Difference between Anglo and nonwhite or Spanish-surname median years, respectively.

[b]Difference as explained in note (a) computed as a percent of Anglo median years, i.e., the percentage by which the Spanish-surname or nonwhite number of years falls below the Anglo figure. This calculation is added to provide a common measurement. For example, a difference of three years is equivalent to one-third if the Anglo median is 9 years but to one-fourth if the Anglo median is 12 years. Percentages are rounded.

Source: Leo Grebler, "The Schooling Gap, Signs of Progress" (Los Angeles: University of California, Graduate School of Business Administration, Mexican-American Study Project, Advance Report 7, 1967), Table 1, from 1960 U. S. Census of Population, Vol. 1, Parts 4, 6, 7, 33, 45, Tables 47 and 103, and PC(2) 1B, Table 7; 1950 Census of Population, Vol. II, Parts 3, 5, 6, 31, 43, Table 20, and P-E No. 3C, Table 3.

TABLE 9

Educational Attainment, Southwest, 1960

Educational Attainment[a]	Age Group		
	14 and Over	14-24	25 and Over
Anglo			
Elem. School 0-4 Years	3.7	1.2	4.4
Elem. School 8 Years	12.8	12.3	13.2
High School 4 Years	27.8	25.6	28.4
Some College[b]	22.1	15.2	23.9
Spanish-Surname			
Elem. School 0-4 Years	27.6	9.0	35.6
Elem. School 8 Years	12.9	16.3	11.5
High School 4 Years	12.8	14.0	12.2
Some College[b]	5.6	4.2	6.2
Nonwhite			
Elem. School 0-4 Years	15.1	3.1	18.6
Elem. School 8 Years	12.1	12.7	11.9
High School 4 Years	18.7	21.0	18.0
Some College[b]	11.7	10.0	12.2

[a]The percentages for each age group do not add up to 100% since some intermediate schooling levels are omitted.

[b]Includes one to three years of college as well as complete college education (4 years or more).

Source: Leo Grebler, "The Schooling Gap, Signs of Progress" (Los Angeles: University of California, Graduate School of Business Administration, Mexican-American Study Project, Advance Report 7, 1967), Table 4, from 1960 U. S. Census of Population, PC (2) 1B, Tables 3 and 7; Vol. I, Parts 4, 6, 7, 33, and 45, Tables 47 and 103.

doubled its 1.7 median years of schooling in 1950 to 3.1 years in 1960. Large cities do not seem to do a significantly better job of educating their Mexican-Americans than do small cities. There is great variation between urban and rural school systems and, as always, in comparing many small cities from Texas to California, the local variations are exceedingly important.

Current ENROLLMENT figures (ages five to thirty-four) are encouraging: they show Mexican-Americans running only a shade below Anglos in every state except Texas. There are some notable disparities in rural areas, and most important of all, a considerable lag in enrollment of children aged five to seven years and children near high-school age. Current enrollments also show that of all ethnic groups in the Southwest, including Negroes, the Mexican-Americans are the least successful in keeping teenage children in school (Figure 4). Dropouts are heavy in all five states.

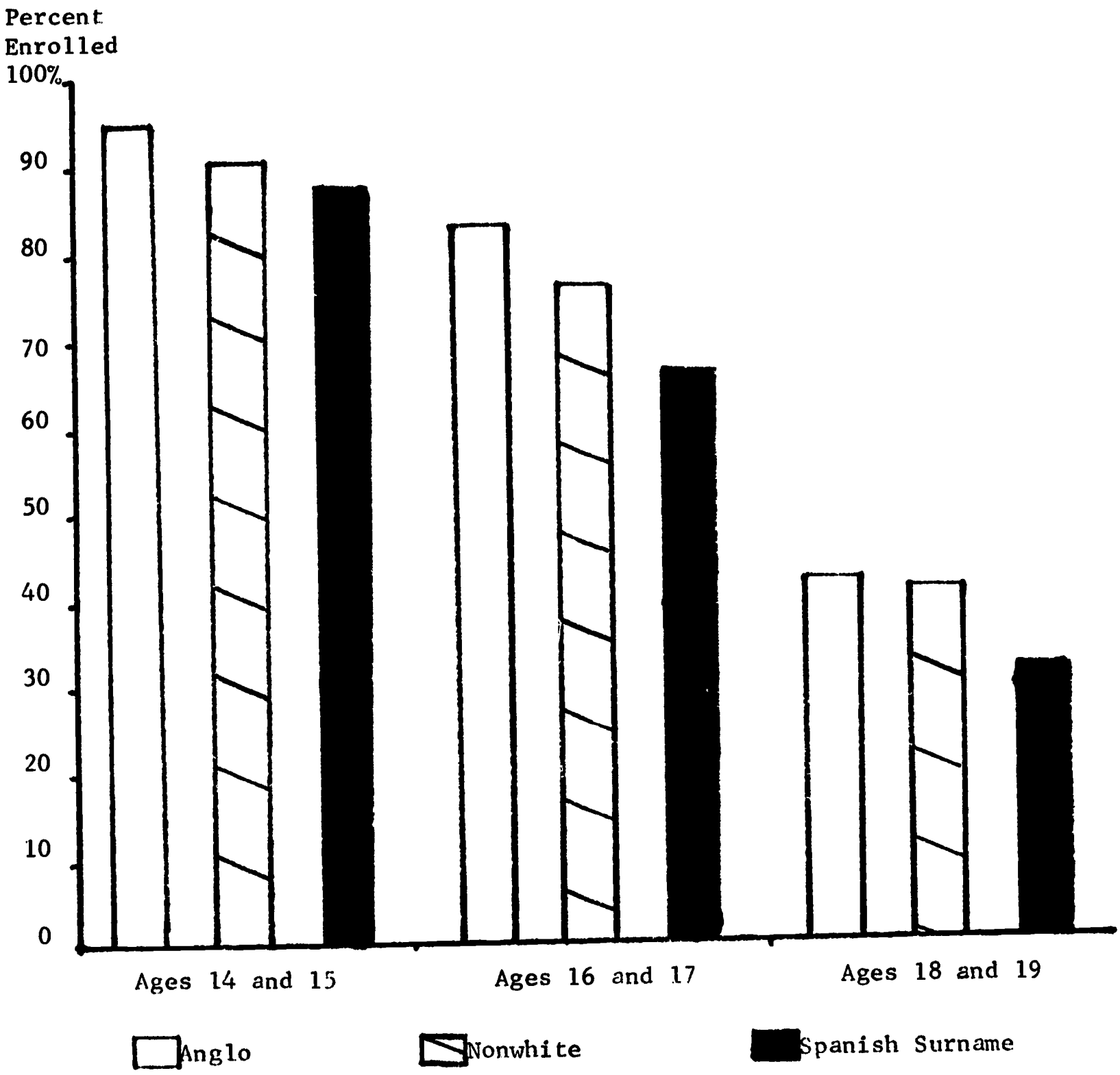
There is also a deep gulf in educational attainment between the foreign-born and the native-born segments. Typically, natives of Mexican or mixed parentage achieve about twice the education of their immigrant foreign-born parents. But the rate of gain does not carry over from the second to the third generation. Fortunately, the enrollment figures show smoother progress (Figure 5) with third-generation Mexican-Americans gaining noticeably in enrollment.

In rural areas (particularly rural-farm) there is much less progress from generation to generation, a reflection of the disproportionate number of foreign-born Mexicans in the migrant labor

FIGURE 4

PERCENT OF TEENAGERS ENROLLED IN SCHOOL,

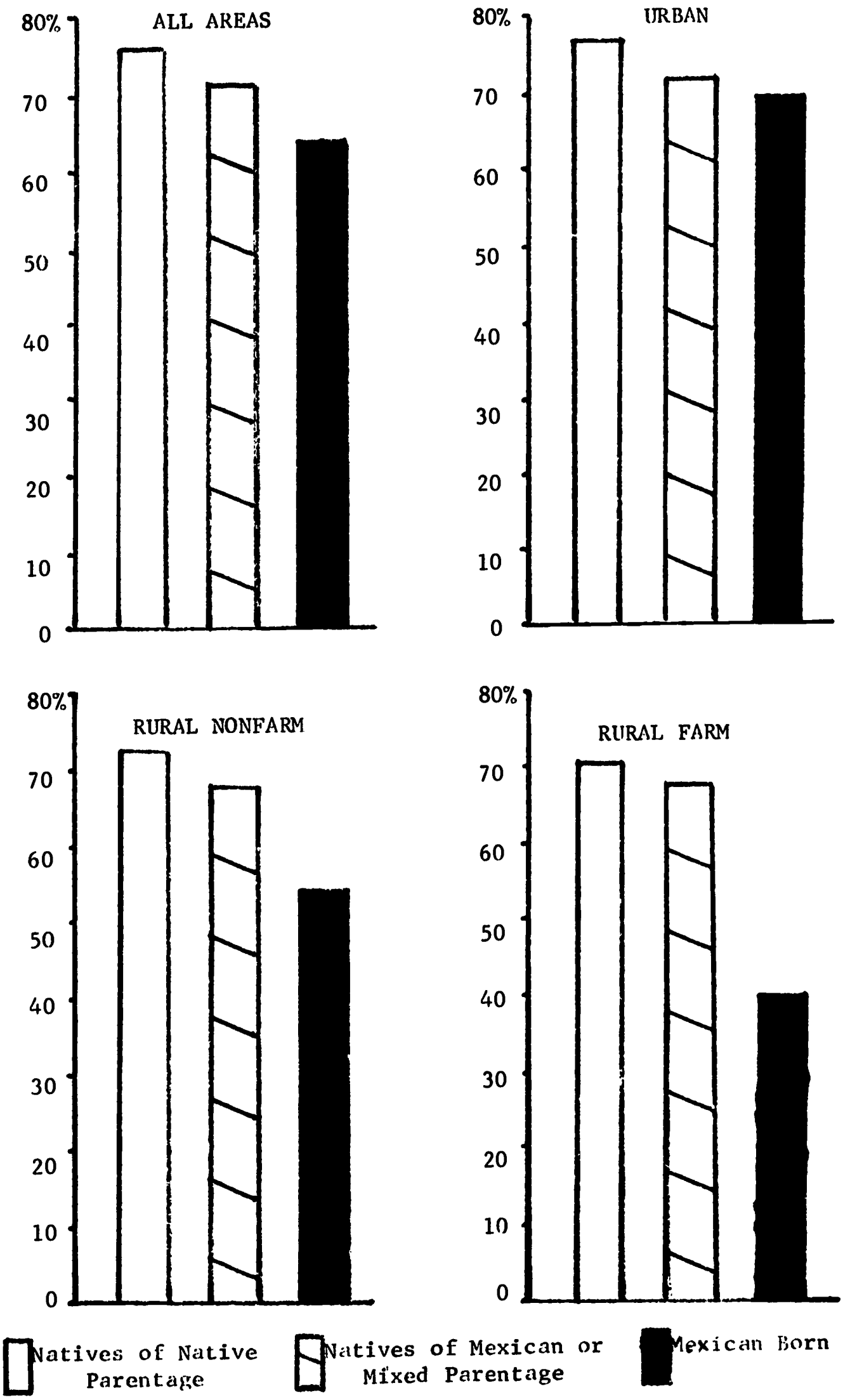
SOUTHWEST, 1960



Source: Leo Grebler, "The Schooling Gap, Signs of Progress" (Los Angeles: University of California, Graduate School of Business Administration, Mexican-American Study Project, Advance Report 7, 1967) Chart III, from 1960 U. S. Census of Population, Vol. 1, Parts 4, 6, 7, 33, and 45, Tables 44, 94, 101; and PC(2) IB, Table 4.

FIGURE 5

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT OF SPANISH-SURNAME PERSONS 5 TO 21 YEARS OF AGE BY NATIVITY, PARENTAGE, AND LOCATION, SOUTHWEST, 1960
(Percent Enrolled)



Source: Leo Grebler, "The Schooling Gap, Signs of Progress" (Los Angeles: University of California, Graduate School of Business Administration, Mexican-American Study Project, Advance Report 7, 1967) Chart V, from 1960 U. S. Census of Population, PC(2) 1B, Table 4.

force. We also have solid evidence of a "vicious cycle" in rural Mexican-American education. Poor education of the parents prevents them from seeking better opportunities in the cities. Thus, the children's schooling is poor, and without a massive effort to improve education in the farm areas, the children are trapped. Apparently the local power structure in many of these areas is unwilling to invest in schooling that will almost surely reduce the supply of labor by an exodus to nearby cities. This problem can probably only be resolved by policy decisions at a higher level of government.

It is encouraging, however, that so much progress in enrollments has been made on the basis of the educational system that existed from 1950 to 1960, even without the current emphasis on education of minority groups. Plainly, a solid base exists for further progress, and it is likely that substantial progress has been achieved since 1960.

III INCOME, UNEMPLOYMENT, AND THE LABOR MARKET

The American Southwest is the home of three overwhelmingly poor populations--the Negroes, the Mexican-Americans, and the Indians. The Mexican-Americans are particularly unfortunate: they are a poverty-stricken provincial subpopulation inside a provincial population; they have very few national or regional spokesmen; and they have been confounded for years in the public mind with the migrant farm laborers, a mistake that tends to keep them out of public view.

On the simplest level, poverty is lack of income. In 1960 nearly 243,000 Spanish-surname families (35 percent of all Mexican-American families) had an annual income of less than $3,000 (Table 10).

TABLE 10

Poor Families,[a] Southwest, 1960

Population Group	All Families	Poor Families[a]	Percent of Poor in Each Group	Poor in Each Group as Percent Of All Poor
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Total.....	7,356,866	1,451,655	19.7%	100.0%
White.....	6,766,367	1,205,729	17.8	83.1
Anglo.....	6,068,340	962,826	15.9	66.4
Spanish Surname	698,027	242,903	34.8	16.7
Nonwhite.....	590,299	245,926	41.7	17.0

[a]Families with annual income under $3,000 in 1959.

Source: Frank G. Mittelbach and Grace Marshall, "The Burden of Poverty" (Los Angeles: University of California, Graduate School of Business Administration, Mexican-American Study Project, Advance Report 5), Table 1, from 1960 U. S. Census of Population, PC(2) 1B, Table 5; Vol. I, Parts 4, 6, 33, and 45, Table 65.

In 1959 the median incomes of Mexican-American males in the Southwest was $2,768 (Table 11). This was 57 percent of the median Anglo male income, and only a little above the Negroes'. In urban areas only is it slightly higher. Among older workers Mexican-Americans steadily lose ground in comparison with other ethnic groups, because Mexican-Americans do not have much job mobility, and because foreign-born immigrants are a larger percentage of the older age groups.

Interstate differences in median family income are large. The incomes themselves range from $5,533 in California to $2,914 in Texas. The Anglo median income figure in Texas is twice that of Mexican-Americans while the nonwhite median income is slightly lower ($2,591). Other states range in between. Mexican-American relative incomes are highest in the high-income states (Table 12).

Most urban Mexican-American males are employed as semiskilled workers and laborers. Only 19 percent are in the white-collar occupations (professional, managerial, clerical, and sales) compared to nearly half of the Anglos. The occupational structures of nonwhites and Mexican-American males are quite similar except that Negroes get slightly less craft work and slightly more service work. Mexican-Americans hold few professional, managerial, and sales jobs because of low educational achievement, lack of business capital, a cultural dissimilarity, and physically apparent membership in a low-prestige group, which probably eliminates many sales and supervisory jobs.

UNEMPLOYMENT rates are very high, roughly twice that of Anglos of comparable ages (Table 13), and, relative to other groups, unemployment tends to increase rapidly for older men and women. Unemployment

TABLE 11

Median Male Income, Southwest, 1959

	Median Incomes[a]			Ratio	
	Spanish Surname	Anglo	Negro	Spanish Surname to Anglo	Spanish Surname to Negro
All Residences	$2768	$4815	$2435	.574	1.136
Urban	$3156	$5134	$2738	.614	1.152

[a]Adjusted for age differences. Age adjustments were computed from index numbers of the following form $\frac{\Sigma X_{is}\ Y_i}{\Sigma X_{ia}\ Y_i}$, where X_{is} refers to the proportion of Spanish surname males with income in each age class, X_{ia} to the same for Anglos and Y_i to the corresponding median incomes of all males. The index numbers were used to adjust the median incomes of each group. Spanish surname males with income in 1959 are classified into the following age groups by the Census: 14-19, 20-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-64, and 65 and over.

Source: Walter Fogel, "Mexican-Americans in Southwest Labor Markets" (Los Angeles: University of California, Graduate School of Business Administration, Mexican-American Study Project, Advance Report 10), Table 1, from the 1960 U. S. Census of Population.

TABLE 12

Median Income by State,
Urban Males, 1959

		Arizona	California	Colorado	New Mexico	Texas
Spanish Surname (1)		$3322	$4137	$3340	$3278	$2339
Anglo (2)		$4757	$5421	$4719	$5276	$4593
Nonwhite (3)		$2581	$3580	$3190	$2563	$2282
Ratio	(1)/(2)	.70	.76	.71	.62	.51
	(1)/(3)	1.29	1.16	1.05	1.28	1.02

All incomes are adjusted for within-state differences in age distribution. For method see Table 11.

Source: Walter Fogel, "Mexican Americans in Southwest Labor Markets" (Los Angeles: University of California, Graduate School of Business Administration, Mexican-American Study Project, Advance Report 10, 1967), Table 11.

TABLE 13

Unemployment Rates, Urban Southwest, 1960

Age Class	Spanish Surname (1)	All Males (2)	Ratio (Column 1/2)
14-19	17.6	12.5	1.41
20-24	11.3	7.8	1.45
25-34	6.6	4.1	1.61
34-44	5.9	3.7	1.60
45-64	8.3	5.1	1.63
65 and over	12.6	7.1	1.78

Source: Walter Fogel, "Mexican Americans in Southwest Labor Markets" (Los Angeles: University of California, Graduate School of Business Administration, Mexican-American Study Project, Advance Report 10, 1967), Table 7.

rates for teenagers also are high. Women easily find work as household servants and continue to work, as do many nonwhites, in advanced years in spite of the homemaker role for women prescribed by Mexican culture. In recent years, in fact the proportion of all wage-earning Mexican-Americans is increasing.

Arizona and California have the lowest rates of Mexican-American unemployment. The difficult situation in Texas is primarily the result of a very large supply of unskilled labor (from immigration, natural increase, and the working "commuters") concentrated in the southern part of the state. Here employment opportunities have not risen fast enough and Mexicans must compete with a large reservoir of unskilled Negroes. Even with a high rate of economic growth there is no prospect for an early end to the poor labor market situation in Texas. In California, by contrast, high wage levels mean a higher real return to wage workers. Women workers in California tend to leave service occupations and drift into semiskilled manufacturing jobs. There is more opportunity and less job discrimination.

In the meantime, occupational upgrading is just slightly outpacing gains in income, although some of these gains may simply reflect the "great shift" from Texas to California. Also, contrary to the general movement away from rural jobs, Mexican-Americans (although leaving rural areas) are taking a greater share of unskilled farm and farm laborer employment by default. Increasingly, also, they are moving into nonfarm laboring jobs, a trend that is likely to continue.

We notice also substantial gains by new arrivals, from the first

to the second generation. Then, except for women, the gains seem to stop (Table 14). More (9.2 percent) third-generation women, however, report no occupation, indicating possibly a greater degree of family stability. Some Los Angeles survey data suggest also that occupationally mobile Mexican-American men are likely to feel more strongly that wives should remain home than are totally unsuccessful men.

"High achievers" (incomes over $7,000) are much more numerous in the second than in the first generation, but the increase is much slower in subsequent generations. There is no "breakthrough at the top" among the Mexican-Americans, and our analysis of central tendencies is meaningful and accurate for the entire population. Compared to other "foreign stock" the Mexicans enter with lower occupational and educational attainments and do not improve them as rapidly. In Chicago, Los Angeles, and San Francisco, Mexican-stock males in 1950 held the lowest occupational positions of any foreign stock. The depressing conclusion is that Mexican-American occupational and income progress is so slight as to offer little hope for matching other immigrant groups in the near future.

Mexican-Americans, furthermore, do not seem responsive to supply-and-demand changes in the labor market. Not only do they concentrate in low-prestige occupations, but they earn less money than Anglos in every category except that of "laborer." This "wage gap" is smallest in California and largest in Texas but, as a rule, smaller than the wage gap between Anglos and Negroes. Mexican-Americans are more often employed in the smaller, more marginal business firms--another factor that tends to depress wages. High unionization in crafts seems to

TABLE 14

Occupational Distribution of Spanish-Surname Urban Males, Ages 35-44, By Nativity, 1960

OCCUPATION	SOUTHWEST			CALIFORNIA			TEXAS		
	Foreign Born	Native of Foreign or Mixed Parentage	Native of Native Parentage	Foreign Born	Native of Foreign or Mixed Parentage	Native of Native Parentage	Foreign Born	Native of Foreign or Mixed Parentage	Native of Native Parentage
Professional	5.0	5.1	6.5	5.2	5.7	7.5	4.7	4.1	4.8
Managerial	4.5	5.9	7.0	3.8	5.9	7.0	6.0	5.3	7.0
Clerical	3.2	5.6	5.8	3.4	5.5	5.6	3.2	6.1	5.4
Sales	2.8	3.8	3.7	2.4	3.8	3.9	3.8	3.9	4.0
Craft	19.4	24.6	22.3	17.2	25.1	22.5	24.2	24.7	22.0
Operatives	24.2	28.3	24.0	25.0	30.0	23.8	22.3	26.1	24.5
Services	7.7	6.5	7.1	8.4	5.8	5.7	6.5	7.5	6.9
Laborers	16.7	14.2	12.2	15.1	12.6	8.4	19.4	15.7	14.4
Farm Laborers	13.6	3.6	2.5	16.8	3.1	2.0	6.8	4.3	3.9
Farm Manager	.6	.5	.4	.7	.8	.5	.5	.3	.5
Not Reported	2.3	1.9	8.6	2.1	1.8	13.1	2.6	2.0	6.5
	100.0	100.0	100.1	100.1	100.1	100.0	100.0	100.0	99.9

Source: Walter Fogel, "Mexican Americans in Southwest Labor Markets" (Los Angeles: University of California, Graduate School of Business Administration, Mexican-American Study Project, Advance Report 10, 1967), Table 31.

restrict Mexican-American participation. Market wage stabilization (by unions, large business firms, or government regulation) seems both to increase Mexican-American wages and to restrict Mexican-American participation.

IV URBAN PROBLEMS

Mexican-American problems are basically the problems that exist in urban areas. Nonetheless, there are some special areas of conflict, most particularly in the urban school system. Although legal segregation ended in the forties, de facto segregation prevails throughout the Southwest. In these schools, sometimes shared by nonwhites, Mexican-American children get fewer special services, less counseling, less experienced teachers, and poorer physical plants.

In recent years, moreover, the "tracking" system of separating the academically gifted students from the others has tended to re-segregate minority students even within nominally unsegregated schools. In Los Angeles, for example, a recent study shows that only a fifth of the Mexican students are in "academic" courses compared to half of the Anglo children.

Parochial schools do not take up the slack; very limited Catholic educational resources mean that less than a tenth of the Mexican-American school population ever attends a parochial school.

As the Census of 1960 summarizes the situation, in nearly every age bracket the percentage of Spanish-surname persons in school is less than the percentage of the total population. The percentages are closest in New Mexico, where the Spanish-speaking population is a

larger part of the total. California does the best job generally in the teaching of Mexican-Americans, although few more definite conclusions are available.

In most schools, Mexican-Americans drop out readily and in all categories show inferior achievement. The reasons for this disparity are not understood, and at the moment there is very little research dealing with Mexican-American school problems. More recent studies point to (1) a lack of "success models" in the family or neighborhood, (2) a lack of awareness of educational opportunities or consequences, (3) family poverty, and (4) a Mexican cultural emphasis on early maturity, which makes the "student role" difficult for Mexican-American children, particularly the boys. Early dropping out of Mexican-American students begins to be evident at fourteen and fifteen, and is marked to ages sixteen and seventeen. In Texas, for example, the Anglo enrollment at ages sixteen and seventeen is 76.3 percent and the Mexican, 58.6 percent. At every age bracket from five to nineteen the lowest enrollment ratio is found in Texas.

A recent study in Los Angeles, interestingly, shows that when all factors of social class and I. Q. are held constant, Mexican-Americans are still more likely than Anglo children to consider dropping out of school. The study also indicates that Mexican-American students in integrated high schools are significantly more ambitious than are Mexican-American students in segregated schools.

There is virtually no information on the extent of segregation of Mexican-American students in the Southwest as a whole, although data for California are available. In the eight largest California school

districts, 57 percent of the Spanish-surname children attend minority schools, 28 percent mixed schools, and 15 percent majority schools, according to the given definitions of these terms.* The mechanism of de facto school segregation also needs much study. San Antonio, for example, maintains its school districts on a local tax base, thereby ensuring that much less money is available for the Mexican schools.

Educational approaches to the bilingual child of Mexican descent are currently being discussed and debated by ethnic leaders, politicians, and many groups outside professional educational circles. The lack of systematic research often leads to conclusions dictated by political considerations.

A powerful educational group in the Southwest recently endorsed the basically ideological point of view that the Mexican school drop-out is suffering primarily from lack of self-esteem. Accordingly, it recommended an increased curricular emphasis on Mexican cultural background. At best, this "solution" is highly oversimplified. It is well known that children of distinctive ethnic backgrounds operate inside a complex network of influences and possible sources of alienation. The teacher, the counselor, Anglo peers, ethnic peers, instrumental handicaps, and so on, are all factors. (It is equally naive to assume that the Navajo's fundamental, complex problems with American society can be "solved" by emphasizing the Navajo language, Navajo tradition, and Navajo pride in the education of Navajo children.)

Possibly the effort and emphasis should be placed on specialized

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*State Department of Education, Racial and Ethnic Survey of California Public Schools, Part One: Distribution of Pupils, Fall 1966 (Sacramento, California, 1967).

teacher training for the whole school-community situation rather than on the search for a single-factor solution, that is, on drastic improvement of teaching and of the school as an institution. In any event, the idea that educational problems can be mitigated by raising the self-esteem of the potential Mexican-American dropout is very typical of current thinking. It is simplistic. It is politically acceptable. And until more research is done, such thinking may well continue to dominate southwestern education.

The dearth of PUBLIC SERVICES is lamentable and obvious, though not systematically enalyzed. In the barrios of the Southwest, dirt roads replace paved streets, street lighting vanishes, sidewalks disappear or are in disrepair, playgrounds are either poorly maintained or are not available, and school buildings tend to become obsolete. In the Southwest the device of "special improvement districts" is often used to shift the burden of public services to impoverished landowners. Mexican-American areas are not always bleak in the sense of the eastern tenement street, and the relative amount of open space tends to disguise severe overcrowding. A notable example is the ten square miles of mainly Mexican-American neighborhood south of Buchanan Street in Phoenix, Arizona. In fact, public services are as diverse as the socioeconomic status of the population itself, ranging in quality from the forgotten slums of south Texas to quite tolerable standards in the San Francisco-Oakland area.

The high proportion of Mexican-American poor (in 1960 urban families with less than $3,000 income were 19.3 percent of all urban poor in Arizona; 10.2 percent in California; 12.9 percent in Colorado; 38.8

percent in New Mexico; 24.0 percent in Texas) means unduly high representation in the usual indices of SOCIAL PATHOLOGY. Highly visible among these are gang problems. Gang membership may provide a means of elevating one's status, although very little is known about this. High delinquency rates observed in Los Angeles County in 1958--170.5 per 10,000 youths referred to the County Probation Department against 54.4 for Anglos--conform to the Anglo's stereotype of the Mexican-American. The rates must be corrected for the high visibility and generally low socioeconomic status of the population, but they were still higher than the rates for Negroes. Explanatory factors include (as for the Negro offenders) a high proportion of orphaned youths. There are many delinquent Mexican-American girls, but the ratio of female to male offenders is lower than among Anglos. Generally, the pattern of offenses resembles that of Anglos with two exceptions: a higher ratio on narcotics offenses and on assault and battery. Most observers believe the offense patterns fit those of any deprived group and do not substantially reflect conformity or nonconformity to cultural patterns with, perhaps, the special exception of the Mexican-American gang. Large numbers of young Mexican-Americans are involved with OEO youth-serving agencies, but again, the effect has not yet been evaluated.

Mexican-American conflicts with the police are an endemic problem throughout the Southwest and a major source of hostility. No significant efforts to "involve" Mexican-American communities in law enforcement are known nor has there been any sustained successful effort to

recruit Mexican law officers. The charge of "police brutality" is often raised and is a continuous source of friction. Here again, new and imaginative exploratory programs are needed as well as some exchange of experience among communities.

More precise information is available on HOUSING. In the metropolitan areas of the Southwest over one-third of the Spanish-surname families (an estimated 1,140,000 Spanish-surname persons) live in overcrowded housing units, in contrast to 22 percent of the Anglos. Still another indicator, in 1960 the incidence of "dilapidation" among Mexican homes was seven times that of Anglo-occupied homes. It is almost certain that the prevailingly larger families mean quality in housing must consistently be sacrificed for size.

Very little is known about Mexican-American patterns of SPENDING and CONSUMPTION, beyond a characteristic "poverty area" reaction. Much more research is needed, and the basic statistics are often not available.

V CULTURE AND THE COMMUNITY

Nearly all of the current literature describes these desperately poor, fragmented, and highly unacculturated people as the last romantic vestiges of a great Spanish tradition in the Southwest. Typically, we hear that Mexican-Americans are poor, proud, stable, and cohesive; that they cherish a value orientation emphasizing interpersonal relations rather than ideas, abstractions, or material possessions; and that this outlook is held together by the idea of la raza. They are said to resent success, assimilation, and personal advancement and to guard zealously their "Spanish culture." They hold tightly to

Catholicism, machismo for the male, large and close families, personal warmth, sensitivity, and quite generally, little interest in the standards or achievements of Anglo middle-class life. This description typically concludes with a plea for "cultural pluralism," i.e., for the southwestern Anglo world to adjust permanently to this "different" subculture.

This literature is the result of intensive research into a variable but probably declining fraction of the total Mexican-American population. The studies generally are quite old and tend to focus on distinct, easily studied areas, often in isolated rural villages. Here, cultural isolation and segregation can produce the small "Appalachias" so often described in these studies. But the social reality of the Mexican-American as a whole is not that simple, not that monolithic.

Nonetheless, the concept of the isolated "Spanish tradition" community is exceedingly significant because it accurately reflects the current ideology of many Mexican-American leaders. For them it can be very appealing because, like their Anglo counterparts, they are desperately searching for an accurate diagnosis and treatment of many minority problems. The culture concept is easy to understand. It offers a comfortable sort of remoteness to the problems of Mexican-Americans in a competitive world. It gives the leader a vital role as a defender of an old and rich culture. It permits a comfortably "segregated" approach for many Anglos who prefer such an approach. And, to speculate for a moment: the self-segregating, strongly Spanish,

anti-materialistic "little community" may offer a very pleasant sort of organizational Utopia both to Anglos and to Mexican-American leaders who must otherwise cope with a rapidly changing, often bewildering, modern industrial society.

The facts are that instead of a monolithic culture, there is great diversity. Living conditions for Mexican-Americans range from the caste-like backwater villages in remote southwestern areas to the almost completely "Mexican" cities like Presidio, Rio Grande City, and Laredo, Texas. Some of these cities are simple in social structure; others are highly complex. The diverse segments may actually live in close proximity to each other. Determinedly middle-class communities in Los Angeles County are very near the segregated barrios of less fortunate Mexicans--and the depressed, alienated, poverty-stricken vestiges of former railroad, industrial, and agricultural labor camps. It is precisely this situational diversity that makes the Anglo and Mexican-American search for the Mexican "soul" so dangerous.

This is not a folk culture. It is not based simply on the keystone of an extended, warm, strong patriarchal family. Many of these families show the outward signs of "ghetto" pathology found in other poverty groups. The similarities to and differences from Negro family and personal "disorganization" remain to be analyzed. However, a recent analysis of Los Angeles marriage certificates shows high rates of divorce and separation--nearly as high as those for nonwhites and Anglos. Mexican-American families are heavily over-represented in juvenile delinquency, felony arrests, narcotic arrests, and such.

Mexican-American youth gangs are certainly related to weakened family control. A large proportion of Mexican-American families are headed by women. Many of these women must work.

Poverty, a high dependency ratio, unemployment, poor housing, disease, inadequate public services, segregated schools, nonparticipation in political life, and a high rate of school delinquency point to a problem population--in the same sense that other deprived populations are a problem to themselves and to the larger society. The traditional culture does not insulate or protect this population from problems.

Both historical accidents and differing employment opportunities channeled Mexicans into a variety of living patterns throughout the Southwest. Social class diversity continues to disperse and fractionate them. The many intergenerational differences are accentuated by the rapid change. Very few of the young adult Mexican-Americans born in the city of Los Angeles, for example, have had personal experience with overt discrimination. Few remember the segregated swimming pools or the highly traditional Mexican churches, which changed during the adulthood of their parents. These many sources of diversity tend to dilute the rigid adherence to "Mexican culture," but in diverse ways and to differing degrees.

Any direct measurement of adherence to tradition is difficult, but some recent interviews in Los Angeles suggest sharply that the deprived Mexican-Americans who are longtime residents of the lower Rio Grande valley are more "Mexican" than recent immigrants from Mexico now living in the city. Many of the values of the Los Angeles Mexican

are more similar to those of Anglos and Negroes of comparable class level than to those of the rural "Texas Mexicans." A more direct index of the disintegration of attachment and loyalty to the ethnic group appears in the comparatively high intermarriage rate in Los Angeles county. In 1963, nearly 25 percent of the total marrying population married Anglos, with proportional increases in the third generation, in higher occupational categories, and among younger people.

Quite beyond the question of cultural conformity, a strong expression of ethnic solidarity, ethnic cohesiveness, and ethnic loyalty is implied in the idea of la raza. This idea, a mystique, a volksgeist concept, is used throughout Latin America and refers to the unique features of the Indian-Spanish racial blend. In the United States it acquires a special meaning because la raza is a minority. For the southwestern Mexican-American, la raza means "Mexican"; it does not include other Latin Americans and certainly not Cubans or Puerto Ricans, except by a highly self-conscious extension. Among Mexican-Americans it functions analogously to the idea of "blackness" among Negro-Americans, suggesting a vague sense of distinctiveness, of uniqueness. The concept of la raza offers positive identity to the person of Mexican descent. It is not explicitly xenophobic. But implicitly the strength of identification of an individual or a community with la raza seems associated with its seclusiveness and, often, its hostility to other groups. It should not, however, be regarded as the essence of the Mexican-American except as it captures the built-in defensiveness of the population. Some near equivalent is found in

every deprived minority.

Hostility to others is also a factor, probably even more so than anti-white resentment among Negroes. Attitudes range from overt racism to almost full acceptance of assimilation. Targets for this hostility include Anglos as well as Negroes. Mexicans do marry Anglos and rarely Negroes, but categorical depreciation of Anglo customs and manners (e.g., weaker family ties, less loyalty, less adequate cooking) is quite common. Among the older Mexican-Americans, and those from Texas in particular, there is a profound and understandable distrust of Anglo politicians, welfare administrators, researchers, social workers, court officials, draft board officials, teachers and counselors. Experience has taught them that they are helpless in confrontation with a cold and often complex Anglo establishment. In time, as with all poverty groups, helpless distrust and hostility lapse into passivity. Anger seems to be privatized, often specific rather than general, expressed in domestic rather than public contexts. Quite possibly the "haughty indifference" so many researchers report in smaller isolated Mexican-American communities is in fact the public expression of deep hurt and anger.

Though significant as symbols of the Mexican-American collective identity (or of the shared reaction-formation-type distress) the public potentials of appeal to this culture and the idea of <u>la raza</u> remain generally latent. Mexican-Americans seem to be remarkable for their nonvoting and their nonparticipation in the rhetoric and dialogue of American politics (except in New Mexico where traditionally they take an active part in political affairs). They have rarely shown interest

in mass protest, at least as presently practiced by the American Negro.*

But this may be less meaningful than the fact that very few Anglo politicians and civic leaders understand the symbols and loyalties that attract Mexican-Americans. For example, when Mexican-American garment workers were pressed for union membership in the 1930s, the I. L. G. W. U. refused to utilize local symbols or to give the Mexican leaders any real discretion. They relied, instead, on the traditional symbolism of trade unionism, successful elsewhere in the country. The union drive ultimately failed. That Mexican-American symbols and loyalties can be manipulated actively and positively with overwhelming success was proved most recently by the famed Delano grape strike in California led by Cesar Chavez. The symbols and spirit of "La Huelga" were carried elsewhere in the Southwest, sparking minor demonstrations in many small and otherwise isolated cities, sweeping through south Texas in "La Marcha" (which, incidentally, was led by an Anglo) and dissolving completely the famous aloof "pride" of the Mexican-Americans. Signs of more vigorous and conventional civil rights protest techniques include picketing in local poverty program disputes, a formal revolt against the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in Albuquerque in 1966, several abortive attempts at Negro-Mexican coalitions, and a certain amount of infighting on the local level in many cities. As leadership experience grows, more such action

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*The recent well-publicized organizational efforts of some groups of rural Mexican-Americans are isolated exceptions, far from "mass" in nature.

can be expected. Here again, the isolation of Mexican-American communities from each other and from the main currents of minority social and political movements is a major factor.

VI THE LEADERSHIP

Mexican-American leadership remains largely an elite group, a band of spokesmen who command little grassroots support. But changes since World War II have produced some noteworthy exceptions. One of these is Cesar Chavez, the charismatic leader of a Mexican-American agrico-social and economic movement and a man who arouses positive passions among urban and rural Mexican-Americans alike. He explicitly uses the concept of la raza and specifically Mexican symbols, although his movement is Catholic in membership and support. Another, Reies Lopez Tijerina, is symbolically seizing Federal land in New Mexico. His approach is totally different in concept but highly appealing to Spanish-Americans who have resented their dispossession for at least a century. He also is a truly charismatic leader and a shrewd manipulator of the psychological truths of la raza.

There are a handful of Mexican-Americans holding elected office on the Federal level: Montoya of New Mexico, two Congressmen from Texas (one conservative, the other liberal) and one Congressman from California. Businessmen and professionals have increasingly earned recognition as leaders by attaining appointed Federal, state, and local office. In general, few Mexican-Americans with college training (California alone has 47,000 men and women with some college) interest themselves in

ethnic leadership. Quite generally (and this seems to affect the educational aspirations of their community) they seem to "vanish" into the Anglo community. The Mexican activist is highly voluntary and self-selected as, indeed, is true for activists in many other ethnic groups as well.

Before World War II Mexican-American leaders were very Mexico-oriented, revolving largely around the Mexican consultate and its immediate social group in various cities. After the War a new group of leaders emerged, most from poor and many from agricultural backgrounds. By this time first- and second-generation Mexicans were beginning to lose direct interest in the affairs of the old country.

Today the Mexican-American leader typically works through altruistic voluntary organizations, small in number but quite effective in influencing Anglo opinion. Typically, the new leaders are catapulted into positions of responsibility. (In recent years, local antipoverty measures have been a great impetus to the emergence of leaders, suggesting that opportunities rather than native spokesmen were in short supply.) Relatively few activists comprise the membership of these organizations and no great effort is made to recruit mass membership within and outside the ethnic community in the fashion of the NAACP or the Urban League. At the moment so few and so intimately connected are these men that, as in Los Angeles, a small group of political families and cliques practically dominate Mexican-American leadership groups. Currently the important leadership organizations include the American G. I. Forum, the Mexican-American Political Association (MAPA), the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), and the Political Association of Spanish

Speaking Organizations (PASSO). There are many ad hoc groups in local communities.

These men have tremendous problems. Chief among them are the very diversity and ambiguousness of their constituencies, which obviate simple diagnoses and solutions. In large California cities, for example, discrimination is declining and the visible barriers melting. Meanwhile the Mexican-American sense of deprivation grows. The Mexican ethnic leader, increasingly accepted as an expert by Anglo society, is aware that he must articulate what may appear to his people as Anglo imperatives. There is little agreement on what constitutes either "militancy" or "responsibility," although a nagging demand for both emanates from critics. The leaders are truly "men in the middle," pressed by both sides for a solution. Though often personally deeply ambivalent about Mexican culture (since their mobility often alienated them both from other Mexicans and from the culture), the "cultural" solution often appears to be both "responsible" and "militant." Most communities have strong "Zionist" factions which advocate the revival of Mexicanism as a solution to the Mexican-Americans' problems. In the absence of contradiction from more comfortably acculturated or assimilated Mexican-Americans (who, until recently, have had little to gain and much to lose by speaking out), such a Zionist position may well prevail in policy.

Great pressures are sometimes exerted on the Mexican spokesmen to prevent public display of the very real internal dissensions. Mexican leaders often operate as interpreters to the Anglo of the hard-to-reach

and mysterious Mexican. Although one of the stereotypes in the kit-bag of interpretations is that Mexican-Americans are highly diversified, the role of spokesman and interpreter appears to preclude the expression and articulation of disagreement. There is often an agonizing attempt to present a "united front" to the Anglos, on the premise that obvious divisions simply weaken "the cause." The attempt is agonizing since it is achieved by appeals to loyalty rather than to intellect, and represses rather than resolves doubts and ambivalences.

A word should be added here about the leadership role of the Catholic Church. The Church's importance in the Mexican-American communities is very evident. However, it would be a mistake to assume that its importance is uniform from one community to another. Like the Mexicans, the Church is not monolithic. Sometimes it produces leaders; sometimes it does not. In some areas, most notably the archdiocese of Los Angeles, the Church's failure to interest itself in Mexican-American temporal needs and aspirations has estranged the activists and many acculturated third-generation Mexican-Americans. In south Texas, by contrast, a traditionally exclusively pastoral and spiritual approach has melted away under dynamic leadership to spur a new form of aggressive activism. At this date the San Antonio Church is currently deeply involved with local War on Poverty programs, civil rights demonstrations, and strikes of various types. But even in the San Antonio situation there are deep divisions of opinion, currently taking the form at the moment of liberal leadership which is meeting considerable resistance on the parish level. In Los Angeles the situation has, on occasion, been reversed.

The extreme localism and diversity of Mexican-American leadership and action is well illustrated by the fate of the grass-roots groups (Community Service Organizations) organized and sponsored by Saul Alinsky's Industrial Areas Foundation in about thirty separate situations. After less than a generation, in no case did a truly grass-roots activity remain. (In Delano, to name an outstanding failure, the CSO found itself opposing Chavez, the most dynamic Mexican-American leader of the decade, and furthering the personal ambitions of a local Mexican-American professional.)

New generations demand new solutions. The leadership is now aging and there is acute need for persons who understand and can work within the Anglo governmental structure. Because of their cultural isolation, the Mexican-American leaders have only elementary notions of the techniques of national pressure. There are no full-time lobbyists or public relations experts, no newspapers or magazines of any consequence. Spanish-language radio and television are of great local importance and of potential influence as opinion molders. Little communication exists between the major centers of Mexican-American population, although this is increasing. The Negro protest movement is enormously advanced and sophisticated by comparison.

VII POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The Mexican-Americans are an American problem. The problem will persist because of the continued immigration from nearby Mexico and because of the steady rural-urban migration within the United States. Problems of social lag resulting from long-standing cultural

and social isolation are severe and seem to be self-perpetuating, as illustrated by the inability of ethnic spokesmen to offer substantial solutions.

Objectively Mexican-Americans share much with other urban poverty segments; subjectively they share almost nothing. Programs directed toward improvement in their welfare would probably have a comparatively quick and high payoff, if the objective and the subjective situations are equally recognized. Little except more problems and a slow "natural" progress can be anticipated from failing to take them both into account.

These considerations point on the one hand to a need for segregated programs. On the other hand there is an equal need for increased communication between Mexican-Americans and other poverty segments on issues. (Such communication may be facilitated by an atmosphere in which no one is called upon to act as an expert interpreter of "his people" and their needs, but where objective questions are raised.) Coerced integration with Negroes or Anglos would probably produce conflict and withdrawal.

In designing programs to overcome the stifling effects of long-standing local isolation local distinctiveness must also be considered. Local limits vary greatly. Tactics defined as rather cautious in one setting may be viewed as "trouble-making" in another, with the attendant withdrawal of support by other Mexican-Americans in either situation. (These "local" variations may occur even within the same metropolitan area.) Small-scale local programs permitting a diffuse relationship between agency and clientele seem particularly advisable.

Leadership development is of the greatest importance. Mexican-American spokesmen must be meaningfully involved in programs at a policy-making level. Whenever possible these leaders should be exposed to organizational tactics and methods of other Mexican-Americans and of other groups in non-threatening contexts. Though existing leadership can be strengthened only to a limited extent, the identification and development of potential leaders offers great possibilities. A program of internships in poverty agencies inside, and especially outside the Southwest would help overcome the extreme local and regional ethnocentrism of the Mexican-American and also help make the problems of the urban Mexican-Americans known to the equally ethnocentric East and Midwest.

More active VISTA recruitment among Mexican-Americans along with careful placement and special training could greatly expand horizons. Greater mobility, of course, risks draining young talent from the less attractive areas, a problem already apparent in many areas of Texas. But the risk seems well worth taking.

Community action programs should involve the community of the poor Mexican-Americans, but this community involvement requires a trained staff and cannot uniformly be accomplished under the present "system" of voluntarism. Too often the poor withdraw, leaving an interested but often self-serving residue. Successful cases of community involvement should be examined; much research is needed in this area, which is inextricably linked to leadership responsibility.

Attention should also be given to the training and retraining of non-Mexican personnel working with this population. Teachers, social

workers, and others could greatly benefit from both formal academic instruction and field training to improve communication with Mexican-Americans. Again this should be done in situations that threaten neither group. It is very likely that a modest investment in small, well-selected groups of people, Mexican and others, will have a far greater return than the search for a uniform programmatic cure-all. This population is too diverse and complex for an overall solution to be feasible.

With respect to employment, more--and more accurate--labor market information for the Mexican-American population is an immediate need. On-the-job training should be expanded. Jobs and business opportunities in the Mexican community should be emphasized, and capitalization made available. An effort should be made to change the admission policies of unions that restrict entry into skilled trades. (There is substantial evidence of much less discrimination against Mexican-Americans than against nonwhites, which should facilitate this task.) Larger businesses should be encouraged to hire Mexican-Americans. (Employers have felt very little pressure, chiefly because of attention paid to the Negro civil rights drive. No effective or sustained representation has been made for Mexican-Americans.)

More attention also should be paid to housing problems. It is very clear that the Mexican-Americans' need to choose space over quality is a continuous hardship, peculiar to this group.

We have limited specific suggestions because it is far more important to consider the general prerequisites of a successful program. There is still a very great need for the highly localized and highly

specific program research that is essential for effective policy planning.
