

How the Border Crossed Us: A Socio-Historic Analysis of Texas Racial Domination

by

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Class of 2017

A thesis submitted to the
faculty of Wesleyan University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
Degree of Bachelor of Arts
with Departmental Honors in Sociology

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Acknowledgements

First, special thanks to my advisor, Jonathan Cutler, and the Wesleyan Sociology Department for giving me the space and support to explore my hometown through this thesis. Without the time and encouragement given by the Sociology Department thesis process, I probably would not have even thought to write this thesis at all. My time here would not have been nearly so engaging or inspiring without the Sociology professors who have pushed me to question all of my assumptions, and everything I have ever been taught.

Another special thanks to my family at 7 Fountain for helping create a peaceful home to come back to after hours of thesis research – we miraculously created a thesis oasis on Fountain Ave.

Last, but not least, special thanks to my Nona, Gloria Cadena, and my grandfather, Carlos Cadena, for passing down to me your love of San Antonio and your passion for social justice. I wish you two were here to read my thesis and correct all the places where I got the story wrong.

Introduction

The stereotype of the Texan with high-heeled boots, white hat, and the swaggering manner symbolizes to most Mexican and other Latin Americans all that was and is bad about Anglo-America.

- Rodolfo Acuña¹

As a site of socio-historical investigation, Texas offers itself up as an interesting focus. Located at the busy intersection of the American South and the Southwest, Texas has seemingly always been a site of contestation. For many, the notion of a “Texan” evokes an image of a tall, brawny man with gold skin, tanned from hours spent on his ranch, with a ten-gallon hat in hand and pointy cowboy boots on his feet. This portrait of the stereotypical man of the American Southwest really has Mexico to thank for the cowboy getup, rather than the America to which it is most often ascribed.

Growing up Texan, one learns certain truths through the required Texas history curriculum that are presumed to be clear facts, plain and simple. I learned about “manifest destiny,” how colonialism was “our” forefathers’ God-given duty in pursuit of God, gold, and glory. However, the quest for God, gold, and glory isn’t the history that all Americans know as their own. Texas was not America’s for the taking, nor was it Spain’s. The Lone Star State is just one of many examples within American history of the innumerable layers of colonial legacies of imperialism that exist in “our” land. With deeper examination into the contexts of significant historical events, they begin to reveal themselves as products of neo-liberal white supremacist motives rather than the racially progressive policy decisions they were advertised to

¹ Acuña, Rodolfo. *Occupied America: The Chicano’s Struggle Toward Liberation*. Harpercollins, 1972. 34. Print.

be. Even from just a quick glance at some of Texas' largest industries -- agriculture, military, tourism -- it becomes clear that the exploitation of Mexican communities has played, and continues to play, a vital role in Texas' economy. This history of exploitation carries with it the Anglo immigrants who infiltrated Texas' borders under the guise of harmless farmers looking for a clean break from America's laws, tax collectors, or land costs, only to become the enemy within Mexican borders.² Reassessing classic Texan history, the application of a critical lens to political trends, social movements, and economic legislation reveals the eugenic interests behind Anglo migration and culture creation. Given a thorough analysis, it has become clear that these interests systematically, and violently, prevented the peaceful assimilation of the local Hispanic population within its imposed Protestant hegemony.

This topic first began as an investigation of my own roots and circumstance. Straddling the line between my Mexican and Irish roots, I never felt quite settled in my environments. Never having understood quite why, I always seemed to find myself simultaneously among and apart from my San Antonio communities. I was not like my classmates at my Episcopal middle school, nor did I truly identify with the Mexican history that my mother's mother explained to me. In an effort to clarify some of my own experiences, I came upon this topic as I researched my home and family and tried to find peace with my state. Texas has always been a difficult place for me to name as my home. I abhor so much of its politics, yet San Antonio will always be my home, and has imbued in me so many of my values and sensibilities. In so many ways, I write this thesis as a love letter to my home city. It is the product of

² Kluger, Richard. "Big Drunk Saves the Day." *Seizing Destiny: How America Grew from Sea to Shining Sea*. New York: A.A. Knopf, 2007. 359. Print.

years of reciprocal domination and uprising, and has offered a never-ending source of inspiration.

In an effort to recognize larger temporal trends within Texas' racial history, each chapter focuses on different eras of conflict and social movements. Revolving around themes of local politics, marriage, education, tourism, and the military, San Antonio presents itself as a crucial focal point within Tejano history, reoccurring throughout as a site of confrontation and progress. Starting with the events precipitating the 1821 Mexican war for independence from Spain, the progression of analysis follows waves of domination and rebellion up until the current political moment.

The 19th century era of domination starts with the question of assimilation and sovereignty. When Anglos first began to settle in Spanish *Coahuila y Texas*, their Spanish hosts were the dominant group. During this period, Anglo settlers were expected to assimilate into Spanish culture and traditions. In this context, assimilation refers the process of integrating oneself into a dominant culture by coming into conformity with their pre-established culture and customs. For Anglo migrants, this meant an expectation to learn the Spanish language, begin using Spanish ranching techniques, and participate in local Mexican celebrations. For some, this resulted in the marrying of local elite women. For others, this meant receding into the Anglo areas of Texas land, refusing to mix with their dark-skinned hosts.³ “The new Texans [had] formed an enclave unto themselves, hewing to their own language, culture, politics, and Protestant faith and energized by ambition and a frontier sense of self-

³ Acosta, Teresa and Winegarten, Ruthe. *Las Tejanas: 300 Years of History*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003. 53. Print.

reliance uncommon among [Mexican] natives.”⁴ After having built up a large enough Anglo base, these Texans declared their independence from Mexico.⁵ From that point on, the power dynamic made a marked shift in favor of the Anglo migrants, especially after the annexation of Texas into the United States.

The next chapter, characterized as an era of awakening, brings into focus the late 19th century. As a critical moment in Texan developmental history, this period is marked by the new waves of industrialization that attracted another influx of Anglo migrants which fortified the shift in the Texas power dynamic. Catalyzed by the newly-built train system, Texas’ military and tourism industries took off, bringing in new sources of revenue and exploitative policy. Since then, it has been left up to the Hispanic residents of Texas to assimilate into white society with little to no support from the dominant Anglo communities. In fact, a large portion of legislation in San Antonio was specifically designed to keep Tejanos separate from white society. For example, new housing developments included clauses in their housing contracts that disallowed any not of Caucasian race from leasing or owning property.⁶ “In much of South Texas, and the Southwest generally, as the Anglo populations grew, dual towns developed, separating Mexican American from Anglo American sections of town.”⁷ With those changes, in order to achieve success in Texas, it became expected that Hispanic residents learn English, go to American schools, do business with their Anglo neighbors, fight in American wars, and follow American law.

⁴ Kluger.. "Big Drunk Saves the Day." *Seizing Destiny*. 359.

⁵ *Ibid.* 361.

⁶ Drennon, Christine M. "Social Relations Spatially Fixed: Construction And Maintenance Of School Districts In San Antonio, Texas." *Geographical Review* 96.4 (2006): 575. Web.

⁷ *Ibid.* 574.

Since the Mexican-American war and up until the American civil war, Mexican immigration hit an all-time low. However, after the turn of the 20th century, the increasing tension building up to the Mexican Revolution in 1910, immigration from Mexico into Texas revived, reaching its all-time high. This, combined with the expansion of the second-generation immigrant middle-class created the perfect environment for the development of middle-class business leadership in San Antonio and South Texas.⁸ However, with the growth of the Mexican population in San Antonio came new restrictive policies, aimed at maintaining racial and socioeconomic boundaries around the city. As white women's organizations took on the fight for women's suffrage and white feminist causes, Mexican women took the brunt of the backlash. As was true in many cases, while white women across the country took up arms against the gender divide, these same middle-class white women's movements used women of color as scapegoats for society's ills, while upholding themselves as the champions of morality. In San Antonio, this resulted in policies that targeted Mexican women in the sex work and food industries. However, as the oppressive practices gained traction, so too did the beginnings of the Chicano Movement.

Starting with the 1930s birth of the Tejano civil rights movement, setting into motion the third chapter's era of uprising, the next wave of analysis picks up speed with the 1938 Pecan Shellers' Strike in San Antonio and spans until the end of the Chicano movement in the 70s. Focusing on the middle class anxieties present in San Antonio and how they manifested in different political movements, this third chapter

⁸ Martinez, Ana Luisa R. "The Voice of the People: Pablo Cruz, El Regidor, and Mexican American Identity in San Antonio, Texas, 1888-1910." Diss. Texas Tech U, 2003. 6. Print.

works to identify the ways in which the Mexican community in San Antonio, and all over the state, stood up to its Anglo oppressors. As the civil rights movement developed, so too did a schism between Chicano activist groups. In one camp was the more conservative, assimilationist leaders. Led largely by middle-class Chicano politicians, this coalition of local Democrats led many local political advocacy initiatives in the 60s. As the first Tejanos to ever take such high-profile political seats, many were faced with the decision of choosing between acceptable class issues and “radical” race issues in order to get elected. Frustrated by this oppressive Anglo-dominated political scene, it wasn’t long before the burgeoning radical political groups, led by *La Raza Unida* party and José Angel Gutiérrez, and assimilationist politicians came into conflict. Though short lived, *La Raza Unida* party left its mark in civil rights history through their confrontationalist strategies, calling for quicker social justice progress and more comprehensive Mexican political representation. During this period, Chicano leaders made some of the biggest advances ever witnessed in United States history. With the end of *La Raza Unida* party in the 70s, the Texas Chicano movement also witnessed some of its greatest setbacks. However, regardless of the upsets, the stage was set for all the future Chicano leaders that would come in its wake. Since then, great leaders have made their mark in San Antonio Chicano history, all progress that would not have been possible without the work done by *Raza* and its leaders.

Written alongside the historical analysis comes an examination of themes of industries and institutions that have taken roles in racialized policy; these themes -- local politics, marriage, education, tourism, and the military -- illustrate the different

forms of violence that state and ideological power can (and often do) take. In his book, *The Reorder of Things*, Roderick Ferguson discusses “the ways in which power enlisted the academy... as conduits for conveying unprecedented forms of political economy to state and capital.”⁹ Although speaking directly to the university, the academy in the form of primary educational bodies is a no less powerful, exploitative state body. Education is a prime example of one of the institutions that took a large role in the enforcement of assimilation *and* separation throughout Texan history. Since the establishment of the Texas educational system in 1884, it has remained largely unchanged.¹⁰ Unfortunately, this has been predominantly to the detriment of the education of Hispanic populations. In San Antonio, in areas where significantly large populations came together, these populations were allowed to declare themselves an “independent school district,” or ISD, allowing those in the district to make decisions about their district’s schools as well as keep district property taxes to themselves, sheltered from Bexar county funds.¹¹ Consequently, due to pre-existing structures of housing discrimination, these school districts were not only racially segregated but also separated by income. Compounding with the existing obstacles for the Hispanic population in San Antonio to assimilate into white society, these educational barriers have lasting implications on the ways the Tejanos must navigate Texas politics.

The social construction of race as an identity category figures prominently in the social dynamics between Anglos and Mexicans all throughout American history.

⁹ Ferguson, Roderick A. Introduction. *The Reorder of Things: The University and Its Pedagogies of Minority Difference*. Minneapolis: U Of Minnesota, 2012. 10. Print.

¹⁰ Drennon. "Social Relations Spatially Fixed." 570.

¹¹ *Ibid.* 570.

The Texas Republic passed its first anti-miscegenation laws in 1837, outlawing marriage between Anglos and anyone of African descent, putting Tejanos in a very legally ambiguous category.¹² Technically, anyone of Latin descent was considered Caucasian. However, considering the state of public records especially after years of political turmoil, tracing one's blood quantum was quite a feat. In many cases, Texan state bodies manipulated statistics and identity categories in order to further regulatory causes that targeted Chicanos. For example, the social status of the Tejano population at various points in history can be determined through their place in national census data. "Between 1900 and 1930, those of Mexican descent were officially considered Caucasian by the U.S. Census Bureau; in 1930 they were classified into their own racial grouping, Mexican, and in 1940 they were reverted back to Caucasian."¹³ Essentially, one's legal status was left up to the subjective decision of local courts. These same courts declared the Republic of Texas an official slave state, making it clear that anyone of African descent who did not want to be put into slavery should immediately get to the free-state of Mexico. Fast forward to the modern era, and race continues to be a painfully ambiguous and powerful category. Presently, the census allows for a "Mexican" category. However, this still denies the vast variety of heritage that continues to diversify with every passing generation.

Although often framed as a move for American expansion, racist, anti-Catholic sentiment figured prominently in Anglo opposition to Mexican rule in both

¹² Menchaca, M. "The Anti-Miscegenation History of the American Southwest, 1837 To 1970: Transforming Racial Ideology into Law." *Cultural Dynamics* 20.3 (2008): 279-318. Web.

¹³ Drennon. "Social Relations Spatially Fixed." 575.

the fight for Texas independence as well as the Mexican-American war.¹⁴ Even in its early years, the Republic of Texas was imagined as one led by WASP values. For the Anglo population, the move to dislodge Mexico's claim to the Southwest was just another step for the expansion of their Race.¹⁵ Discussing Malthusian social reproductive logic, Angela Davis' take on modern economic imperialism suits -- "Eugenic ideas were perfectly suited to the ideological needs of the young monopoly capitalists. Imperialist incursions in Latin America and in the Pacific needed to be justified."¹⁶ As this thesis will go on to illustrate, patterns of eugenic logic continue to present themselves in local politics and legislation. Through a socio-historical lens that spans nearly two decades, I demonstrate the ways in which racialized power structures have repeated themselves for the whole of San Antonio's political history and how they continue to do so.

Beginning with a critical retelling of Texas history, the purpose of this critical analysis is to examine the obstacles and means for assimilation in San Antonio. Although, for some, assimilation in Texas has been possible, especially through the bicultural model made possible by the large Hispanic population, state and ideological institutions still act as obstacles preventing people of color in Texas from assimilating comfortably. In the modern period since World War II, the Chicano movement and the accompanying civil rights legislation changed many of the *de jure* practices in Texas, while the *de facto* traditions have often, if not entirely, remained the same. In the face of modern immigration and race debates, it is as important as

¹⁴ "Continuities in American anti-Catholicism: the Texas Baptist Standard and the coming of the 1960 election.." [The Free Library](#). 2007 Baptist History and Heritage Society 14 Dec. 2016.

¹⁵ Kluger. "Big Drunk Saves the Day." *Seizing Destiny*. 377.

¹⁶ Davis, Angela. "Racism, Birth Control and Reproductive Rights," *Women, Race and Class*. 360.

ever to recognize the historical context from which these circumstances have come to be. The United States is a product of conquest, genocide, and appropriation -- as much as many would like to believe that those parts of America exist only in history books, they are integral components of everyday policy and practice.

Chapter 1: Era of Domination

The birth of the Texan state began like most American states had: the “finders-keepers” philosophy of entitlement. Beginning with the Spanish aristocracy staking its claim in North and Central America, it wasn’t long before Anglo Americans began their conquest for the Western frontier, beginning with Texas. Starting in the 19th century, the relationship between Mexico and its Anglo settlers was always a matter of conquest, consciousness, and assimilation. When Anglo-Americans first began to settle in Spanish *Coahuila y Texas*, their Spanish hosts were the dominant party. During this period, Anglos were expected to assimilate by using the Spanish language, integrate Spanish ranching techniques into their farming practices, and take part in local celebrations. However, this interest in assimilation only went so far. In migrating to Mexico from America, Anglo farmers brought with them their pre-established understandings of economic, political and racial hierarchies. For some, this resulted in the marrying of local elite women, often as a means for political profit; for others, this meant receding into Anglo regions of Texas land, refusing to mix with their dark-skinned hosts.¹⁷

The development of interracial marriage in Spanish Texas serves as one of the best examples of the ways in which Anglo settlers began their assimilatory processes, as well as how social capital began to develop in the Anglo population’s favor.

Marriage to an Anglo for an upper-class Tejana initiated a process of acculturation, which often led to the virtual assimilation of their children in a society increasingly dominated by Anglos. However, the woman’s Catholic Church affiliation usually resulted in the children being reared as Catholics... Nevertheless, most upper-class

¹⁷ Acosta and Winegarten. *Las Tejanas: 300 Years of History*. 53.

children of mixed marriages identified with their father's ethnic group, and their assimilation was aided greatly through their attendance at school.¹⁸

Though initially developing as a means for Anglo men to ingratiate themselves into elite San Antonio society, it wasn't too long before racial lines began being drawn, giving preference to lighter skin. Not to mention that Spanish women from elite families became increasingly objectified and commodified through their marriages to Anglo men, especially as their families worked to protect their familial land and capital from foreign encroachment.

Up until 1821, Mexico, including Texas and much of what is now the American Southwest, was Spanish territory.¹⁹ During that time, the Spanish-Mexican government was working to populate its Texan region both in order to take advantage of its farming potential, but also as a means to fight against the Native American raids that had become common in *Coahuila y Texas*.²⁰ Additionally, it couldn't hurt to prove to the American presidents eyeing the Western frontier that the Spanish colony was independent *and* thriving. So, when Moses Austin, a businessman from Connecticut, offered to act as an *empresario* and bring in families from abroad to farm Texas plots of land, the Spanish vision of an international community seemed within reach.²¹ However, in 1821, the same year Mexico demanded its independence, Moses Austin died. Newly-independent, Mexico decided to proceed with Spain's *empresario* plan in Texas. So, when Stephen Austin, Moses Austin's son, decided to

¹⁸ *Ibid.* 53.

¹⁹ "Texas Timeline (Key Events in Early Texas)." *Texas Timeline (Key Events in Early Texas)*. Lonestar Junction, n.d. Web. 12 Dec. 2016.

²⁰ Kluger. "Big Drunk Saves the Day." *Seizing Destiny*. 356-7.

²¹ *Ibid.* 356.

take on his father's position as *empresario*, the Mexican government was more than happy to accommodate.²²

In return for the discounted Texan land contracted by the local *empresarios*, the new migrants were contractually obligated to agree to certain terms in return for access to land grants and Mexican citizenship. These terms included, but were in no way limited to, declaring Catholicism their official religion and ending their use of slave labor on their farms. However, for most of the farmers coming from Southern states, slavery was an essential component of the farming style they would become accustomed to and was fundamental to managing their large plots of land. So, Austin managed a deal in which these farmers agreed to "phase out" their use of slavery over several years -- a deal they, of course, had no intention of following.²³ Before long, it became clear that the disproportionate success and population growth of Austin's foreign settlements in comparison to other regions of Texas were putting Texas at risk of American incursion. So, in an effort to prevent further international interference, in April of 1830, Mexican Congress cut off all American immigration and installed a military presence along the Texas border.²⁴

Despite all of Stephen Austin's attempts to manage a peaceful agreement between the Anglos and the Mexican government, it was largely out of his hands; America's interest in Western expansion was far too powerful. After years of attempts by the American government to purchase the Texan territory, President Andrew Jackson sent Sam Houston to a negotiation conference in October 1832 to push the Anglo separatists towards an official declaration of independence, knowing

²² *Ibid.* 356-7.

²³ *Ibid.* 356-7.

²⁴ *Ibid.* 361.

full well that it would lead to war.²⁵ After years of disdain for their Mexican hosts and tiring of pressures to end their use of slavery, the Anglo enclave in Texas had had enough. “The new Texans [had] formed an enclave unto themselves, hewing to their own language, culture, politics, and Protestant faith and energized by ambition and a frontier sense of self-reliance uncommon among [Mexican] natives.”²⁶ Having built up a large enough Anglo base, the movement to declare independence from Mexico was becoming stronger and stronger.²⁷ So, in 1835, the Texas Revolution began.²⁸

As 1836 ushered in the new Texas Republic, there was also a marked shift in power relations between Anglos and Mexicans in Texas. “The war of independence in 1836 formalized the host culture claim of southern Anglos by awarding them political, social, and economic overlordship.”²⁹ Instead of the previous expectations of assimilation, it was becoming increasingly clear that the Mexicans’ social upper hand would not be lasting much longer. In 1837, after building up its new government, the Texas Republic continued its *de jure* implementation of racial hierarchy through the passing of its first anti-miscegenation laws. These laws were doubly powerful in that they simultaneously outlawed interracial marriage between Anglos and anyone of African descent, and put Mexicans in Texas in a highly legally ambiguous category.³⁰ Technically, anyone of Latin descent was considered Caucasian. However, considering the state of public records especially after years of

²⁵ *Ibid.* 363.

²⁶ *Ibid.* 359.

²⁷ *Ibid.* 361.

²⁸ “Texas Timeline.” *Texas Timeline (Key Events in Early Texas)*.

²⁹ Jordan, Terry G. “A Century and a Half of Ethnic Change in Texas, 1836-1986.” *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 89.4 (1986): 386.

³⁰ Menchaca, M. “The Anti-Miscegenation History of the American Southwest, 1837 To 1970: Transforming Racial Ideology into Law.” *Cultural Dynamics* 20.3 (2008): 279-318. Web.

political turmoil, tracing one's blood quantum was nearly impossible. Essentially, depending on the darkness of your skin, one's legal status was left up to the subjective decision of local courts, who were under the control of the White-dominated Texas Republic. Upon becoming independent, these very same courts also declared the Republic of Texas a slave state, meaning that anyone of African descent who remained in Texas could be enslaved unless they fled south to Mexico, which had already outlawed slavery.

After years of neglect and political turmoil, religious organizations in Texas began to rebuild and regain their followings. In 1838, the Roman Catholic Church of Texas began to rebuild its congregation. Around the same time, the first Protestant groups in Texas began to hold services, with the first Episcopal parish in Texas officially organizing in early 1839. Before then, church affiliation was very low in Texas, especially due to low population as well as a lack of family units.³¹ The reestablishment of church power announced to many that Texas was a suitable destination for even more Anglo settlement, letting those in the United States know that the Catholic church's hold on Texas would soon be passing and further encouraging American interest in Texas annexation.

Regardless of how well Texas was doing on its own, conflict continued with Mexico as leaders refused to recognize Texas' independence. Even with economic support from trade agreements with European countries such as Britain and France, Texas was still incredibly financially vulnerable since the war for independence. Since then, Sam Houston, then-president of the Republic, had been working with

³¹ "Texas Almanac - The Source For All Things Texan Since 1857." *Religion in Early Texas / Texas Almanac*. Texas Almanac, n.d. Web. 14 Dec. 2016.

American leaders to request annexation into the Union. However, due to its dedication to slavery, as well as Mexico's continued claim to Texan regions, American leaders were hesitant to annex the Southwestern state, for many feared that annexing a slave state would create an uneven balance between free and slave states.³² However, during his campaign and eventual presidency in 1845, James Polk used the annexation of Texas to his benefit. As part of Polk's campaign platform, he argued that the takeover of Texas was the next step in gaining the Western frontier lands, and was able to convince US Congress to approve the annexation.³³

As expected, the affront to the sovereignty and claim to the American southwest of the Mexican government through the United States annexation of Texas led to the immediate declaration of the Mexican-American war. Lasting from 1846 to 1848, the war came to a violent close for Mexico with the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, ceding much of what is now California, Wyoming, Utah, Nevada, Colorado, New Mexico, and Texas to the United States, and leaving Mexico economically devastated.³⁴ Although often framed as a move for American expansion and manifest destiny, racist, anti-Catholic sentiment figured prominently in Anglo opposition to Mexican rule in both the fight for Texas independence as well as the Mexican-American war.³⁵ Even in its early years, the Republic of Texas had always been founded as a Protestant-led state. In his farewell address in December 1844, Sam Houston even went so far as to publicly ponder the racial motivations behind an expansion of the Texas Republic -- "If we remain an independent nation, our territory

³² Kluger. "Big Drunk Saves the Day." *Seizing Destiny*. 380.

³³ *Ibid.* 392.

³⁴ "Texas Timeline." *Texas Timeline (Key Events in Early Texas)*.

³⁵ "Continuities in American anti-Catholicism: the Texas Baptist Standard and the coming of the 1960 election.." [The Free Library](#). 2007 Baptist History and Heritage Society 14 Dec. 2016.

will be extensive--unlimited. The Pacific alone will bound the mighty march of our race and our empire.” Although the Texas Republic never got the chance to set out to expand on its own, for the Anglo population, the move to dislodge Mexico’s claim to the Southwest was just another clear step for the expansion of the white race.³⁶

Between the investment opportunities available for Northern entrepreneurs and the access to cheap labor offered by the Mexican population, San Antonio had officially become a site for capitalist development. After the establishment of both the railroad and military systems in the late 19th century, San Antonio experienced an industrial and population boom. In the years surrounding the Civil War, the social climate of the United States was undergoing radical changes as the Southern economy lost an integral source of labor by the official abolition of slave labor. At the same time, the population of San Antonio grew by almost 50 percent.³⁷ Bringing in thousands of workers from Mexico, the American southwest--Texas, California, Colorado, Arizona--worked to replace that workforce with new sources of cheap, exploitable labor.³⁸ As the 20th century developed, the era of Anglo domination found its close with a completely transformed Texan status quo.

³⁶ Kluger. "Big Drunk Saves the Day." *Seizing Destiny*. 387.

³⁷ Drennon. "Social Relations Spatially Fixed". 574.

³⁸ Tenayuca, E. Brooks, H. "The Mexican Question in the Southwest". *The Communist* (1939): 257.

Chapter 2: Era of Awakening

In classic descriptions of Texan history, brave American men set out into the great unknown Western frontier to discover “new” land and “civilize” all those populations that had yet to see the light (also known as Anglo culture and religion). In this Eurocentric history, after these brave Texans fought off the “savage” Mexican army in the fight for Texas territory, all was well in the land. Texas quickly became part of the union, and, before long, America took the land in the West that, according to Manifest Destiny, was meant to be theirs all along. In Texan elementary school classrooms, students pledge allegiance to the Texas flag every morning, learn the Anglo historical canon, thus internalizing the American “finders-keepers” philosophy. For those students, Texas history is all about the conquest, without any of the social or historical context. It is all about the Alamo, with none of the repercussions. When Texans chant “Remember the Alamo,” they are remembering the Anglo triumph over the Mexican people. However, given closer inspection, there is, of course, more than meets the eye. The Anglo conquest of Texas had larger, violent implications than are reported in classic history books, all with repercussions that extend into the modern era. Though the official American war on Mexicans ended in the 19th century, it continues in other forms of violence and oppression.

The start of the Civil War marked more than just strained national race policy, it also marked a turning point in relationships between the Anglo and Mexican populations in Texas. During the Civil War period up until the 1920’s, the presence of large military bases and the development of a large tourist industry in San Antonio played a large role in local politics. Beginning during the Anglo mass migration to

Mexico, a long-standing tradition of othering dark skinned women through exoticization and racial stereotyping developed. Originally manifesting itself through interracial marriages that were often means of managing social and economic capital, the exoticization of Mexican women diversified, coming to present itself through the prostitution industry and the invention of the “chili queen” by Anglo leaders for the tourism industry. So, although it takes on different forms throughout the political and economic changes in San Antonio, the economic exploitation of Mexican women has continually been a foundational element of Texas. Thus, the 20th century was inaugurated with the diversification of municipal policies aimed at controlling and exploiting the Mexican community.

As marked by the 1880 census, interracial marriage between Anglo men and Mexican women had become increasingly “unfashionable”.³⁹ However, this did not mean that these interracial liaisons simply ceased to exist. Instead, the relationships took on new forms in relation to the expansion of the city’s newest additions: military and railroads. The development of the military sector brought new opportunities for Mexican men to join in on middle class prosperity, as well as the opportunity for the proliferation of San Antonio’s “red light” district. The establishment of the train systems brought a completely new source of economic growth: tourism. While the development of these two industries did bring new sources of work and prosperity to San Antonio, they also contributed to new forms of racialized domination of the Mexican population. Anglo leaders worked to take advantage of the new military and

³⁹ Pilcher, Jeffrey M. “Who Chased Out the ‘Chili Queens’? Gender, Race, and Urban Reform in San Antonio, Texas, 1880-1943.” *Food and Foodways* 16.3 (2008): 177. Web.

tourist industries, resulting in new policies that exploited the labor of Mexican women.

Originating during Spanish rule, San Antonio had a long tradition of brothels and prostitution, especially between Mexican women and Anglo men (more specifically Anglo soldiers). The first reported cases of these relationships took place during San Antonio's famous "fandangos". Though beginning as town dance socials, around 1850, San Antonio fandangos took on new meaning.⁴⁰ As the military presence in San Antonio increased, so too did the prostitution industry. So, when several large military bases were built, the sex work industry expanded in kind -- "Fort Sam Houston and the various other Army and Air Corps installations in the vicinity contributed heavily to the demand for low-priced prostitutes."⁴¹

Though originally tolerant of sex work as a byproduct of military expansion, before too long San Antonio came to have a reputation for being *overly* tolerant of vice and prostitution. As the war effort kicked into gear leading into World War I, the rising rates of venereal disease (VD) demanded the attention of national health officials and San Antonio military leaders.⁴² As the temperance movement gained more national support, prostitution and, more specifically, the women working in the sex industry were put under increased scrutiny. "Officials worried that the city's historical toleration of vice, its racially diverse population, and its relative proximity

⁴⁰ LeCompte, Mary Lou. "Any Sunday in April: The Rise of Sport in San Antonio and the Hispanic Borderlands." *Journal of Sport History* 13.2 (1986): 131. Web.

⁴¹ Shapiro, Harold A. "Health Conditions in San Antonio, Texas, 1900-1947." *Southwestern Social Science Quarterly* 34.3 (1953): 70. Web.

⁴² Sandos, James A. "Prostitution and Drugs: The United States Army on the Mexican-American Border, 1916-1917." *Pacific Historical Review* 49.4 (1980): 629. Web.

to Mexico detracted from the city's assets."⁴³ While the military expansion brought huge economic prosperity to San Antonio, increased criticism of lenient sex work legislation put San Antonio at risk of losing its military funding.⁴⁴ So, in an attempt to keep VD at bay and reconstruct the city's public image, Anglo leaders instituted a moralizing sex education propaganda campaign. Though this campaign was aimed at preventing the spread of VD, this goal was executed by demonizing and pathologizing women's sexuality, rather than educating men about safe sex practices. After prostitution was declared a national security risk, it became only too easy to execute anti-VD campaigns that targeted women as the source of infection, and disproportionately impacted women of color.⁴⁵

Spearheaded by middle-class white women in an anti-vice campaign, Mexican women soon became the scapegoat for all city hygiene and moral issues.⁴⁶ Though framed as a campaign to aid struggling women, the true effect of the movement was to emphasize white middle-class female propriety and incorruptibility, and the lack thereof in Mexican communities. The campaign was implemented in two ways, regulation through policy and "treatment". In a 1918 civilian sex-ed propaganda campaign, the role of women in the war effort was summarized as being either the supportive mother figure or the corrupting whore.⁴⁷ Thus, middle-class white women were cast as the supportive mother figure who was expected to stay at home and lead society's moral foundation. Women of color were then cast as foils to this image of

⁴³ Shah, Courtney Q. "'Against Their Own Weakness': Policing Sexuality and Women in San Antonio, Texas, during World War I." *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 19.3 (2010): 460. Web.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* 460-1.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* 466.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* 459.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.* 463.

Republican motherhood, with hygiene campaigns emphasizing Mexican women's role in corrupting soldiers through their pathologized uncleanliness and hyper sexuality.⁴⁸

This middle-class white women's campaign against prostitution, in addition to encapsulating many of the issues within white feminist movements, reveals several points of anxiety within 20th century American society. In targeting Mexican female sex workers, the San Antonio women's organizations also revealed their insecurities surrounding marriage, exoticism, and overt sexuality. By placing women of color in their crosshairs, these organizations displaced their anxiety about marriage and their husbands. Throughout popular culture representations, Hispanic women are presented as exotic, sultry sexual objects, though marriage was very rarely part of that image. As prostitutes in San Antonio, Mexican women posed a threat to white women's marriages by offering exotic "escapes" for their husbands. What is more, the relationship between middle-class white men and Mexican women posed a threat to Anglo society's interests in racial purity and exclusion. Instead of focusing on the man's role in this exchange, white women's organizations placed the onus on Mexican women. In their campaign, they presented an anti-sexual vision of womanhood and marriage that was directly at odds with all that the sex industry represents. As a result, middle-class white women were developing an image of the chaste, moral savior, while Mexican women were used as means by which to promote white feminist progress, all while receiving the brunt of the social backlash.

This attack on women of color was also executed through the mass prosecution of prostitution and VD. "The military arrested and detained more than

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* 464.

15,000 women on suspicion of prostitution or disease, holding them without trial for an average of ten weeks.” For some, this meant being sent to one of the many detention homes that opened during this time to offer “promiscuous” women an “opportunity” for educational and vocational training. For other women, disproportionately low-income women of color, this meant being officially charged with prostitution.⁴⁹ To the public eye, this may have seemed like a tough on vice approach. However, while city government was focused on prosecuting prostitutes, they were also turning a blind eye to the men creating the demand for sex work and the continued exploitation of sex workers. “Green-light stations” in downtown San Antonio were maintained well into the 30’s and offered prophylaxis to military personnel exposed to VD.⁵⁰ Though the ultimate goal was to reduce VD and aid in the war effort, the execution of the anti-vice campaigns also illustrates the deeper contradictions between the military’s need to present an upstanding, moral image in order to receive investment from the Department of War, and its interest in sustaining the sex work industry -- not to mention the lengths that it would go to fulfill those demands.

Though both the military and San Antonio middle class reformers set out to support the anti-VD campaigns, the two groups had very different ideas about execution and ultimate goals. Though the military did have an interest in reducing rates of VD, they were not willing to cut back on their patronage of the prostitution industry. Ultimately, the goal of the military was to reduce VD in order to help the war effort, and, for the soldiers, cutting back on prostitution was definitely *not* going

⁴⁹ *Ibid.* 468.

⁵⁰ Shapiro. “Health Conditions in San Antonio, Texas, 1900-1947.” 70.

to improve their performance in the field. In contrast, middle-class white reformers focused their anxiety on the women of color-dominated sex work field. For the women leading the anti-VD charge in San Antonio, the best way to achieve that goal was to target prostitutes through moral uplift, hygienic restitution, and, in many cases, legal disciplinary action. Though the military and middle-class reformers had intersecting goals, their means for achieving those goals were very different.

Just as the sex work industry was expanding in response to military investment, so too was the local food industry in response to increased tourism brought in by the establishment of railroads. “Already in the 1880s, tourists had begun to seek out the dangerous yet alluring foods of San Antonio street vendors”.⁵¹ Though street vendors had already become a long-standing tradition in downtown San Antonio, the new influx of tourists offered new opportunities for the women running the stands to gain financial autonomy. However, it also offered new opportunities for Anglo leaders to take advantage of the profits being made. Thus, the “chili queens” of San Antonio were born. Drawing on pre-existing Mexican stereotypes, the turn of the century invention drew upon Spanish society nostalgia, casting Mexican women as the exotic, spicy mistresses and providers of exotic, spicy foods.⁵² Still, as the moral panic seized the nation surrounding sanitation in the 20th century, Anglo leaders made a public show of “cleaning up” San Antonio by outlawing street vendors. Much like the anti-vice fight against prostitution spurred by the temperance movement, city leaders were stuck between wanting to encourage outside investment while still maintaining local culture -- a dilemma that resulted in

⁵¹ Pilcher. “Who Chased Out the ‘Chili Queens?’” 173.

⁵² *Ibid.* 175.

the further stereotyping of the Mexican community as unsanitary and dangerous. Just as Mexican women's bodies were being managed through anti-vice campaigns, the Mexican community as a whole was also being legislated and controlled through thinly-veiled, racist food sanitation policies. Targeting the Mexican women who ran the popular food stands, new health policies created guidelines that made it too burdensome to continue the local tradition.

With the influx of Mexican immigrants following the Mexican revolution in 1910, the Hispanic community was becoming a force in and of itself. Responding to the population growth *and* the growing Mexican middle-class, a large portion of legislation in San Antonio was designed to keep Tejanos separate from white society -- the Mexican population was effectively being managed on all sides by local legislation. "Between 1900 and 1930, those of Mexican descent were officially considered Caucasian by the U.S. Census Bureau; in 1930 they were classified into their own racial grouping, Mexican, and in 1940 they were reverted back to Caucasian."⁵³ New housing developments included clauses in their housing contracts that disallowed any person not of Caucasian race from leasing or owning property.⁵⁴ In a continuation in the trend of racially biased legislation, these red-lining policies had (and continue to have) deep reverberations throughout San Antonio's political and racial climate. Resulting directly from the residential exclusions put in place in response to increased minority populations, independent school districts began to develop in accordance with the racial lines drawn throughout the city's

⁵³ Drennon. "Social Relations Spatially Fixed." 575.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

neighborhoods.⁵⁵ More importantly, by declaring an area of the city an independent school district, the residents were able to shelter their tax dollars from county control, allowing them to funnel their tax dollars into their districts schools. As a result, wealthier neighborhoods (disproportionately white neighborhoods) had better public education for their children. All the while, schools in, say, the west side of the city (a disproportionately low-income, Mexican area) had much less funding and attention. Thus, the spatial organization of the city had very explicit, racialized effects on the opportunities of students around the city. And, in 1948, when racial restrictions on residences were found unconstitutional, the damage had already been done.⁵⁶ By then, school districts aligned by income had been established; “these spaces were produced from specific social relations that spatialized and polarized city residents economically and racially”.⁵⁷ So, when using distorted educational and monetary statistics from San Antonio data to justify segregation and racism, it was only too easy to use the “clear data” to substantiate racist claims about Mexican intelligence, hygiene, upward mobility, etc., thus creating a self-perpetuating system of racial hierarchy.

Increasing urban populations in San Antonio during the beginning of the 20th century combined with the expansion of the second-generation immigrant middle-class created the perfect environment for the development of middle-class business leadership in San Antonio and South Texas.⁵⁸ As the Mexican population in San Antonio became more socioeconomically diverse, new streams of political

⁵⁵ *Ibid.* 574.

⁵⁶ Drennon. "Social Relations Spatially Fixed." 575.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* 591.

⁵⁸ Martinez. "The Voice of the People." 6.

consciousness were born. According to middle-class assimilationist rhetoric, it was expected that Hispanic residents learn English, go to American schools, do business with their Anglo neighbors, fight in American wars, and follow American law. At the same time, the various forms of Anglo exploitation of the Mexican working class gave rise to further animosity between the exploiters and the exploited in addition to a developing labor-class movement. With the establishment of the League of Latin American Citizens, or LULAC, in 1929 and the 1938 Pecan Shellers' Strike, two very different forms of political expression and philosophy lead the San Antonio Mexican community into an era of political awakening. This period, leading into the 1930s and the World War II period, gave birth to the Chicano Movement.

Chapter 3: Era of Uprising

It is nearly impossible to pinpoint exactly when the Chicano Movement began. To some, it began when European powers began forcibly installing themselves in the American Southwest. To others, it was a short lived civil rights movement beginning in the 1960s. Though one cannot clearly delineate its chronological boundaries, the ebb and flow of the movement began to quicken its pace in the late 1920's and 30s. Depending on where you locate the center of the movement, its timeline takes different forms. For the Texas Chicano civil rights movement, San Antonio acted as a staging point. In analyzing the various actors, groups, and events that contributed to the movement, one cannot view these pieces separately, as if they occurred in a vacuum. The movement in San Antonio cannot be considered without considering the two World Wars, nor without looking at the interactions between local politics and civil rights groups and their individual philosophies. The Chicano civil rights groups each had a life of their own, with different internal conflicts and varying interests. All of the histories of these actors are intertwined and inseparable from the larger political, economic, and social structures that they worked within.

The Chicano Movement in San Antonio can be characterized in waves of economic and political change. As explored in the last chapter analyzing the effects of industrialization on racialized health policies, the industrializing development of military bases and railroad systems in the late 19th century in San Antonio had immense effects that expanded into the 20th century. During this time and up until the end of World War II, Anglo political hegemony in San Antonio was largely enacted

through political machine system controlled by Anglo business leaders.⁵⁹ However, after another wave of Mexican immigration in the 1920's into Texas cities after the Mexican Revolution, the Mexican middle class in San Antonio began to diversify and demand a viable political outlet.⁶⁰ World War II marks a critical point in San Antonio's political and economic development. After Chicano soldiers returned from a war where they defended the rights of others, it became harder to deny the lack thereof stateside. Additionally, the war boom had created a fully urban market economy, requiring a city government that could handle the demand for changes in labor policy.⁶¹ It is during this shift of public opinion that San Antonio finally kicked its political machine habit.⁶² However, it was not long before a new form of Anglo political hegemony was enacted in the form of the Good Government League (GGL). Founded in 1951, the municipal politics in the three decades that followed in San Antonio can best be characterized by the interactions between GGL and Chicano communities.⁶³ Directly contributing to the development of the Chicano group, the Bexar County Democratic Coalition, whose liberal assimilationist rhetoric inspired the radical nationalist, confrontational politics of the eventual Chicano third party, *La Raza Unida*.

⁵⁹ Rosales, Rodolfo. *The Illusion of Inclusion: The Untold Political Story of San Antonio, Texas*. Cmas History, Culture, & Society. University of Texas Press. 2010. Location 202. Kindle Edition.

⁶⁰ Woods, Frances Jerome. "Mexican Ethnic Leadership In San Antonio, Texas." Washington: Catholic Univ. of America Press, 1949. 18.

⁶¹ Rosales. *The Illusion of Inclusion*. Location 284.

⁶² In this context, the political machine refers to the monopolization of municipal politics by conservative Anglo upper-class business owners. In San Antonio, this political machine began with Bryan Callaghan Jr. becoming mayor in 1885, and continued up until 1951. *Handbook of Texas Online*, J. Kaaz Doyle, "Callaghan, Bryan V., Jr.," accessed April 17, 2017, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fcadw>.

⁶³ *Ibid.* Location 393.

The political agitation during the 20th century was inaugurated with the passing of the 1902 poll tax. An important part of then-mayor Bryan Callaghan's political machine, up to World War II it was not uncommon for Callaghan's supporters to pay the poll tax for Mexican American voters in exchange for their vote.⁶⁴ However, with founding of the League of Latin American Citizens (LULAC) in 1929 that consolidated several local civic engagement organizations, the era of anti-machine politics began.⁶⁵ In response to the blatant racism and exploitation that pervaded the Chicano community in San Antonio, LULAC offered an organization that worked to combat exploitation through community engagement and political activism projects. Espousing the view that the best way to combat exploitation is through socio economic upward mobility, LULAC encouraged its members to learn English and assimilate into the larger community.⁶⁶ However, not all members of the community shared that view.

After the downturn of the Great Depression, the Mexican community in San Antonio was hit especially hard. Both Mexican men and women were in competition for low skilled jobs, receiving little aid from New Deal agencies who refused help to unemployed non-citizens.⁶⁷ In response to the lack of advocacy for laborers, communist groups began to develop all around Texas. In San Antonio, the Workers' Alliance was led by radical leader Emma Tenayuca. Her role was especially important in 1938 after the passage of the Fair Labor Standards Act that instituted a mandated minimum wage. After the minimum wage required businesses to pay their

⁶⁴ *Ibid.* Location 197.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.* Location 223.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ Buitron, Richard. *The Quest for Tejano Identity in San Antonio, Texas, 1913-2000*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2004. 38. Print.

workers a fair wage, it was only a matter of months before workers were replaced with machinery. In this moment in history, a Texan pattern began to emerge -- Mexican workers are the first to be exploited for cheap labor and the first to go when fair treatment is demanded.

Emma Tenayuca established her historic role in San Antonio as a fierce leader during the Pecan Shellers' Strike in 1938. After the pecan shellers, who were largely Mexican women, were issued steep pay cuts in an industry that already had some of the lowest wages in the country, Tenayuca and the Workers' Alliance led city-wide protests. Even after the walkouts and picketing were ticketed by local authorities, Tenayuca worked to negotiate with the Pecan companies. However, after city officials realized Tenayuca's connection to the Communist Party, they used that connection to undermine her labor negotiations, calling the strike a "'Red plot' to gain control of the West Side of San Antonio". Though the laborers were eventually given raises, the victories were short lived as businesses soon replaced workers with mechanized shellers.⁶⁸

"Tenayuca was like many independent-thinking individuals who joined the Communist Party in the twenties and thirties but left when they could no longer follow the Stalinist line after 1939. The horrors of Communism, with its destruction of individual freedoms and cynical diplomacy repelled many in the Popular Front."⁶⁹ In addition to serving as an example of the rise of anti-communist rhetoric that engulfed national politics in the late 30's, the Pecan Shellers' Strike in San Antonio also serves to illustrate the policing of the Chicano community. Though it was a

⁶⁸ *Handbook of Texas Online*, Richard Croxdale, "Pecan-Shellers' Strike," accessed March 21, 2017, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/oe01>.

⁶⁹ Buitron. *The Quest for Tejano Identity in San Antonio, Texas, 1913-2000*. 41.

completely peaceful strike, after the movement was given the communist label, local authorities were given free rein to arrest laborers and mount attacks on Tenayuca, as its leader. Though the Workers Alliance made up only a portion of the Mexican civil rights advocacy in San Antonio, after it was labeled communist, the entire San Antonio movement suffered as a result. The anti-communist attacks in San Antonio were even so aggressive that, during a meeting of local communists to discuss the recent international developments, rioters attacked members of the party -- "from this altercation Tenayuca barely escaped injury, but the experience caused her to leave political and labor activity permanently."⁷⁰ After her role in labor negotiations during the Pecan Shellers' Strike put her at odds with prominent Anglo leaders, and as anti-fascism engulfed even the most pacifist labor activists, Tenayuca was ousted from her leadership position and her generation of radical innovators went underground.

As San Antonio's military industry kicked into high gear during wartime, radical labor class movements faded into the background and middle class assimilationist groups flourished. In an effort to prevent fascism in Latin America and encourage Latin American military participation, the United States began a propaganda campaign touting the benefits of peaceful diplomacy and trade alliances between American nations.⁷¹ To this end, groups such as LULAC joined forces with local leaders to promote the Good Neighbor Policy and the 1943 "Caucasian Race--Equal Privileges" resolution. Of the two, the first policy, championed by Roosevelt, declared a non-interventionist, non-interference approach to relations with Latin

⁷⁰ *Ibid.* 41.

⁷¹ Guglielmo, T. A. "Fighting for Caucasian Rights: Mexicans, Mexican Americans, and the Transnational Struggle for Civil Rights in World War II Texas." *Journal of American History* 92.4 (2006): 1212-237. Web.

America. The second policy declared that "all persons of the Caucasian Race within the jurisdiction of this State are entitled to the full and equal accommodations, advantages, facilities, and privileges of all public places of business or amusement."⁷² Originally heavily debated, this resolution used the label 'Caucasian' to include Hispanic citizens in the rights already afforded to the Anglo community. It is especially important to view these two pieces of political strategy in conjunction with one another. These moves were also accompanied various pro-immigration legislative actions such as the Bilingual Education act, recognizing the needs of students with limited English skills.⁷³ As moves made during the war, the policies worked to encourage Mexican Americans to join the war effort and to pressure Latin American leaders to resist fascist regimes. Though these measures were presented as progressive civil rights conventions, it is important to recognize their place as diplomatic strategies used to capitalize on the large, domestic Hispanic population.

As the war ended and Chicano veterans returned from the fray, a new public consciousness was spreading. After having participated in the ultimate patriotic duty, it was becoming ever more difficult for American society to deny their right to equal status under the law. However, to acknowledge the issue and to enact the necessary change were two different endeavors. Though veteran status did afford many Mexican men additional respect, that respect did not translate into practicable rights, nor did much of that respect extend to other portions of the Chicano community. Reacting to the widespread discrimination against Hispanic veterans, the American GI Forum was founded in 1948. At the time, the GI Forum's main focus was to

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ Davidson, Chandler. *Race and Class in Texas Politics*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1990. 32. Print.

demand equal access to the 1944 GI Bill of Rights for Mexican American veterans.⁷⁴ As many Chicano veterans had been unskilled laborers, this was critical for GI Forum members, as it offered them the opportunity for free education and entry into the middle-class.

Though membership in the GI Forum did provide Mexican veterans new possibilities, the GI Forum also used the veteran label to distinguish itself from other civil rights groups. “Unlike Lulacers, [Forum members] did not have to emphasize their knowledge of English and their professional status in order to prove their citizenship to skeptical Anglos. No matter how poor or dark-skinned, a veteran had the best possible U.S. pedigree.”⁷⁵ Additionally, unlike other groups, the GI Forum was able to avoid being targeted as a Communist or radical group as many liberal groups were; in some cases, veterans were given the most respect within the Chicano community afforded by San Antonio Anglos (though that definitely wasn’t saying much).⁷⁶

As the war ended and the GI Bill took effect, San Antonio had made a full transition from an agricultural focus to an urban market economy. With the increased urban population came an increased demand for a municipal government that could keep up with its economic needs. As the middle class grew, so too did the need for leaders who would create policy that would support the growing business class. So, as San Antonio business owners called for a focus on creating a “stable investment environment,” the political machine that had been in place since the turn of the 20th

⁷⁴ Buitron. *The Quest for Tejano Identity in San Antonio, Texas, 1913-2000*. 56-7.

⁷⁵ Pycior, Judy L. *LBJ and Mexican Americans*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1997. 60. Print.

⁷⁶ Buitron. *The Quest for Tejano Identity in San Antonio, Texas, 1913-2000*. 57.

century ended.⁷⁷ However, this change in no way meant that the Chicano community got more representation. As new Anglo middle class political groups began to take control, there was no room in their minds for “radical” or “leftist” agendas that pandered to the Hispanic community. As a result, middle class Chicano business owners were stuck between having a political voice in regards to class issues, or trying to voice Chicano community issues and being completely excluded -- and there was no in between.⁷⁸ So, a schism began to occur within Chicano politics between those who chose assimilationist or confrontationalist strategies for achieving political inclusion. In many cases, as the political environment opened up, Chicano business owners were willing to sacrifice discussing race issues if it meant being allowed within mainstream municipal politics at all. For example, Henry B. Gonzalez’ political career followed this line of thought. Gonzalez spearheaded the assimilationist approach during the post-WWII era using successful Chicano business owners as poster children for the community in order to show why Mexican Americans deserved respect and attention. However, capitalizing on middle class success meant having to focus on middle class issues such as redlining practices in Anglo neighborhoods rather than bringing race politics into discussion.⁷⁹

Though the original San Antonio political machine that had dominated local politics for nearly 50 years was voted out in ‘51, it was replaced by a new form of Anglo hegemonic politics: The Good Government League (GGL). Established in 1954, the non-partisan group took advantage of new municipal policies that made all elections non-partisan and self-funded. “The members of the GGL’s board of

⁷⁷ Rosales. *The Illusion of Inclusion*. Location 134.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.* Location 376.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.* Location 437.

directors constituted ‘the economic and social elite of San Antonio.’ This connection supplied immense financial support for its political campaigns. As a consequence, 65 percent of all candidates, including many Chicano candidates, came from the more affluent north side of San Antonio.”⁸⁰ Though GGL did support some Chicanos’ candidacy for city council, this support only lasted as long as they ran on a GGL-approved platform. As GGL city council members, they were expected to support the more conservative, assimilationist point of view. Even garnering political support from LULAC, these Mexican GGL city council members denigrated the more radical, confrontational strategy, which they viewed as “undermining political inclusion.”⁸¹ Eventually, LULAC became the leading political advocacy group, registering voters in the Hispanic-majority West Side of the San Antonio in order to get candidates involved in local and state politics.

By 1960, Chicano assimilationist politicians had officially taken over leadership of the Bexar County Democratic Coalition. Capitalizing off of Lyndon B. Johnson’s blossoming political campaign, Chicano communities across the country made it clear that civil rights could not be ignored during the upcoming election. Looking to court the liberal factions in Texas, LBJ’s campaign made sure to garner the support of minority leaders in Texas in exchange for offering them a place at the upcoming National Democratic Convention.⁸² By this time, the Chicano-led Coalition had grown tired of GGL’s Anglo centric politics, and instead, it dedicated itself to electing Mexican representatives independent from GGL control. Since the coalition had already instituted new waves of Chicano politicians into local and state seats (as

⁸⁰ *Ibid.* Locations 1068-1070.

⁸¹ *Ibid.* Location 1116.

⁸² *Ibid.* Location 1183.

they would continue to do for the next decade), it was too late for GGL to interfere. The next year, when Henry B. Gonzalez became the first ever Hispanic member of Congress, he was able to win the seat with the support of LULAC and the Coalition, even despite GGL attempts to put up a competitor.

At the same time, in the summer of 1960, JFK's campaign also recognized the power of Chicano groups. Drawing on the organizational power of the Bexar County Democratic Coalition, political groups launched a statewide network of "Viva Kennedy" groups.⁸³ After his successful election, this network of political engagement groups came to be included within the umbrella network, Political Association of Spanish Speaking Organizations (PASSO). Led largely by San Antonio democrats, PASSO included groups such as LULAC and the GI Forum, as well as more radical labor reform groups. Engaged in similar missions as the Coalition, PASSO responded to the lack of Chicano political representatives, bringing in education reform and migrant laborer rights issues that expanded past city politics in order to build up a larger base of Chicano power.⁸⁴

In 1963, when a call for political support came from Crystal City, Texas, PASSO sent in help. As the leading producer of spinach in the country (80%!), Crystal City's population was largely made up of Hispanic migrant workers. However, it was completely Anglo-run. As PASSO came in to help register voters, it wasn't long before then-governor John Connally called in the Texas Rangers to help "maintain order". Even with the Rangers' presence intimidating voters, Crystal City witnessed the largest Chicano voter turnout in its history, with many migrant workers

⁸³ *Ibid.* Location 1710.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

even staying past harvest to participate. The Texas Ranger harassment even got so violent that PASSO came in to take newly-elected mayor Juan Cornejo into hiding from Ranger Captain Y.A. Allee. Even after complaints were filed, the complaints were dismissed by Governor Connally, saying that the Rangers were a necessary move for security. Unfortunately, the presence of *Los Rinches* (a nickname used to describe the Rangers as well as any Anglo agency armed to kill Mexicans)⁸⁵ had become a rather commonplace occurrence for Mexicans in South Texas as a means of Anglos in power to manage and intimidate Hispanic communities. However, despite the Anglo intrusion, with an uprising that had never before been seen in the Chicano community, PASSO helped organize elections that led to a completely Tejano-run city council (affectionately nicknamed *Los Cinco Candidatos*).⁸⁶

And when the dust had settled from in front of the only polling place in Crystal City on election night, a fresh breath of promise was breathed into every Texas citizen of Latin-American descent. The Citizens Committee for Better Government was announced the victors. The five members of this winning ticket, all of Mexican extraction, stand as a beacon to all others like them, struggling in the morass of discrimination and inequality. For the first time in South Texas the true ‘majority’ ruled.⁸⁷

After having been blocked from using a labor rights-oriented title by several bureaucratic stipulations aimed at preventing radical third-party candidates, PASSO was eventually able to register for the ballot using the seemingly bland name, “The Citizens Committee for Better Government”. Although city council reverted back to

⁸⁵ Webb, Walter Prescott. "The Texas Rangers in the Mexican War" (Master's thesis, University of Texas, 1920). 9.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.* Location 1748.

⁸⁷ PASSO, July 30, 1985. “Crystal City Story.”

Anglo control the year following, Crystal City would act as a proud exemplification of what change could be enacted through the power of Chicano organizing without Anglo organization aid. Not to mention that it wouldn't be long before José Angel Gutiérrez returned to Crystal City in order to test out the viability of *La Raza Unida* Party.

The reverberations from Crystal City were even felt in San Antonio's GGL. In a fit of white middle-class anxiety, GGL launched an outwardly anti-Mexican campaign, attempting to incite political backlash from San Antonio's predominantly white, affluent Northside neighborhoods.⁸⁸ Despite attempts by GGL to label civil rights and labor groups as undemocratic, radical, or communist-minded, the status quo was already shifting in favor of the burgeoning Chicano Movement. As American society stepped up their protests against the seemingly neverending war in Vietnam, the reign of GGL and even the Bexar County Democratic Coalition was coming to an end, and Emma Tenayuca's radical labor movement legacy was on the cusp of revival by *Los Cinco* and Cesar Chavez.

As social justice-minded agitation spread across the country in response to the Vietnam War, in 1965, Cesar Chavez capitalized on the unrest with the beginning of his farmworker movement setting into motion the beginning of the decade that is often used to define the Chicano Movement. This became even clearer in the spring of 1966 when President Johnson failed to attend a conference discussing the lack of Chicano representation on the new Equal Opportunities Commission. After mass protest over his dismissal of the issue, another cabinet meeting was scheduled in El Paso, Texas. However, this time, unlike the original conference, no Chicano leaders

⁸⁸ Rosales, R. *The Illusion of Inclusion*. Location 1945.

were invited to partake in the forum. In response, activists set up a large protest outside the cabinet meeting, calling themselves *La Raza Unida*. Though just a beginning, this protest set the stage for public support of a Chicano nationalist third party. “Representatives of fifty Chicano organizations met at San Antonio and pledged support to the concept of La Raza Unida; about 1,200 people attended. To many observers, it was clear that the lid was about to blow off in the Chicano community.”⁸⁹

Inspired by Cesar Chavez’ movement as it reached South Texas in 1967, students all over the state joined in on the protests. That same year, the historic Mexican American Youth Organization (MAYO), a predecessor of *La Raza Unida* party, was founded by five St. Mary’s College students in San Antonio -- Mario Compean, Jose Angel Gutierrez, Juan Patlan, Nacho Perez, Ernie Cortez, and Willie Velasquez.⁹⁰ Quickly spreading all around Texas, chapters of MAYO came to organize over 50 different school walkouts calling for political representation that more equitably represented the large Mexican communities around the state; it became quickly clear that the new generation of Chicano leaders was not to be trifled with. Quickly gaining a reputation as an assertive, militant group constantly butting heads with the “gringos in power,” MAYO publicly criticized the 20th century oppressive Anglo political regimes born from 19th century Anglo colonialism.⁹¹ Though largely working to advocate for labor-class issues, MAYO was founded with larger educational reform goals. Having brought together the five founding students,

⁸⁹ *Ibid.* Locations 2022-4.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.* Location 2211.

⁹¹ Navarro, Armando. *La Raza Unida Party: A Chicano Challenge to the U.S. Two-Party Dictatorship*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2000. 24. Print.

higher education played a large role in shaping the tactics and goals of the San Antonio Chicano movement, both as a goal and as inspiration. As MAYO gained local and state traction, some of its first initiatives included organizing high school protests that called for administrations that better represented their student demographics and the addition of bicultural, bilingual curriculums. Across the state, higher education was becoming an increasingly attainable goal for many Tejanos.

In addition to MAYO, the late '60s war protests inspired various forms of radical Chicano groups. Although Chicano communities were engaged in anti-war protests, their focus was much different than that of mainstream groups. Due to the disproportionately high number of Mexican Americans enlisted in the war, there was an extremely high casualty rate for Chicano soldiers, with the added injustice of extremely low rates of upward mobility for veterans.⁹² As a direct result, the Brown Berets was founded. Starting in Southern California, groups quickly developed across the Southwest. Similar to Black Panther groups, the Brown Berets' main focuses were community engagement and security. Around San Antonio, the Brown Berets worked to organize anti-war rallies, institute social services and monitor police behavior in the barrios, and mentor young gang members.⁹³ In this way, Chicanas began having more prominent roles in social activism. With all the work of their male peers but none of the recognition, Chicanas were an integral part of the Chicano movement, especially on a community level. For example, Chicanas took a large role in the Brown Berets in working with young gang members and encouraging them to focus

⁹² Rosales. *The Illusion of Inclusion*. Location 2250.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

their energies on community engagement in the barrios.⁹⁴ In these contexts, it is important to recognize that, in Spanish, the word *Chicano* includes both men and women. So, when viewing the progress made in Chicano communities, it is critical to recognize the role of women. In many instances, Chicanas were forced to choose between racial or white-dominated “women’s advocacy”. Since the feminist movements of this era were led largely by white, middle-class women, Chicanas felt their interests were better served by the Chicano Movement, even if it was largely male-centered.

The dilemma was that most of the Chicana activists in San Antonio who were involved in the Chicano movement were caught between a “White feminism” that was not responsive to the Chicana experience and a political reality where they struggled, mobilized, and politicized, but were not recognized in their own right. They were discriminated against both along gender and ethnic lines.⁹⁵

During LBJ’s War on Poverty, progress made for middle class Chicanos created new opportunities for Chicanas to get involved with protest politics and grassroots movements calling for improved welfare, housing, health services, and progressive education reform. Given the opportunity for middle-class, college educated Chicanos to gain professional positions, though limited, many Chicanas were able to find new spaces for professional and political growth.⁹⁶

As the 70s began, Chicanos and Chicanas alike came together to organize around *La Raza*, a radical Chicano third party being organized by MAYO. Of the five students that founded MAYO, José Angel Gutiérrez became the leading member to

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ *Ibid.* Locations 2358-60.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.* Location 2263.

spearhead *La Raza Unida* Party (RUP). In 1969, after Gutiérrez' famous "kill the gringos" speech -- "essentially, that unless social change came to Mexicanos in Texas, it would be necessary to eliminate gringos by killing them" -- Henry B. Gonzalez capitalized on the politically-charged moment to target MAYO for its perceived radicalism.⁹⁷ Mounting an attack on the group and its resources, it wasn't long before MAYO was nearly entirely cut off from its legal and monetary resources. For example, the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF), had provided MAYO with free legal counsel for a variety of issues. However, after the political scrutiny initiated by Gonzalez' attacks on MAYO, MALDEF not only stopped helping MAYO, it also moved its main headquarters from San Antonio to California.⁹⁸ Though MAYO survived this attack, the conflict between Gutiérrez and Gonzalez is a clear example of the schism that had developed between Chicano civil rights leaders. In spite of his support of Chicano civil rights progress, Gonzalez was a vocal opponent of radical confrontationalism -- "MAYO styles itself the embodiment of Good and the Anglo-American as the incarnation of evil. That is not merely ridiculous, it is drawing fire from the deepest wellsprings of hate."⁹⁹ In the same vein, MAYO and, eventually, *La Raza*, were vocally critical of Gonzalez and his assimilationist politics, calling them ineffectual moves that ultimately acted as small concessions to the Chicano community made by GGL and other Anglo leaders to appease civil rights activists.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷ Navarro. *La Raza Unida Party*. 27.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.* 26-7.

⁹⁹ Hazlett, Joseph M. *The Libertarian Party and Minor Political Parties in the United States*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1992. 14. Print.

¹⁰⁰ Rosales. *The Illusion of Inclusion*. Location 2019.

After Gonzalez' crusade against MAYO cut it off from its resources and aid, Gutiérrez and its other leaders knew that it was time for a more substantial political move. Though MAYO had largely been focused on educational reform and local political advocacy, after the political attacks levied by Gonzalez it was clear that their focus now needed to be electing representatives that supported their goals. Already having made his name during the first uprising in Crystal City and within MAYO, Gutiérrez returned to Crystal City in 1969 to start building up the new third party option throughout South Texas counties in a move called the Winter Garden Project (WGP).¹⁰¹ Getting its name from the Winter Garden region of Texas that was home to large migrant laborer populations, Gutiérrez used Crystal City as a test site for his new ideas. Working under the auspices of *La Raza*, Gutiérrez encountered much more bureaucratic backlash than he expected in Crystal City. So, instead of trying to run under the *La Raza* title, Gutiérrez established Ciudadanos Unidos (CU) as a political organizing group, which eventually became the most powerful Chicano grassroots organization in Texas. Using the local high school's queen coronation nomination process as a jumping-off point for WGP, CU organized a walkout in protest of the Anglo-dominated school administration that had traditionally been in charge of choosing high school queen (and usually chose a white student, despite the majority Mexican student-base). Using this as an opportunity to demand larger institutional changes, student organizations called for increased student participation in school elections, as well as bilingual and bicultural faculty, administration, and curriculum.¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ Navarro. *La Raza Unida Party*. 30.

¹⁰² *Ibid.* 30-1.

Though ultimately successful, the progress in Crystal City was met with sharp Anglo reprisals. After RUP took control over the local school board and city council, there was a mass Anglo exodus. Anglo families took their children out of the public schools and moved their businesses to other nearby towns. “The few gringo families that remained in Cristal established a private school for their children, as well as for the children of those *Méxicanos* who opposed RUP which they perceived was a Communist-inspired movement led by Gutiérrez the despot.”¹⁰³ On the other hand, the RUP leaders created unprecedented change for the residents that remained. In addition to focusing more of the budget on the building and renovation of local schools, various new educational programs were instituted in Crystal City that supported teacher training, adult education, and student retention.¹⁰⁴

After the successes in Crystal City, MAYO leaders were finally ready to initiate a larger RUP campaign led by Gutiérrez.¹⁰⁵ At a MAYO conference that followed shortly after the Crystal City walkout, MAYO leaders agreed upon two new resolutions. The first called for the promotion of alternate education programs that recognized the contributions that Mexican Americans had made to American history as well as the racist, colonialist legacy of Anglo-America. The second, championed by Gutiérrez, called for the official formation of RUP. In this move, the MAYO board gave its support for voter registration drives, platform development, and fundraising, all on a rural scale. Though some suggested working in city centers, it was agreed that it would be easier to tackle Texas’ large size if the rural populations were targeted

¹⁰³ *Ibid.* 36.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.* 37.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.* 31.

first.¹⁰⁶ In its first official meeting in 1970, RUP got its start in Zavala county and, from there, began spreading all across South Texas. Though RUP was gaining momentum, it became painfully clear with every passing election that the largest obstacle they would face would be to bring in voters from the Democratic party.

In the period between 1971 and '75, RUP had its largest impacts. RUP launched an all-out publicity campaign in rural areas, complete with political education and get-out-the-vote efforts, including, but not limited to, rallies, canvassing Chicano-dominated neighborhoods, radio spots, and literary campaigns. However, this did not go unnoticed by the Anglo leaders of these communities. In Crystal, conservative *Méxicanos* and Anglos created the Citizen's Association Serving All Americans (CASAA) in order to put up "acceptable" Mexican candidates for local seats. CASAA even went so far as to launch an all-out three-fold strategic assault on RUP. First, it publicly attacked Gutiérrez' credibility, calling him a "militant radical." Second, it made sure to use media outlets to attack RUP candidates in order to characterize them as unfit to lead. Lastly, CASAA set out to intimidate *México* voters, threatening economic reprisals those who voted for RUP candidates.¹⁰⁷ Ultimately, as this type of attack strategy spread to other conservative groups across South Texas, *La Raza* met its demise. Supported by the state Democratic Party, anti-RUP rhetoric spread, calling *La Raza* a threat to democracy itself.¹⁰⁸ Though enacted largely through bureaucratic obstacles and state leadership backlash, the Texas Democratic Party made it nearly impossible for RUP to get a strong foothold in Texas state politics. In one instance, when attempting to declare

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.* 41.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.* 34.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.* 59.

RUP as an official third party, the then-governor made *Raza* representatives wait for hours, putting off their appointment, before ultimately allowing the paperwork to be submitted after Gutiérrez himself went to the governor's office to press him on the issue. In another case, RUP had to institute a large-scale movement to educate Méxicano voters about write-in voting after certain counties wouldn't allow RUP on the ballot. What was worse, many Méxicano voters were functionally illiterate, and, although they were technically allowed to ask for translation help from voting officials, the Anglo voting officials refused.¹⁰⁹

“The years of 1970 to 1974 were the golden era of the Raza Unida Party's organizing in Texas. These were history-making years, when thousands of Méxicanos repudiated the Democratic Party's dictatorship.”¹¹⁰ Around 1975, civil rights movements around the country began to disintegrate. Seemingly all at once, the Chicano movement started to fade, the Vietnam War ended, and the “Viva Yo,” individualist generation began. With the rise of neo-liberal, capitalist ideals, society's interests shifted away from confrontational protest politics towards “a return to the normalcy of the status quo.”¹¹¹ To add insult to injury, a 1975 legislative move made it even harder for political groups to create third parties. The next year, in a move that further contributed to the end of RUP, the Mexican American Democrat group was founded in Texas, and even recruited former RUP organizers to lead it. After years of attacks on all fronts, RUP leaders were tired and burnt out.¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.* 38.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.* 59.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² *Ibid.* 73.

In spite of its premature demise, it is the legacy of *La Raza* that counts more than its ultimate ending. Notwithstanding the fact that the Good Government League and the Coalition (and their rather problematic politics) eventually came to meet a simultaneous end in San Antonio in the late '60s, these groups had set the stage for new ideas and leaders. Though the Coalition disparaged the confrontational rhetoric proffered by leaders of the radical labor movement, Cesar Chavez and José Angel Gutiérrez's brand of Chicano movement wouldn't have been possible without the work done by the Bexar County Democratic Coalition and PASSO, just as they would not have developed without the municipal changes made by the Good Government League. The history of these groups is inseparable and should be analyzed as such. The political, economic, and social environment throughout San Antonio history gave birth to these historic groups and leaders, just as *La Raza*'s legacy continues to inspire educational policy reform to this day.

Chapter 4: Jeb & Columba

The story of Cinderella and her dashing prince is a concept that has fascinated the public imagination in all corners of the world. Defying language and origin, the tale of an orphaned young woman growing up under hapless circumstance who is blessed with remarkable fortune, often in the form of a wealthy lover, has bewitched the minds of many, fortifying the possibility of real life rags to riches. Given this fascination, the public interest in the romance between Jeb Bush and Columba Garnica Gallo is no surprise. However, we cannot ignore the social context in which this love story occurred. Jeb Bush, member of America's most prominent political family, fell in love with Columba Garnica Gallo, a previously anonymous, young girl of modest upbringing from Mexico City, all at the young ages of 17 and 16, respectively. By all accounts, this was a stunningly unexpected romance. According to Jeb and Columba, it was love at first sight that blossomed into a lifelong partnership. However, after years in the public eye and media attention, it seems that the bloom is off the rose. Given years of news coverage, there seems to be years of evidence of a marriage that has only become increasingly complicated as the two young lovebirds grew into political figures, navigating the public and private domains. The weight of the various social expectations and racial tropes on the relationship has left its mark -- the stigmatization of interracial couples, the exoticization of women of color, the use of a Mexican spouse for political gain, not to mention the White Anglo-Saxon Protestant anxiety surrounding a gold-digging foreigner marrying up into their clan. Given all the different forces at play within Jeb

and Columba's marriage, one begins to wonder whether it is a truly blissful union, or, rather, that it has lasted the test of time more as a means for Columba's survival.

Following the various accounts that have been published about Columba and Jeb, from the 1989 Chicago Tribune article profile of Columba to the gotcha-journalism style pieces written during Jeb's 2015 presidential campaign, the coverage of Jeb and Columba's unlikely romance reads like a political rewrite of *West Side Story*.¹¹³

He was a tall, gangly 17-year-old gringo who was in León on a two-month exchange program from Andover, Massachusetts, and Phillips Academy, one of the most prestigious boarding schools in the United States. She was 16 years old, petite and a Catholic school student at the Instituto Antonia Mayllen. His father had been a congressman from Texas and at the time was the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations. Her father, meanwhile, had grown up an hour away, in the rural village of Arperos, and worked as a waiter in Mexico and in the U.S., at first illegally and then legally picking fruit and working on road crews.¹¹⁴

Though it seems almost impossible that journalists could be so unaware of the racial and socioeconomic tropes that they were playing into as to describe Columba as "a pop of color"¹¹⁵ or Jeb's "counterculture rebellion,"¹¹⁶ the news reports surrounding the marriage do serve as nearly perfect documents ripe for analysis.

Practically so cliché I could not have made it up myself, Jeb and Columba's courtship first began in 1970 during Jeb's Phillips Academy Andover two-month

¹¹³ Balmaseda, Liz. "Columba Bush: A Private Person In A Public Role." *Chicago Tribune* 13 Feb. 1989: n. pag. *Chicago Tribune*. Knight-Ridder Newspapers. Web. MacGillis, Alec. "When Jeb Bush and Bill Belichick Were High School Classmates." *Slate*. N.p., 28 Jan. 2015. Web.

¹¹⁴ Kruse, Michael. "Jeb's Forgotten Father-in-law." *Politico*. N.p., 19 Mar. 2015. Web.

¹¹⁵ Rosin, Hanna. "The Mysterious Columba Bush." *The Atlantic*. N.p., June 2015. Web.

¹¹⁶ MacGillis. "When Jeb Bush and Bill Belichick Were High School Classmates."

senior, anthropology trip to León, Mexico. Presented as an opportunity to step outside their boarding school bubble into the “exotic” locations of, either, South Boston or León, Mexico, this class trip gave the boys a chance to explore the “dynamics of power” and poverty.¹¹⁷ Offered the chance to practice his Spanish and be closer to his family in Texas, Jeb and 10 of his classmates took off for Mexico.

According to Jeb’s former Andover classmate, Lawry Bump, their friend, John Schmitz, was looking for a wingman for his double date with Columba’s sister, Lucila, who wanted to bring along her sister.¹¹⁸ Initially asking Lawry Bump himself, who was too sick at the time to accept the offer, Schmitz turned to Jeb with the offer. Call it fate, call it whatever you like, but that double date turned out to be fateful for all those involved--eventually leading to marriage for both Jeb and John.

It’s easy to imagine that, at the time, many within their personal circles viewed Jeb’s relationship with Columba, and hers with him, as a fleeting, youthful rebellion. Within the Bush family, it seems that diverging from their father’s footsteps was well within the family tradition. After all, Jeb’s father, former United States President George H. W. Bush had left New England for the Texas oil business, as his father, Prescott Bush, had left Ohio for Connecticut banking and politics¹¹⁹. Not to mention that Jeb’s brother, former United States president George W. Bush, is known for his boyhood antics in his own rite, even more so than Jeb’s. However, although a certain amount of youthful trouble from the Bush brothers was expected, they were also an expectation for them to grow out of it, choose their future wives from their familial social circles and strike out on their own as businessmen. So, when word

¹¹⁷ Rosin. "The Mysterious Columba Bush."

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

came from Jeb that he was planning on choosing to attend University of Texas at Austin instead of accepting his legacy spot at Yale in order to be closer to his new girlfriend, one can only imagine how the news was received by George and Barbara.¹²⁰

In joining the Bush clan, it seems that Columba had to make the difficult choice between one side of the border over the other. It is hard to say exactly how Columba made that decision, or how her family took the news that she had left Mexico behind. According to Bush aides, when Columba left with Jeb, she was just following her heart. However, Columba's family in Mexico recounts the story in a different way. Most accounts in the news say that, after her parents divorced in 1963, Columba never saw her father, Jose Maria Garnica Rodríguez, ever again once he had left their family to immigrate to the United States.¹²¹ According to Beatriz Parga's 2004 biography, *Columba Bush*, the story is much more complicated than that. Allegedly, Garnica Rodríguez crossed back and forth between borders (mostly illegally) before attaining a resident alien card in 1960. According to Parga, Columba went to stay with her father in California in 1973 but disappeared shortly after Garnica Rodríguez accused her of betraying her "modest" Mexican roots.¹²² Morales Mendez, Garnica Rodríguez's second wife, in an interview with Politico, even went so far as to claim that it was Columba who abandoned her father, rather than the other way around, and that Columba refused to let him meet his grandchildren before he died in 2013; "Once she left with this guy, she had no relationship at all with her

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Kruse. "Jeb's Forgotten Father-in-law."

¹²² Ibid.

father.”¹²³ Although Jeb and Columba do take the family down to Mexico for the holidays some years, it appears that Columba’s relationship with her family has never quite recovered from her marriage. Without the full story from Columba, it is impossible to tell whether her father did truly abandon her and her mother, or if Columba and Bush spokeswoman Kristy Campbell is just trying to protect Jeb’s political career from the fallout surrounding her family’s history with illegal immigration.

Once Columba left her family and reunited with Jeb, it was not long before he proposed -- all before he had even graduated from University of Texas at Austin or even introduced her to his parents. “When he called his parents, George and Barbara, and told them he was going to marry Columba, that was also lightning—the news hit like a bolt ‘from a West Texas thunderstorm,’ write Peter and Rochelle Schweizer in their 2004 book, *The Bushes: Portrait of a Dynasty*.”¹²⁴ In her autobiographical memoir, *Barbara Bush: A Memoir*, Jeb’s mother revealed an excerpt from her personal diary during Jeb and Columba’s engagement where she questioned Columba’s interests in Jeb; “How I worry about Jeb and Columba. Does she love him?”¹²⁵ It seems that even in this highly publicized political marriage, it is nearly impossible to get the full story about Columba Garnica Gallo. According to Barbara’s memoir, Columba is a valued and loved member of the family; “[Columba] also has given us three of the most attractive, bright grandchildren. She has made Jeb very happy, and we love her dearly.”¹²⁶ However, both Peter and Rochelle Schweizer’s

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Rosin. "The Mysterious Columba Bush."

¹²⁵ Bush, Barbara. *Barbara Bush: A Memoir*. New York: Scribner's Sons, 1994. 110. Print.

¹²⁶ Ibid, 104.

book and the media coverage surrounding the marriage give a different impression of Columba's transition into the Bush family and the political spotlight. After the couple decided to move to Florida to pursue Jeb's political career, more and more news came to light that added new layers of interpretation to Jeb and Columba's relationship.

In 1989, *The Chicago Tribune* published a short, but pointed, profile of Columba entitled "Columba Bush: A Private Person in a Public Role" that further emphasized the divide between Columba and her new family.¹²⁷ Setting the stage for all future journalistic interest in Columba's background, journalist Liz Balmaseda spared no opportunity to draw attention to the unexpected coupling. Even going so far as to insert diminutive words in Spanish throughout the piece to highlight her ethnic background, Balmaseda writes of a woman from across the border struggling to fit into her new roles within American politics -- "She is married to the son of the American President, yet her eyes moisten when she hears the Mexican national anthem."¹²⁸ Even before Jeb had announced his interest in running for governor of Florida, the addition of Columba to the Bush family was read as a political move. Jeb's campaign had yet to begin, and Bush politics were already weighing on Jeb and Columba's marriage. Though Columba is often noted as having very little interest in the political spotlight, the expectation for her to support her family regardless of her relationship with them made that nearly impossible. In Balmaseda's article, in one instance, Columba is cited as "trembling" when she discovered that her father-in-law had referred to her children as "Jebby's kids from Florida, the little brown ones" in a conversation with President Reagan. Although Columba is later quoted covering for

¹²⁷ Balmaseda. "Columba Bush: A Private Person In A Public Role."

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

George Sr., “[defending] the comment, lashing out at the ‘misinterpretation’ of her father-in-law in the public,”¹²⁹ the damage had already been done.

Since then, writers have only dug deeper into Columba’s background and marriage. During Jeb’s tenure as Florida governor, more and more came out about the strain it put on his marriage and children.

In 1998, Jeb ran for governor again and won. The family relocated to Tallahassee, and as first lady, Columba changed the look of the governor’s mansion. She organized exhibits of the works of Salvador Dalí, Diego Rivera, and Frida Kahlo, and of her favorite local artists...“She was doing Latino, not southern belle,” Jim Towey recalled. “And it did ruffle some feathers.”...Eventually, she and Jeb agreed that she’d spend more of her time in Miami.¹³⁰

Despite her attempts to bolster her husband’s career with her philanthropy, Columba never quite fit comfortably into her role as First Lady of Florida. During Jeb’s governorship from 1999 to 2007, she spent more time in Miami than elsewhere. Left with the job of childcare while her husband was off in Tallahassee, Columba and her children landed in the news in various, unsavory manners. At one point, Columba is even quoted by the press discussing how Jeb’s career damaged their children’s upbringing, and had told Jeb that he ruined her life.¹³¹

Based on news coverage throughout Jeb and Columba’s relationship, it is difficult to discern whether those following were rooting more for the success or failure of their marriage. Though it does seem that the public is fascinated by their opposites-attract coupling, the journalistic framing of their relationship seems to show

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Rosin. "The Mysterious Columba Bush."

that the writers cannot swallow this interracial marriage. In following so closely Columba's social climb into the Bush family, they have also cast light upon just how fragile that familial dynamic is for her. Regardless of how true their affection was or may continue to be for each other, Columba is in an incredibly precarious position should her marriage go awry, especially with such fragile relations on both sides of her family. Though Jeb and his father may have taken advantage of her ethnic background during their campaigns, Columba never quite let her husband essentialize and objectify her heritage in the way that so many white male politicians have done to their "exotic" wives throughout history. Although her and Jeb's marriage does serve as an example of exotification of women of color and racism towards interracial couplings in the modern era, Columba should be recognized for the ways that she has pushed back against that image and even used it to her advantage. Though the Cinderella comparison seemingly rings true in regards to Columba's absent father, questionable in-laws, and her remarkable socio economic climb, we may never know if she truly got her fairytale ending.

Chapter 5: How Far We've Come

To consider where Texas and San Antonio are now is to consider all that has come to pass over the evolution of the Texas-Mexican border. Despite what my high school textbooks may depict, Texas history did not begin when Anglos first stepped into Mexican territory nor when European crusaders discovered its economic potentials. That brand of snake oil betrays the long history of invasion and oppression that Texan land has borne witness to (and continues to host). Beginning as a white supremacist crusade for protestant hegemony in the Americas, the Anglo seizure of Texas continues to be what is essentially a never-ending gentrification mission. After an investigation into the rise and fall of the Mexican American civil rights crusade in the 20th century, one might hope to be able to report the fall of gringo power in Texas. As I transition my focus into the current moment, it is only too clear how little has changed since *La Raza Unida* party sought to challenge the assimilationist rhetoric of the Texas Democratic party. The themes explored in this thesis -- local politics, marriage, education, tourism, the military -- all continue to be incredibly relevant within San Antonio race relations. Though the *de jure* redlining policies may be long gone, the city's spatial organization continues to be stratified along racial and socioeconomic lines. Almost a century and a half after the institution of San Antonio's tourism and military industries, its dependence on these income sources continues to dictate its political decisions in ways that have serious repercussions on local Mexican communities. So, although great steps forward have been made in San Antonio race relations, there is still much more work to be done and still many obstacles to overcome.

Local Politics

Though the San Antonio movement of the New Left ended in the 70s, conservative, assimilationist rhetoric continues to function as a central element of municipal politics. Since the rise of Tejano leadership in the Texas Democratic party in the 60s, Mexican men continue to dominate San Antonio politics. Though there are still many issues to reconcile, especially at the state-level, San Antonio's city politics have come a long way in terms of minority representation. However, this progress did not come without concessions. As seen during the struggle between Chicano business leaders and the Good Government League in the 1960's, Mexican politicians are often pressured to focus on class issues over racial policy in order to be elected. As a result, low-income areas of San Antonio, which are largely Hispanic, continued to be underrepresented. However, as more and more Chicanos took on prominent roles in local politics, Mexican leadership has become increasingly standard in San Antonio. Beginning with Henry B. Gonzalez' rise to Congress, which helped give rise to Henry Cisneros' election as mayor and eventual position as Secretary of Housing and Urban Development under the Clinton administration, San Antonio has been home to many groundbreaking Chicano politicians. The recent spotlight given to Joaquín and Julián Castro's political careers illustrates the progress that has been made. As the sons of Rosie Castro, a San Antonio community activist known for her advocacy for *La Raza*, the Castro twins demonstrate the development of Mexican community leaders that the *Raza Unida* movement and the Bexar County Democratic Coalition made possible.

Despite all the advancements that have been made, there continues to be an egregious lack of Hispanic leadership at the state-level, as well as a lack of Chicanas

in prominent political positions. Though Texas continues to have one of the largest Hispanic populations in the country, it has only five Hispanic representatives in the House, and our senator, Ted Cruz, just happens to represent all that is abhorrent about the modern Republican party. San Antonio's current mayor, Ivy Taylor, offers an example of the ways a politician could make civil rights history while running on a very conservative platform. In 2014, Taylor made history as our country's first Black woman to be elected mayor of city with a population above one million. Since her election, Mayor Taylor has received vocal criticism from San Antonio's liberal communities for her use of religion to justify her anti-LGBT voting record as well as her increase of the municipal police budget without addressing the rise of police violence.¹³² In these ways, examples such as Ted Cruz and Ivy Taylor illustrate a situation in which there is a scarcity of minority representation, and the minority representatives that *are* elected are largely conservative. This political situation also draws attention to a pattern in Texas politics where, in order to be elected, politicians from minority communities often use a more conservative platform that is classically associated with minority group politics in order to be viewed as a viable political candidate. For example, in general, Mexican voters tend to vote for liberal policies, especially in regards to race and immigration policy. However, Ted Cruz is known for having an incredibly strict immigration voting record, even for a member of the Republican party. Additionally, the long history of gerrymandering in Texas has

¹³² Chasmar, Jessica. "San Antonio mayor booed during prayer for Orlando victims: 'Shame on you!'" *The Washington Times*, June 17, 2016.

created districts that break up minority communities in order to weaken their voting power.¹³³

The development of state district gerrymandering is largely related to the expansion of the Mexican voting base. As the population grew and demanded better political representation, in order for Republicans to maintain state control, it became imperative to weaken the Mexican electorate's power. This is achieved both through gerrymandering and strict voting laws. For example, Texas' voting laws target low-income voters as well as citizens without government issued ID's.¹³⁴ As attaining a driver's license in Texas is a costly, time-intensive process that requires several forms of ID (i.e. birth certificate, passport, etc.), it is difficult for residents that work full-time to get one at all. So, the conservative-led state is able to remain as such through traditions of voter suppression. However, this can also be viewed as a subtle recognition of the power held by Mexican voters. In many cases, the Democratic party in Texas has been working to eliminate racialized gerrymandering practices as well as these discriminatory voting laws in order to capitalize upon the latent voting base. In fact, in many ways, this political commodification of Mexican communities is what inspired many to join the *Raza Unida* party as a way to reclaim their political agency. As Mexican representation in political circles became more standard throughout Texas, racial barriers to higher socioeconomic class became increasingly blurred. Continuing a tradition that began way back when Anglos first migrated to Mexico, many Texas politicians have capitalized on the power of Mexican voters

¹³³ Barnes, Robert. "Court says Texas congressional districts gerrymandered to hurt minorities." *The Washington Post*, March 11, 2017.

¹³⁴ Eckholm, Erik. "Texas ID Law Called Breach of Voting Rights Act". *The New York Times*, Aug. 5, 2015.

through their interracial marriages. This is exemplified through my previous chapter's examination of the marriage between Columba Garnica-Gallo and Jeb Bush. Though it is impossible to say what types of political interests went into the marriage initially, Jeb Bush's political career undeniably benefitted from his wife's nationality. Through this case study, we see the ways in which interracial marriage can be (*and is*) used to manage social capital between majority and minority groups, especially for the economic and political gain of both parties.

Marriage

In spite of the wave of civil rights laws during the 60s and 70s that legally ended racially charged legislation such as anti-miscegenation laws and school segregation, the *de facto* practices informed by these policies still remain alive and well. Since then, the prevalence of interracial couples has steadily risen, though it is nowhere near a "norm," so to speak. Many of the themes that have already been discussed contribute to this practice; institutions such as schools, religion, and social circles inform romantic choices and preferences. When these institutions continue to be largely stratified along lines of income and race, it is no surprise that interracial couples continue to be viewed as atypical or surprising. In the case of Jeb and Columba, their relationship was met with a wide variety of public scrutiny, especially from Jeb's parents, Barbara and George Sr. Though one cannot say whether Barbara's distrust of Columba's interest in Jeb was based more on race or socio economic roots, it is, without a doubt, a racially charged point of tension. In San Antonio, where the Mexican community is relatively better integrated than in many other parts of the country, interracial couplings are much more commonplace, though do not come

without their obstacles. In a recent think-piece from *The New York Times*, “Erased Onscreen: Where Are All the Interracial Couples?” Kevin Noble Maillard considers the lack of interracial couples in pop culture media, and its possible effects on prevalent social practices. In this article, he makes a very apt point, “We may see and know mixed couples and families, but the anecdotal does not translate into collective visibility... Sustaining the legitimacy of racial boundaries requires suppression of these narratives. Without policing and erasing by law and popular culture, taboos lose their authority.”¹³⁵ So much of the way individuals conceptualize acceptable practices is informed by their personal experiences *as well as* what they see in popular media. So, when interracial couples appear infrequently, or not at all, in both of those settings, is it really a surprise that Barbara was so taken aback? Despite Jeb and Columba beginning their relationship in the 70s, these trends in practice and expectation have continued steadily enough that only in the past year have we had several interracial couples depicted onscreen (*Loving* and *Get Out*), and, in those cases, the interracial romance was the centerpiece of the films.

Education

For the local families who wish to maintain a more exclusive level of social capital, San Antonio is also home to several elite private schools. Largely founded as exclusive, Protestant institutions, San Antonio’s private schools all have a pattern of majority-white student bases, extensive entrance testing, and exorbitant tuition costs that become more expensive with each grade level. Though these schools do offer merit and need-based financial aid, the schools come with additional obstacles that

¹³⁵ Noble Maillard, Kevin. “Erased Onscreen: Where Are All the Interracial Couples?”. *The New York Times*, March 3, 2017.

contribute to a student-base that has very limited diversity. For example, many of these private schools do not offer school bus transportation, and Keystone School, possibly the most elite private school in San Antonio, does not offer student lunch. The lack of these cornerstones of public education make attending these elite institutions more complicated for low-income students. To top it all off, every private school in San Antonio is surrounded by systems of large fences that contribute to the school's elite aesthetic and reputation; some, like St. Mary's Hall are located on large plots of land that accentuate its distance from low-income areas of town as well as the school's own wealth.

Growing up in San Antonio, I have had experience with a wide variety of educational institutions. Though my mother did grow up working-class, her father's veteran status gave her and her siblings access to free university educations, and also contributed to her ability to eventually attend law school. Thus, with my mother's income, I was able to attend private school for my formative years, and then move to a public high school. Living just outside the boundaries of Alamo Heights, I also went to middle school with many people who later attended Alamo Heights High School, and I also took my SAT's at Alamo Heights High School. While attending private school, I was also able to see many of the private school campuses around the city during sporting and social events. It is through these experiences that I was able to witness the diversity of San Antonio's standards of living and education. Compared to my public high school, located in a low-income, Mexican-majority area, the difference in the quality of the campuses and education at Alamo Heights schools in comparison to private schools was astonishing. This is further exemplified in post-

graduate plans. My high school, which had a relatively developed college planning support system, sent most of its graduates to public universities in San Antonio, with the top 10% of its students going to more elite institutions, though sending a student to an Ivy-league destination was relatively rare. Additionally, some of my classmate dropped out before graduating and many did not go on to college. In comparison, San Antonio private schools usually boast a nearly 100% college acceptance rate and sent nearly all of their graduates to well-established colleges, with several attending Ivy institutions every year. What is more, these private institutions also offer college entrance prep courses as well as well-developed college guidance systems. As a result, the socio-economic disparities between local families are largely related to the family's ability to afford private school, or, at least, pay the residential costs associated with living in an area with a well-funded public school, which contributes the likelihood of their child pursuing higher education.

Gentrification & Tourism

Although San Antonio's local representatives are largely liberal democrats, there are still many obstacles preventing Mexican communities from making socio economic advancements. As discussed in previous chapters, historical practices in residential redlining continue to have an immense effect on school districts and minority communities. Though now illegal, neighborhood lines drawn by redlining based on race and ethnicity continue to exist in *de facto* housing practices. As real estate buyers can no longer be legally discriminated against based upon race or ethnicity, San Antonio neighborhoods maintain economic standards through housing taxes. For example, Alamo Heights is known for its high housing taxes that largely go

towards maintaining high standards of education provided by Alamo Heights public schools. Although Alamo Heights schools are *technically* public, in order to attend, one's family must first be able to afford the high cost of living within its boundaries. As a result, residents of Alamo Heights enjoy the privileges of living in an area with a well-maintained infrastructure, and all the social capital that is included in that status. The dramatic difference between Alamo Heights and the neighborhoods just beyond its border are immediately discernible; just by driving down San Antonio's Broadway Street, one can immediately tell the difference in quality of businesses and street upkeep as one passes across the Alamo Heights boundary into other areas of downtown San Antonio.

Just in the past ten years or so, as the nearby city of Austin's housing costs have skyrocketed and young postgrads have set their sights on San Antonio in its stead, forces of gentrification are spreading past Alamo Heights' borders into surrounding areas. One such example can be seen in the case of the Pearl Brewery. Previously a local beer brewery, its once deserted lot has recently become the site of rapid gentrification as the old brewery site was bought up by upscale restaurants and expensive boutique shops. As San Antonio's status becomes increasingly high-profile, more and more Mexican communities are encroached upon for the sake of expensive apartment complexes and specialty cupcake shops. Though quickly disappearing, one can still find ramshackle houses surrounding the Pearl Brewery where homeowners have refused to be pushed out, despite the parking garages being built just mere feet from their homes. As the gentrification spreads, cost of living has

systematically increased year by year in an ever-growing radius surrounding Alamo Heights, Pearl Brewery, and the nearby military bases.

As San Antonio rises in national status, its tourism industry has similarly grown. As part of the expansion of the Pearl Brewery, the famous Riverwalk that runs alongside the San Antonio River has also been revitalized. Incorporating local artists, San Antonio renovated the Riverwalk all the way up through Mission Reach in a campaign to publicize its potential as a hiking and biking destination. Capitalizing on Mexican culture, the Mission Reach campaign continues to market the Alamo and San Antonio's other historic missions as fabulous tourist destinations. Though the chili queens and their tourism potential may be long gone, San Antonio continues to manipulate its Hispanic history for Anglo capitalist profit. Despite San Antonio's rich tex-mex cuisine, Anglo-owned businesses continue to garner the most media attention for their fare. This is more so evident if one attempts to research "best tacos" or "best tex-mex" on the internet. As part of a longtime rivalry, Austin is often given the title of the city with the best Mexican food over San Antonio, which has a much larger Mexican population as well as many more well-reputed Tex-Mex restaurants. Though the Tex-Mex quality is arguably subjective, this rivalry illustrates the ways in which Austin's gentrified cooptation of Mexican culture is more palatable to the American public than San Antonio's more authentic food, or El Paso's truly authentic food.

The use of Mexican cultural tradition for economic profit is further exemplified in San Antonio's fiesta traditions. Based on cultural traditions dating back to before Anglo colonization of Mexico, San Antonio's Fiesta celebration takes place every year over a weekend in April. Comprised of various fairs and parades,

attendees flock upon the downtown area in a wave of alcohol, flower crowns, and *cascarones*. Taking place largely in downtown's King William area, fiesta draws in locals from all over the state as well as tourists from all over the country. In spite of its origin as a celebration of Mexican traditions, the fiesta tradition goes largely to benefit Anglo-dominated neighborhoods and businesses. Although there are Mexican-run food booths which do benefit local Mexican businesses, because many events are held downtown, especially in the wealthy King William neighborhood, fiesta has become increasingly Anglo dominated. King William is known as a historic district with increasingly expensive residential areas that continue to rise in price as the area's reputation as an artist center grows. Similar to the development and gentrification of the Pearl Brewery district, in the last ten or so years, more and more boutique businesses have found space in King William, especially surrounding its Blue Star art complex, thus developing a reputation as the new and improved Southtown district. As fiesta is hosted in this area, these Anglo-run businesses get a immense influx of business investment during this time.

Though gentrification and tourism have expanded in San Antonio in a way that often benefits Anglo residents, there has also been a rise of Mexican-owned businesses. Using the emphasis of Mexican culture tourism to their advantage, many Hispanic community-members have been able to capitalize on this trend to market authentic cuisine and products. Since the founding of University of Texas at San Antonio in 1969, San Antonio's Hispanic business class has grown exponentially and risen to new professional positions that would have previously been unattainable. As this business-class has grown, so too has the resulting business and political

communities that work symbiotically to support one another. As UTSA expanded, it added many departments, such as the Mexican American Studies department, that was inspired by the Chicano movement's focus on educational reform. The combination of the movement and its educational reforms now contribute to San Antonio's ever growing Mexican middle class. As UTSA largely draws its students from San Antonio and other nearby parts of Texas, many of its graduates stay in San Antonio after finishing their degrees. So, the UTSA alumni community continues to grow and support its members; a quick glance at UTSA's list of notable alumni reveals a rise in socio-economic status within the Hispanic community that has been made possible through the development of a local public university.

Military

In that same vein, the expansion of the national military budget in recent decades has also contributed to a rise in social capital of Mexican soldiers and veterans in San Antonio. As previously discussed, the development of military bases in San Antonio has been a huge source of economic growth in addition to serving as a means by which to ascend the socio-economic ladder. As Texas is home to many different military bases around the state, it has a large soldier and veteran population and thus places a great value on supporting its military community. Beginning during World War II, Mexican participation in the military has only since increased, thus helping to normalize the Hispanic population's place in mainstream American society. Though admittedly a hugely flawed system, the GI Bill contributed to the rise in socio-economic class of many Mexican-American veterans. Take, for example, my own family. After the death of my grandfather, Robert Galvan, during his service in

the air force, my mother and her seven siblings were able to attend university for free. Having grown up in a low-income household, my mother and her siblings' ability to climb the social ladder was immensely affected by their educational opportunities. For many San Antonio families, the option to enlist has offered opportunities and a level of financial and social security that would be otherwise unattainable.

It cannot be denied that progress has been made. One can quibble about how much has been made and if that progress is close enough to the type of social justice that Mexican Americans deserve or desire, but it is important to at least recognize the changes that have occurred. As explored through the recurring themes of local politics, marriage, education, tourism, and the military, a lot has developed and changed since Americans first took interest in Spanish territory. Just through my own experiences and knowledge of San Antonio, it is clear that there have been many advancements, as well as many steps backwards. It would be incredibly difficult to argue that the white supremacist Protestant crusade to colonize Mexico failed. Perhaps one could say that the war continues, but there are still many more battles to be fought. Throughout my time writing this thesis, the war against Mexican immigration has increased in prevalence, especially since the most recent presidential election. Not too long ago, I found out that Texas is home to more ICE immigrant detention centers than any other state, in some cases, by several factors. Despite all that has happened, Mexican civil rights are still up for discussion, rather than an inalienable right.

Epilogue

In light of our nation's recent presidential election, the historical movements that I have investigated are, perhaps, more important than ever. The 2016 Presidential Election, at the time, was the source of hope and fear for so many Americans. With the same vigor that many used to champion our potential first woman President, we suffered an equally devastating defeat to Donald Trump. As hard as it is to even write in our current president, it is important to face the threats that he poses to civil rights and social justice progress for years to come. Throughout his campaign, Trump's platform centered around his proposal to build a wall between the US and Mexico. Oh, that wall. It offers so many metaphorical and concrete avenues by which to describe the state of modern racial politics. As if history was not enough to show that even a wall could not prevent people from reaching their families and middle-class aspirations. A wall will not make America "great", as if it ever truly was. America was only ever *great* in the sense that it was great at imposing itself where it had no right to impose. America never had any claim to the regions it now classifies as the Southwest, and to suggest otherwise is just obtuse, though that *would* be in keeping with its usual rhetoric.

The building of the wall presents a variety of implications in Texas politics. Even some of the most conservative Texas leaders agree that it would be of no use, and would only waste precious taxpayer dollars. Yet, I suppose, that is not really its point. The point of the wall is to be a symbol of all that Trump's campaign cherished: xenophobia, American exceptionalism, and racial segregation. And, since his election, his administration has made sure to codify those values into national

legislation as fast as his little veto-stamping hands will allow. As frustrating as this political situation is, the research that went into this project has given me hope in the face of heartbreak.

The expansion of strict immigration policy is just one of many maneuvers in the expansive timeline of American oppressive race policies. Despite what Texan history books may portray, the violent seizure of Mexican territory did not cease with the end of the Mexican-American War. Rather, it continues up to the present moment. Yet again, American legislators endeavor to conquer land (that is not theirs to conquer) in the name of God, gold, and glory.

With every new wave of immigration comes new strains of American racism and hatred. Every day, more and more people are turned away at a border that originated out of American racial colonization. However, just as this most recent era of domination finds its bearings, the next wave of uprising and activism is developing. Across the country, advocacy organizations and local political leaders are rallying support. In the past, the “radical” movements were the ones first labeled dangerous. Yet, from Emma Tenayuca’s cry for labor reform to José Angel Gutiérrez’ demand for political representation, the radicals made the most noise and the quickest progress. It’s time for more radical thinkers, more radical ideas, more radical movements. In the face of Trump-era politics, *radical* doesn’t seem like such a bad idea.

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