

and business executives such as newspaper publisher Mónica Cecilia Lozano and television entrepreneur Danny Villanueva.

In general, the decade of the fifties, based on census records, indicated a gradual improvement in the community's socioeconomic condition, this in spite of ongoing immigration from Mexico that skewed the statistics against this positive trend.

Nevertheless, there were many problems. The best indicators of socioeconomic status are education, occupation, and income. According to the Grebler study, Mexicanos ranked close to the bottom in all three categories. In all southwestern states, Mexicanos averaged three to four years less education than Anglos. Roughly 50 percent had less than eight grades of schooling, a lower rate than African Americans. Moreover, the statistics do not indicate the severity of the problem, for they tell us nothing about the quality of instruction. "These years of education," according to the sociologist Joan W. Moore, "probably were obtained disproportionately in rural, small town, and other schools of inferior quality."⁴ In institutions of higher learning, the record was dismal. Less than 6 percent of Mexicanos had some college education, half the percentage of the black population and a quarter of the Anglo population. Naturally, the problem was most severe at the university level. In the Golden State, for example, where Mexicanos made up about 10 percent of the population, no branch of the University of California as late as 1967 had as many as one hundred Mexicano students.

In part because of their educational deficiencies, most Mexicanos were employed as unskilled or semiskilled workers in low-wage or marginal jobs, what social scientists call a secondary labor market. Within a particular job category, they tended to be at the bottom, earning the lowest wages. Unemployment rates for Mexicanos were twice as high as for Anglos of comparable ages in 1960. The census of that year indicated that incomes were considerably lower among Spanish-speaking people than other segments of the population. Grebler, Moore, and Guzmán state: "Mexican Americans had only 47 cents for every dollar of Anglo income, and they were worse off than nonwhites."⁵ The rural population was significantly more disadvantaged in this respect than the urban population, a disparity that widened during the previous decade, which helps explain the continuing migration to the cities. According to government criteria, over one-third of the Spanish-speaking population fell under the poverty level—an annual income of three thousand dollars per family. In Texas, over half the Mexicano population was officially poor. Juan Gómez-Quiñones, widely viewed as "the dean of Chicano historians," puts the picture in clear perspective: "Despite the organizational challenge by Mexican Americans to discrimination in the forties, fifties, and sixties and economic gains resulting from postwar economic booms, the unequal position between Mexican Americans and Anglo Americans probably expanded rather than contracted. Mexican advances in