READY TO RUN: FORT WORTH'S MEXICANS IN SEARCH OF REPRESENTATION, 1960-2000

Peter Charles Martínez, B.A., M.A.

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APPROVED:

Roberto Calderón, Committee Chair
J. Todd Moye, Committee Member
Sandra Mendiola-García, Committee Member
Neilesh Bose, Committee Member
Harold Tanner, Chair of the Department of History
David Holdeman, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences
Victor Prybutok, Dean of the Toulouse Graduate School

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This dissertation analyzes Fort Worth's Mexican community from 1960 to 2000 while considering the idea of citizenship through representation in education and politics. After establishing an introductory chapter that places the research in context with traditional Chicano scholarship while utilizing prominent ideas and theories that exist within Modern Imperial studies, the ensuing chapter looks into the rise of Fort Worth's Mexican population over the last four decades of the twentieth century. Thereafter, this work brings the attention to Mexican education in Fort Worth beginning in the 1960s and going through the end of the twentieth century. This research shows some of the struggles Mexicans encountered as they sought increased representation in the classroom, on the school board, and within other areas of the Fort Worth Independent School District. Meanwhile, Mexicans were in direct competition with African Americans who also sought increased representation while simultaneously pushing for more aggressive integration efforts against the wishes of Mexican leadership. Subsequently, this research moves the attention to political power in Fort Worth, primarily focusing on the Fort Worth city council. Again, this dissertation begins in the 1960s after the Fort Worth opened the election of the mayor to the people of Fort Worth. No Mexican was ever elected to city council prior to the rise of single-member districts despite several efforts by various community leaders. Chapter V thus culminates with the rise of single-member districts in 1977 which transitions the research to chapter VI when Mexicans were finally successful in garnering political representation on the city council. Finally, Chapter VII

concludes the twentieth century beginning with the rapid rise and fall of an organization called Hispanic 2000, an organization that sought increased Mexican representation but soon fell apart because of differences of opinion. In concluding the research, the final chapter provides an evaluation of the lack of Mexican representation both in Fort Worth education and in the political realm. Furthermore, the finishing chapter places Fort Worth's Mexican situation within the context of both Chicano history as well as identify some key aspects of the history of modern empire. This investigation poses pertinent questions regarding the lack of Mexican representation while African Americans end the century well-represented on the school board, in education jobs, and on the city council.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

During the 1960s and 1970s, United States' Mexican political and community leaders established a new plan of attack in their pursuit for civil rights and political power. Thanks in part to civil rights legislation such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and the Bilingual Education Act of 1968, it became advantageous for Mexicans to fight for rights based upon the brownness of their skin rather depend on their previous legal assertions of whiteness. Additionally, the 1973 landmark Supreme Court case, *White, et al. v. Regester, et al.*, served as a precedent for the implementation of single-member districts for Texas county, city council, and school board elections, thus encouraging more aggressive challenges to existing political structures that kept Mexicans out of power by utilizing at-large elections.[1] Chicano historian, Carlos Muñoz, described this era as the "first attempt to shape a politics of unification on the basis of nonwhite identity and culture and on the interests of the Mexican American working class."[2] As this study will show, while Muñoz praised this effort to unify Mexicans, differing agendas in the Mexican community as well as challenges from outside the community prevented true unification both during the Chicano movement period and in subsequent decades.

When considering the history of Mexicans within the geographical borders of the United States of America, one should not ignore how students of Modern Empire view social and

[1] Teresa Palomo Acosta, "Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund," *The Handbook of Texas*, Texas State Historical Association, https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/jom01 (Accessed April 16, 2017).
[2] Carlos Muñoz, Jr., *Youth, Identity, Power: The Chicano Movement*, Verso, London, 2007, 22.

political constructions of colonial society when subject to the control established by the metropole. Americans often do not deeply consider how relationships between how groups of people that are perceived as foreign relate to U.S. political structure, but in many ways the U.S. can be studied as one of the most prevalent and powerful empires since the nineteenth century. While U.S. historians may not readily consider the United States as an empire, American economic and military power exerted throughout the world since the 1800s suggest otherwise. Aspects of imperialism are evident when studying foreign relations, particularly in Latin America, during the nineteenth century. The Monroe Doctrine of the 1820s, the Mexican-American War during the late 1840s, the Spanish-American War in the late 1890s, and efforts at establishing a presence using the Open Door Policy during the early 1900s are some of the most obvious examples of American Imperialism; but studying how American financial investments backed by U.S. military support in areas like Panamá and Guatemala during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries make the U.S. Economic Empire much more evident.[3] If the U.S. truly is a modern empire then we should be able to apply theories and ideas to the American Empire just as easily as we can to traditional European empires and if this is the case then students of Modern Empire must consider the United States history when considering theories and consequences of Modern Empire.

[3] For a historical overview of U.S. policy toward Latin American, see Lars Schoultz, *Beneath the United States: A History of U.S. Policy Toward Latin America*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1998.

According to Michel Foucault, unlike traditional empires where the goal was to obtain property and expand physical territory, Modern Empires seek to control people.[4] Methods of controlling people include, but are not limited to, utilizing educational management and statistical analysis to ensure that those who are supposed to maintain power and institute order on behalf of the metropole remain in their desired positions. With Foucault's conjectures in mind, there may not be better evidence of the United States as a model of Modern Empire than when one explores how Mexicans, both inside and outside U.S. geographical boundaries, are used as importable and internalized colonists who, for over a hundred years, have been subject to economic desires of the favored and privileged classes.[5] As colonists, Mexicans have been subjected to a lesser status than that of the favored and privileged Euro-American population. Furthermore, even African Americans, who have long fought against civil injustice and oppression, are often afforded more privileges as "Americans" than ethnic and racialized Mexicans, although these benefits have historically been petty when compared to privileges granted to the Euro-American population.

While Foucault did not address an American empire directly in his series of lectures, more recent scholarship addresses the United States as an empire while addressing some of Foucault's contentions. One such historian who recently incorporated the United States into

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[4] Michel Foucault, Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller, *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality : with Two Lectures by and an Interview with Michel Foucault*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991.

[5] Mae M. Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2004. Ngai reviews the history of U.S. immigration policy and in her analysis concludes that Mexicans, as well as Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino have historically been deemed impossible subjects. Their labor was desired but they were considered unfit as Americans.

the study of modern empires is Julian Go.[6] Go compared British and United States empires as each subjugated other territories, utilizing military action and economic domination while establishing racialized sociopolitical hierarchies. According to Go, American exceptionalism has historically granted justification for establishing hegemony over foreign people who were not racially white. As such, people of Asian, Pacific Islander, and Latin American blood lines "were racially inferior and so not worthy of self-government."[7]Although Go's work focuses on overseas imperialism, the governmental attitudes and beliefs espoused in his work can be easily applied to theories of internal colonialism within the American empire framework. For example, If Latin Americans are incapable of self-government overseas because of their racial make-up, why would American political leaders believe that Latin Americans are worthy of governing within the United States?

Understanding that Mexicans in the U.S. have historically meant to be positioned as imported laborers, this particular study aims to explore how Mexicans in Fort Worth, Texas struggled to overcome their perceived status as resident "aliens" during the last three decades of the twentieth century by attempting to assert themselves as decision-makers in elected city government. What makes cities like Fort Worth significant is that the United States Mexican population rapidly increased in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, therefore it is incumbent that historians who focus on Chicano history, immigration history, race relations, and studies of modern empire account for the shifting demographic as well as the resulting consequences. Mexicans in Fort Worth, as in much of the U.S., have historically been treated as

[6] Julian Go, *Patterns of Empire: The British and American Empires, 1688 to the Present*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
[7] Ibid., 56.

unassimilated foreigners, regardless of whether or not they were from Mexico, and as such Mexicans were often not expected to vote on their own cognizance, let alone run for elected positions like the Fort Worth City Council or Fort Worth School Board. José Gonzales, who will be discussed at length later in this essay, assessed the situation succinctly in 1971 when he said, "A Democrat advised me a few years ago that when the Democratic Party was ready for a Chicano to run for (office) they would let us know."[8] Mexicans in Fort Worth did not want to wait any longer… they were ready to run.

While many people prefer to use the term "Mexican American" and others like using "Chicano" when referring to Mexican-ethnic people in the U.S., this dissertation will primarily refer to people of Mexican descent as "Mexicans" for a couple of reasons. First, by using the term "Mexican," this essay hopes to enforce the idea that Mexicans in the United States have purposely been kept separate from the privilege of being considered "American" except occasionally when perhaps the Mexican is sufficiently "Americanized."[9] When referencing other texts that study Mexican history in the United States, the term "Chicano" will be used more often since the study of Mexicans in the United States spiked dramatically during the Chicano Movement beginning in the 1960s as Mexicans themselves increasingly wrote about their own communities and condition in the United States. The terms "Mexican American" and "Hispanic" will be used sparingly and almost exclusively when citing sources that use one of those two

[8] Bob Ray Sanders, "Raza Ponders County Race," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, October 14, 1971.
[9] Much more can be written about the "Americanization" process but in the interest of keeping this essay relatively brief I will not approach this subject in depth, but Americanization efforts toward Mexicans have been in place since at least the mid-nineteenth century. Anglicizing one's name is a small part of Americanization. For example, "Juan" may be to referred to as "John," "Pedro" as "Pete," or "Marta" as "Martha."

terms. Furthermore, the terms "Euro-American," "Anglo," and "white" will each be used when referring to people of predominantly non-Spanish European ethnic origins just as the terms "African American" and "black" will be utilized when discussing people who have a noted background with African ancestry.

In order to pursue this study, one must first recognize how other scholars have approached the issue of race in American history and, moreover, in the study of Modern Empire. One of the most intriguing aspects of the U.S. Empire is that its largest colonial settlement is *within* its own geographical boundaries. Whereas traditional empires have a clearly defined and recognizable metropole, in *A Century of Chicano History*, Gilbert G. González and Raúl A. Fernández argued that imperial powers are not always easily identifiable.[10] González and Fernández provide a convincing argument that the United States has used economic imperialism for well over a century to make Mexico the first foreign country under America's imperial umbrella. Utilizing coercion, militaristic threats, and economic influence, the United States began exercising control over Mexico's economy, and consequently Mexico's socio-political structure during the reign of Porfirio Díaz (a time often referred to as the *porfiriato*). As a result of America's economic imperialism, Mexicans, both in Mexico and in the United States, can thus be defined as colonial subjects. Even Mexican elites who have thrived economically since the late nineteenth century play a part in the United States Empire since they assist the United States by agreeing to economic pacts and American investments that fail to financially benefit Mexicans in their own country, but ultimately it is not the Mexican elites

[10] Gilbert G. González and Raúl A. Fernández, *A Century of Chicano History: Empire, Nations, and Migration,* New York: Routledge, 2003.

who control the people. Instead, González and Fernández argue that Mexican elites serve as a tool for the United States Empire in the Empire's efforts at controlling the masses. For well over a hundred years, the U.S. has been relying on an exogenous Mexican population to provide cheap labor on both sides of the border for the benefit of Euro-American elites.[11] This population is then moveable and expendable thus allowing the Empire to manipulate the workforce and provide competition for existing "native" populations, but as colonial subjects, Mexicans were not expected to assume a position of leadership.

In order to maintain a separation between the internal Mexican colony and the Euro-American metropole, liberal-minded Euro-Americans have exercised the idea of racial difference and superiority to ensure that Euro-Americans remain the privileged class.[12] The superiority of "whiteness" provided a basis for nineteenth-century Americans who wanted an explanation for the rapid and successful growth of the United States and allowed white Americans justification for expansion into established Native American and Mexican territories. In her analysis of Michel Foucault's theories, Ann Laura Stoler wrote, "racism is situated squarely at the core of state and societal process of normalization and regularization."[13] By the early twentieth century, the U.S. used statistical analysis and eugenics as tools to "(limit) who had access to property and privilege and who did not."[14] Stoler explained that in the late nineteenth century, religion, language, education, and social characteristics were used by

[11] Lorenzo Veracini, *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview*. Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.
[12] Nell Irvin Painter, *The History of White People*, New York: W.W. Norton, 2010.
[13] Ann Laura Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002, 147-148.
[14] Ibid, 39.

modern imperial powers to determine who might be considered acceptable participants of metropole society but the same could be said of the early twentieth-century United States.[15]

Unfortunately, Modern History scholars tend to focus their attention on traditional European empires and Chicano Historians often fail to incorporate their research into the framework of Modern Empire instead focusing on Chicano cultural, social, and political issues without considering how forces of empire affect Mexican populations regardless of their geographical location. Luckily, much has been written regarding the racialization of Mexicans and other "minority" groups in the United States. In combination with ideas and arguments presented by scholars of Modern Empire, particularly Stoler and Michel Foucault, Chicano History texts can help construct an analysis of Mexican politics in the United States through the lens of Modern Empire.

Turning now to more traditional Chicano studies, there have been a number of publications studying the rise of Chicano politics in Crystal City, Texas during the 1960s when the Mexican majority took control of Crystal City politics in 1963 and again in 1969, an area where an Anglo minority had established control over city politics for generations. John Staples Shockley, Armando Navarro, and Ignacio García each explored the rise of the Chicano movement in an area where Anglos believed that Mexicans were intended to be submissive laborers, subject to the economic needs of the established Anglo establishment, not elected representatives of a community despite the fact Mexicans far outnumbered Anglos in Crystal City and had for a long time.[16] Unlike Crystal City, Fort Worth had a relatively low percentage of

[15]Ibid, 39.

[16] John Staples Shockley, *Chicano Revolt in a Texas Town*, Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1974; Armando Navarro, *The Cristal Experiment: A Chicano Struggle for*

Mexican residents in the 1960s and 1970s, but similar to Crystal City, Fort Worth's Mexican population resulted from labor needs as railroads began bringing Mexicans to Fort Worth as early as the 1880s.[17] One could argue that Mexicans in Fort Worth can be seen as even more of a "foreign" population since Mexico never had a colony as far north as the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area, while Crystal City had large numbers of Mexicans in or near the area for hundreds of years prior to the Chicano revolts of the 1960s and Mexicans constituted a small minority of Fort Worth's population until the late twentieth century.

In *Quixote's Soldiers: A Local History of the Chicano Movement, 1966-1981*, David Montejano focused on the rise of Chicano representation in San Antonio, Texas, reminding the reader that the United States is built on towns and cities and that change starts at the local level.[18] David Montejano astutely revealed how important grass roots efforts are in affecting American society and politics. Moreover, Montejano explained how the Chicano Movement of the 1960s and 1970s that culminated in the election of an ethnically Mexican mayor in San Antonio, Texas evolved from attempts to address neighborhood gang problems decades prior to Henry Cisneros ascendancy to mayor in 1981 after serving on the city council for six years. While Cisneros himself was not necessarily a part of the Chicano Movement, the fact that Mexicans in San Antonio recognized and acted upon the importance of their vote signified a change from the past. In providing one of the key voices in the rise of San Antonio's Chicano

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Community Control, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998; Ignacio M. García, *United We Win: The Rise and Fall of La Raza Unida Party*, Tucson: MASRC, The University of Arizona, 1989.

[17] Carlos Eliseo Cuéllar, *Stories from the Barrio: A History of Mexican Fort Worth*, Fort Worth: TCU Press, 2003.

[18] David Montejano, *Quixote's Soldiers: A Local History of the Chicano Movement, 1966-1981*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010.

Movement as well as Crystal City's, José Angel Gutiérrez identified that gringos "were obstructing Mexican Americans' 'right of self-determination,'" and the rise of Mexican American independence then means escaping the clutches of an Anglo-dominated society.[19] The goals set-forth by members of the Chicano movement in South Texas then were not only to gain power, but also to escape the control of a structure that established a white power base that intended Mexicans to be subservient laborers or colonists. In South Texas, militant Chicanos indicated that they were willing to resort to violence if necessary to gain their freedom from a position of conditioned acquiescence.[20]

In Juan Gómez-Quiñones's book *Chicano Politics: Reality and Promise, 1940-1990*, Gómez-Quiñones provided an excellent survey of Chicano political history over a fifty year period, detailing the trials and triumphs of America's Mexican population. Furthermore, Gómez-Quiñones keenly utilized theoretical and philosophical arguments, stressing the importance of Chicano political history arguing, "Mexican politics is an expression of conscious economic and cultural struggle, a conflict of interests engendered by exploitation and a conflict stemming from the group oppression under which Mexicans live."[21] In surveying Chicano politics, Gómez-Quiñones points out that although Chicanos have a desire to escape oppression through political involvement, various approaches often contradict and combat one another as some Mexican Americans desire equality through assimilation and claims of "whiteness" while

[19] Ibid., 100.
[20] For an alternative explanation and analysis of the rise of Henry Cisneros and Chicano political power in San Antonio, read Rodolfo Rosales, *The Illusion of Inclusion: The Untold Political Story of San Antonio*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 2000.
[21] Juan Gómez Quiñones, *Chicano Politics: Reality and Promise, 1940-1990*, Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1990, 28.

others, like the aforementioned Gutiérrez, seek social and political equality through a recognition of difference.

This argument about whiteness is not dissimilar to struggles encountered by Europeans in the West Indies during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries who sought European privileges based upon arguments of whiteness. Stoler argued, "There was a set of fundamental tensions: between a culture of whiteness that cordoned itself off from the native world and a set of domestic arrangements and class distinctions among Europeans that produced cultural proximities, intimacies, and sympathies that transgressed them."[22] In Fort Worth, as in other Texas cities, the tensions were between Mexicans who claimed their American whiteness over their Mexican brownness and Chicanos who proudly clung to their Mexican "otherness," or what is often referred to in Chicano scholarship as *mexicanidad*. In *Walls and Mirrors: Mexican Americans, Mexican Immigrants, and the Politics of Ethnicity*, David Gutiérrez described the challenges that arose in the 1960 s and 1970s as traditional Mexican community leaders and the younger, more radical Chicano activists attempted to work together, but with varying ideas about how closely they should be connected to their Mexican roots when approaching nationally pertinent issues like immigration.[23]

Not only was there a struggle between the more aggressive "brown" Mexican and the more conservative and often business-minded "white" Mexican, but in Fort Worth, Mexicans also had to compete with African Americans for power and representation. As imported subjects, Mexicans have been forced to compete with African Americans for political power in

[22] Stoler, 153.
[23] David Gutiérrez, *Walls and Mirrors: Mexican Americans, Mexican Immigrants, and the Politics of Ethnicity*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.

the form of political representation and educational power in the form of representation on the school board and in the classroom. Lorenzo Veracini defined these populations in terms as exogenous "Others" who are put in place to compete with one another.[24] Veracini argued that in modern imperial socio-political structures, representatives of the metropole bring in groups of "Others" compete in an effort to maintain power, privilege, and order while the "Others" seek to rid their "Others" status. In other words, within a modern empire, various groups fail to rid their identity to work with other subaltern groups in fear of losing power and the opportunity to gain privilege, but instead imported subaltern groups tend to displace each other. Furthermore, Veracini explained that over time that groups of people who were originally considered exogenous groups become indigenized, but in so doing, these groups displace indigenous populations.

With Veracini in mind, African Americans clearly had to struggle mightily for civil rights including political representation and equal education with noted successes including several victories in landmark court cases over the second half of the twentieth century. This was certainly the case in Fort Worth just as it was in the rest of the South where stubborn white leaders who wanted to uphold the existing power structure often stood as a roadblock to African American progress. While older generations of Mexican civil rights activists often fought for civil rights by claiming their legal whiteness that was afforded Mexicans in the United States upon the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, younger generations beginning in the 1960s (for the most part) used another approach. The newer generation of Chicano movement

[24] Lorenzo Veracini, *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

proponents recognized the inherent difficulties that went along with brown people fighting for rights as white people when language barriers (or *alleged* language barriers) were often used by white-dominated courts to keep Mexicans from using whiteness in their legal battles. These conflicting ideas of social and ethnic identity thus set the stage for a series of battles between races, and in the case of Mexicans, the white-versus-brown fight would also hinder efforts toward progress and power.

Once Mexican leaders recognized the value of using the "brown-not-white" argument, they essentially created a new minority group out of a group that fought against being a minority to enhance their legal status while also claiming civil rights. Thanks to groups like the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF) along with the plaintiffs and lawyers who pursued these legal challenges, court decisions began granting civil rights to Mexicans based upon their brownness in the 1970s. A few of these cases will be discussed in the second chapter.

After Mexicans began actively pursuing rights based upon the color of their skin as well as the origin of their language, some African American leaders took exception. African Americans had fought for rights based upon their position as a minority group for decades and since Mexicans often argued themselves to be white, African Americans were fighting for the rights that Mexicans believed they should have regardless of whether or not African Americans were provided the same justice. Clifford Davis, one of Fort Worth's most prominent African American leaders in the fight for educational equality during the 1960s and 1970s, said the following about this transition within the Mexican community as well as the potential relationship between Mexicans and African Americans in Fort Worth:

> There was not a whole lot of coalition with the Mexican-American community. We, you know, let me be real candid; back in the good old days when the Mexicans had certain privileges that were denied blacks, uh, they made the difference themselves too. After the civil rights movement became successful and we got passage of the Civil Rights Act, the statement in our community was Mexicans said, 'Me minority, me minority, me minority.' And it was only after that point that they began to actually proclaim themselves as a minority.[25]

Clearly, Davis, who was appointed Tarrant County District Judge in 1983, was not supportive of the burgeoning Mexican civil rights movement. In fact, in his view, Mexicans were a historical impediment to progress as he implied that Mexicans who were seeking civil rights using the brown argument in the 1960s and 1970s did not correctly utilize the first person, indicative of someone who could not or would not correctly speak the English language.

At the beginning of the timeframe this research covers, African Americans had little political power and the Fort Worth Independent School District (FWISD) had done little to address the educational needs of African American children. Likewise, Fort Worth's Mexicans did not have much political strength and the FWISD also failed to address the needs of its Mexican students, but there were Mexicans at white schools. Whether or not teachers or the district itself did much to help these students progress educationally in the 1960s is up for debate as many Mexican students were funneled into the Technical High School instead of being encouraged to become doctors, lawyers, engineers, accountants, etc… Many of the prominent Fort Worth Mexicans that discussed later in this work either did not attend college or they attended college after serving in the United States armed forces.

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[25] Clifford L. Davis, interviewed by Todd Moye, Sandra Enríquez, and David Robles, Fort Worth, June 11, 2015. "Black-Brown Coalitions," *Civil Rights in Black & Brown Oral History Project* https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/black-brown-coalitions (Accessed March 19, 2017).

Because Fort Worth's rapidly growing Mexican community began actively seeking improved educational opportunities outside of the technical school, they posed a new challenge for not only Fort Worth's dominant white community, but Mexicans also created a new and different obstacle for African Americans. African Americans not only had to take power away from white Fort Worth, but they also had to compete with another minority group that apparently had a leg in the door so to speak. As will be discussed later, Mexicans lived closer to and sometimes among white populations while African Americans were clearly segregated from Anglos and Mexicans alike. Although this research is focused on Fort Worth's Mexican population, the investigative work will endeavor to keep in mind how African Americans viewed this competition and conversely how, at times, Mexicans stood in the way of African American goals.

In order to provide a comprehensible argument, this work will be split into six chapters plus an conclusion. The primary goal of this research is to position Fort Worth's Mexican community into Chicano historical scholarship and through the body of the work, little attention will be paid to theories of modern empire, but nevertheless there will be some consideration within each chapter. The second chapter looks into the rise of Fort Worth's Mexican population over the last four decades of the twentieth century. Mexican immigration was of great concern to American and Texas policy makers during the 1970s and 1980s so government reports and research projects establish a base for the first chapter. The chapter then moves the focus over to Fort Worth and the Dallas-Fort Worth area as much of the Mexican immigration to Texas moved further into North Texas during the latter half of the twentieth century.

In chapter III, this work brings the attention to Mexican education in Fort Worth beginning in the 1960s. As was mentioned previously, Fort Worth's African American population was much larger than the Mexican population during the mid-twentieth century so the basis for Mexican educational advancements were built upon the efforts of African Americans in the early 1960s. As such, attention is given to the establishment of a court case initiated by African Americans upon which the Mexican community intervened a little over a decade into the case. This intervention was led by a group called the Mexican American Education Advisory Committee (MAEAC) and the face of the organization during the 1970s and 1980s was Rufino Mendoza, Sr. While Fort Worth's Mexican community fought for educational advancements, their efforts often hindered African American efforts toward progress and equality. Nevertheless, Mendoza and MAEAC proceeded without the assistance of the African American community, culminating in the two subaltern groups essentially fighting against one another to gain power within the historically white dominated FWISD power structure.

Subsequently, chapter IV provides a more delineated break between African American and Mexican goals. While African Americans experienced more pronounced success in employee hiring practices and better representation on the school board, Mexicans in Fort Worth saw a rise in spending and an end to aggressive integration efforts that were unwanted by Mexican leadership. Neither African American nor Mexican leadership truly accomplished what they wanted from the FWISD, and a major reason for the failures was because of their conflicting goals. Meanwhile, as the twentieth century drew to an end, Anglo power remained in place despite the fact that Anglos were easily outnumbered by the combination of African American and Mexican populations.

The following three chapters move the attention to political power in Fort Worth, primarily focusing on the Fort Worth city council. Again, chapter V begins in the 1960s after the City of Fort Worth opened election of the mayor to the people of Fort Worth. From 1925 to 1965, Fort Worth's mayor was appointed by the nine city council members who were elected at-large by Fort Worth voters and was himself one of the nine elected members. In 1965, an African American named Edward Guinn unsuccessfully ran for city council only to win a seat two years later despite the fact that council members were elected at-large and African Americans constituted less than 20 percent of Fort Worth's population. Mexicans were legally considered white but no Mexican was ever elected to the white-dominated city council while council members were elected at-large. Furthermore, no Mexican came close to being elected to city council before single-member districts arose in the late 1970s, even when running against African Americans in the early 1970s. Clearly, "legally white" Mexicans did not have the support of the Euro-American white community while a few African Americans received the support from the white business community that no Mexican was able to harness.

During the 1970s, the rise of single-member districts became an important issue to Fort Worth's African Americans and Mexicans alike, especially since African Americans lost representation on the city council following the 1975 election. Chapter V thus culminates with the rise of single-member districts in 1977 which transitions the research to chapter VI when Mexicans were finally successful in garnering political representation on the city council. While chapter V provides information pertaining to an existing power structure within the Mexican community, particularly that of Fort Worth's historically Mexican part of town referred to simply as North Side, chapter VI shows how Mexican representation on the city council came

from a political outsider with practically no record of civic or political activism who was financially backed by wealthy, powerful Anglo supporters. Louis Zapata, the aforementioned political outsider, maintained his seat on the city council for a record fourteen years and was considered to be a viable candidate for mayor in 1991, but his lack of credentials made him a suspicious choice for Mexican representation when he appeared to come out of nowhere to win his seat, beating historically active members of the Mexican community in the 1977 election. As an outsider, Zapata failed to represent the roots of the Mexican empowerment movement that was on the rise leading up to his selection and thus his appointment to represent Fort Worth's Mexicans makes him a dubious choice that hindered pre-existing grass roots while simultaneously establishing a candidate that satisfied the existing Anglo power structure.

Finally, Chapter VII concludes the twentieth century beginning with the rapid rise and fall of both Carlos Puente and an organization called Hispanic 2000. Puente succeeded Zapata in the 1991 election but decided not to run for re-election primarily because of financial reasons, but during his time on the council, one of the most important issues for Fort Worth's Mexicans in the 1990s arose. When the United States Census Bureau released new population data following the 1990 census, Fort Worth's Mexican leadership had fuel for their desire to expand power on the council. The 1990 census revealed that Mexicans comprised about one-fifth of Fort Worth's population yet only one out of eight single-member districts had ever had a Mexican council member and of course no Mexican had ever been elected mayor. Meanwhile, starting with the 1977 election, the African American community had two members sitting on the council each election cycle and this would be the case through the

beginning of the twenty-first century despite the fact that African Americans never held much more than 20 percent of the city and by the end of the twentieth century the African American population dropped slightly below 20 percent.

Because of this noted Mexican population boom, a group called Hispanic 2000 sought to expand Mexican power in Fort Worth in the early 1990s. Despite the stated goal of recruiting and supporting Mexicans for elected positions in government, key members of the organization butted heads leading to a rapid demise with limited success in the time the organization's brief existence during the early 1990s. With the fragmentation of Hispanic 2000's leadership along with a lack of support from the African American community that feared losing power and influence in city governance, Fort Worth's Mexican community lost representation on the city council once again in 1993. This forfeiture of power remained an enduring loss as no Mexican would gain a seat on the city council again until the twenty-first century.

In concluding the research, the final chapter provides an ultimate evaluation of the lack of Mexican representation both in Fort Worth education and in the political realm. Furthermore, the finishing chapter will endeavor to place Fort Worth's Mexican situation within the context of both Chicano history as well as identify some key aspects of the history of modern empire. This investigation will also pose pertinent questions regarding the lack of Mexican representation while African Americans end the century well-represented on the school board, in education jobs, and on the city council. This is not to say that African Americans reached equality in Fort Worth, nor is this meant to be critical of African American leadership, but instead the research proposes that Fort Worth's Mexicans and African Americans have historically been utilized to keep Euro-American power in place while each

group vies for power and recognition within the City of Fort Worth. After all, at the end of the twentieth century six of Fort Worth's nine city council members were Anglo despite the fact that Anglos only comprised 46 percent of the population and no Fort Worth mayor has ever been African American or Mexican.

Moreover, by 2010, Fort Worth's Anglo population dropped to less than 42 percent despite the fact that Fort Worth experienced tremendous population growth between 2000 and 2010. In fact, Fort Worth's population grew by about 37 percent during the first decade of the twenty-first century with Mexicans comprising over 34 percent of the 2010 population and African Americans making up about 19 percent.[26] Fort Worth's Mexican population is on track to surpass the Anglo population in the relatively near future but at what point will Mexican representational power be realized? If Mexicans are truly citizens and part of the metropole, where is their power in Fort Worth society? Furthermore, how do Fort Worth Mexicans define their power? Is it simply by being able to play a role in electing representatives regardless of ethnic background or do Mexicans need to be in positions of power for the community to truly exercise its influence on city governance? Ultimately, this work seeks to address some of these questions as well as discover how a rapidly rising Mexican population in an area that is not historically Mexican failed to establish representational power. In order to attain true citizenship, those who take positions of representational power must be representatives from the community and selected by the community. If the appointed or elected representative is an outsider, designated by the existing power structure that resides apart from the community,

[26] "QuickFacts: Fort Worth city, Texas," United States Department of Commerce, https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045215/4827000 (Accessed March 19, 2017).

that person symbolizes a continuation of the existing power structure and therefore serves as an apparatus that allows unremitting management of the exogenous other.

CHAPTER II

THE RISE OF FORT WORTH'S MEXICAN COMMUNITY

Between the 1960s and the end of the twentieth century, Fort Worth's Chicano population experienced rapid and considerable growth. This growth mirrored Chicano population development in Texas as Mexican populations continued to cross over and move further away from the U.S.-Mexico border. Much of the early growth stemmed in large part to the rise of American-owned maquila factories in northern Mexico that began sprouting up due to the demise of the Bracero program in the mid-1960s. These factories encouraged rapid population growth near the border.[27] As evidence, the number of people living in border cities, both in Mexico and the United States, saw tremendous growth during the 1960s. On the U.S. side this population grew by about twenty-one percent while in Mexico border cities grew from just under 1.5 million in 1960 to over 2.1 million by 1970 – an increase of approximately forty-four percent over a relatively brief ten-year period of time. Maquila factories, or maquiladoras, provide low-wage Mexican labor for American corporations and typically exist in or near border cities, thus allowing for rapid transportation of goods into the United States to be placed in the American marketplace or where the product could be finished by American laborers. Likewise, once Mexican laborers are invited to the border by these economic Sirens, these same laborers are within the proverbial stone's throw from American soil where wages increase dramatically simply by crossing a river or an invisible border. This economic structure set forth in the 1960s by a dominant American economy then helped set the stage for Mexican migration and

[27] For a more detailed account of how this economic transition occurred, read Gilbert G. González and Raúl A. Fernández, *A Century of Chicano History: Empire, Nations, and Migration*, New York: Routledge, 2003.

emigration throughout the remainder of the twentieth century and well into the twenty-first century also.[28]

Mexican Immigration through a National Lens

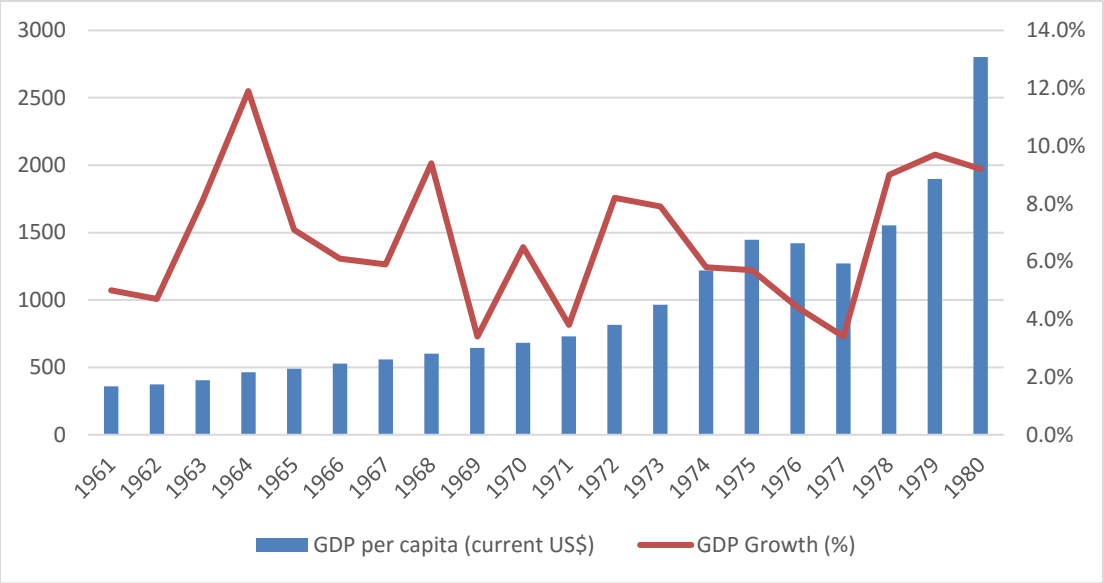
As a result of the Immigration Act of 1965, for the first time in U.S. history a quota was established on the number of Mexicans (or Latin Americans) who were allowed authorized entry into the United States. Between 1966 and 1973, an average of around 50,000 Mexicans were provided authorized entry as immigrants each year but the average number of apprehended and/or deported Mexicans averaged close to 300,000 during that same time-span. In the ten years leading up to 1966, the average number of apprehended/deported Mexicans was slightly over 40,000 per year. Before 1965, the United States attempted to manage Mexican immigration by using the Bracero program to temporarily contract Mexican laborers for months at a time while encouraging Mexicans to return back to Mexico and discouraging permanent settlements in the United States. Without the Bracero program, Mexican migration continued but without the official sponsorship that the U.S. previously provided. In his 1975 assessment of Mexican immigration, University of Texas Economics Professor Vernon M. Briggs, Jr. argued, "Mexicans have been welcomed as workers but not as settlers." Furthermore, Briggs, who would later earn the title of Emeritus Professor of Labor Economics at Cornell University, criticized the United States contending, "The fact that U.S.

[28] Texas, *Annual Report - Good Neighbor Commission of Texas*. [Austin]: Good Neighbor Commission of Texas, 1971; Vernon M. Briggs, *Mexican Migration and the U.S. Labor Market: A Mounting Issue for the Seventies*. [Austin]: Center for the Study of Human Resources, University of Texas at Austin, 1975.

policy in the 1970s is so tolerant of the wave of illegal entrants; so timid in the enforcement of its existing laws which prohibit unlawful entry; and so hesitant to assume a posture of deterrence, can lead to only one conclusion: namely, labor policy continues to dominate settlement considerations." Briggs indicated a belief that Mexico's economic structure also played a major role in Mexican emigration arguing that the Mexican economy disproportionately benefited a small group of elites who were at the top of Mexico's economic structure. Consequently, despite the fact that Mexico's economy experienced steady growth through the 1960s and early 1970s, averaging over a 6 percent annual increase in Gross Domestic Product between 1960 and 1975 (versus an average growth of 4 percent in the U.S. for that same time-span), the common Mexican did not benefit greatly from this growth. Furthermore, while the per capita income in the United States was a little over $5000 in the early 1970s, Mexico's per capita income was only around $700.[29]

[29] Arthur F. Corwin, "The Numbers Game: Estimates of Illegal Aliens in the United States, 1970-1981." Hofstetter, Richard R. *U.S. Immigration Policy*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1984, 26. Briggs, Vernon M., 10-11; 15; "GDP Growth," The World Bank Group, http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG?end=2015&locations=US&start=1961&view=chart (Accessed March 19, 2017).

Figure 1: Mexican GDP Growth - 1961 to 1980



Data obtained from "GDP Growth," The World Bank Group, http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG?end=2015&locations=US&start=1961&view=chart (Accessed March 19, 2017).

Addressing the Mexican Immigrant Population in Texas

With economic factors established, large numbers of Mexicans migrated to the United States during the 1960s and 1970s. As a result, a number of studies were commissioned to examine this rapidly rising population in the 1970s and into the 1980s. Despite the fact that Mexicans tended to work in the fields as migrant laborers, by 1970 Chicano populations had become more urbanized than Euro-American and African American populations thus making Mexicans more visible. Some estimates indicated that out of 6.5 million Mexicans residing in the United States by 1970, approximately 1.6 million were undocumented. Both documented and undocumented Mexican populations continued to escalate through the decade so by the early 1980s, as President Ronald Reagan considered immigration legislation, Republican Governor Bill Clements of Texas established a task force to provide a report of undocumented Mexican workers in Texas. In 1981, the *Governor's Task Force on Undocumented Mexican*

Workers estimated that there were between 600,000 and three million undocumented Mexican workers in Texas. Clearly this was a wide range and provides an indication of how little was actually known about the undocumented Mexican immigrant population. Whether the undocumented Mexican population was closer to 600,000 or 3 million, either number was a significant percentage in state where the total population was approximately 14 million.[30]

In order to help address the dearth of knowledge pertaining to the undocumented Mexican immigrant population, another report entitled *A Study of Undocumented Workers in the State of Texas* accompanied the *Task Force* report, providing more detailed information by interviewing a wide array of Mexican immigrants. These immigrants were placed into five groups: Long Term Residents, New Arrivals, Recent Residents, Migrants, and Commuters. Each of these groups' titles are self-explanatory but the immigrants who were most concerning to the federal government and Texas alike were the Long Term Residents and Recent Residents who were establishing homes for themselves within the United States. In the study's findings, "New Arrivals" tended to be in South Texas and San Antonio while "Recent" and "Long Term Residents" were primarily located in the Houston, Dallas/Fort Worth, and Central Texas regions. In other words, the study leads one to believe that Mexican immigrants (or at least undocumented Mexican immigrants) were likely to establish homes in less traditional Chicano-populated areas. Although San Antonio and South Texas have relatively long histories of providing homes to Chicano populations, according to this 1982 study, Mexican immigrants

[30] Total population statistics obtained from Bureau of the Census, "General Population Characteristics," https://www2.census.gov/prod2/decennial/documents/1980/1980censusofpopu8011u_bw.pdf (Accessed April 16, 2017).

who were intent on making homes for themselves in the United States were doing so in areas that were not traditional heavily-concentrated Chicano areas like Fort Worth.[31] With Mexican populations moving further away from the border, it is incumbent upon historians to account for the new histories that are created with this transition.

Other findings from the *Study of Undocumented Workers* provide further insight as to what this influx of people brought to the United States and who they were. Over half of the immigrants in this study were from the following five Mexican states: Chihuahua, Guanajuato, San Luís Potosí, Tamaulipas, and Nuevo León with Guanajuato providing the most immigrants at approximately 15 percent to 16 percent of all undocumented immigrants surveyed. This study also found that undocumented Mexican immigrants in Texas tended to be young with a median age of twenty-three and poorly educated with only seven percent attaining the equivalency of a ninth grade education or higher. Furthermore, despite the fact that about one-third of those surveyed were married, only seven percent actually had their spouses with them in Texas. Additionally, over half surveyed were paid by check and had social security taxes deducted from their paycheck, so the majority of these laborers were contributing tax dollars to a social security system using social security numbers from which they would never collect the benefits. Very few surveyed received food stamps, welfare, or other federal government assistance while over forty percent sent money back to Mexico, averaging $100 to $400 in monthly remittances.

Undocumented Mexican immigrants who lived in Texas in the early 1980s were portrayed as helping themselves and their families financially while subsidizing America's social

[31] Briggs, 27; Texas. *Governor's Task Force on Undocumented Mexican Workers*. [Austin, Tex.]: The Task Force, 1982; *A Study of Undocumented Workers in the State of Texas, March - July, 1982*. Houston: Tarrance & Associates, 1982.

security system with contributions that they would never collect. Rarely did Mexicans in this study seek financial assistance from the federal government, which is understandable since collecting money from the federal government would likely make oneself a more visible unauthorized resident. Furthermore, remittances sent back to Mexico provide economic benefits to Mexico itself, contributing to the Mexican economy without working in Mexico or for Mexican employers. Finally, for those who planned on making a permanent (or semi-permanent) home in the United States, urban areas further away from the border than San Antonio was a key feature of the desired setting.

While waves of Mexican immigrants were entering Texas in the 1970s and beyond, this was symptomatic of Mexican immigration in general. In 1980, Mexico surpassed all other countries in the number of immigrants to the United States. According to the Pew Research Center, the number of Mexican immigrants residing in the U.S. grew from approximately 760,000 in 1970 to about 2.2 million in 1980. Furthermore, the Mexican immigrant population more than doubled to 4.5 million by 1990 and it dramatically increased to over 9.7 million by 2000 in part because of the establishment of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in the 1990s.[32]

Placing the Mexican Immigrant in Context

Although Fort Worth has not been considered a historically significant setting for Chicano studies, Chicano historians need to pay closer attention to cities like Fort Worth. Unlike

[32] "Mexican Immigrants in the United States, 2008," Pew Research Center, http://www.pewhispanic.org/2009/04/15/mexican-immigrants-in-the-united-states-2008/ (accessed April 16, 2017).

cities like San Antonio, Los Angeles, and American cities along the Mexico-U.S. border, Fort Worth was not an originally a Spanish or Mexican settlement and did not have a significant Mexican population until the late twentieth century. Part of what makes places like Fort Worth important for Chicano historians is that Fort Worth and cities like it represent a broadening field of Chicano history. Almost one-third of Mexicans who live in the United States now reside in states that do not border Mexico with states like Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, and Washington all holding populations in excess of 500,000 people of Mexican descent according to the 2010 United States Census (see Table 1).[33] In fact, the combined 2010 Mexican populations of Colorado, Illinois, and Washington match the Mexican population of Texas in 1980 at around 3 million. By exploring these new regions, a better understanding can be attained when analyzing the effects of United States economic, social, and political policies. Furthermore, moving our research away from the border only makes sense since Mexicans are also moving further away from the border. As Mexicans move further from the border, new communities are formed, histories are created, and conflicts often arise.

[33] Mexican population information gathered from United States Census Bureau, "American Fact Finder," https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=DEC_10_SF1_QTP10&prodType=table (accessed April 16, 2017).

Table 1: 2010 Mexican Population in 5 Non-Mexican Border States Compared to 1980 Texas Mexican Population

State	2010 Mexican Population	2010 Mexican Population Percent
Colorado	757,181	15.1
Florida	629,718	3.3
Georgia	519,502	5.4
Illinois	1,602,403	12.5
Washington	601,768	8.9
Texas (1980)	2,752,487	19.3

Data for table obtained using Mexican population information gathered from United States Census Bureau, "American Fact Finder," https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=DEC_10_SF1_QTP10&prodType=table (accessed April 16, 2017).

Throughout American history, tension often arises when people who are perceived as immigrants create homes in new environments. Examples of such people include but certainly are not limited to Chinese and Irish immigrants in the late nineteenth century and Italian and Filipino immigrants in the early twentieth century. The rise of these immigrants led to landmark immigration reform in the 1910s and 1920s culminating in the National Origins Act of 1924. In the decades following passage of the National Origins Act, immigration to the United States was overwhelmingly white with northern and western European origins. Meanwhile, as Mexican and other Latin American immigrants were not limited in number by the National Origins Act the way Southern European, Eastern European, and the Asiatic Barred Zone were, it became increasingly difficult to become a naturalized citizen despite the relative ease with which Latin Americans could cross the border into the United States. Latin Americans, particularly Mexicans, were desired as temporary laborers that could provide cheap labor for the U.S.

agricultural industry but the open invitation to Mexicans was not an invitation to stay, but rather a solicitation of services.[34]

A few decades later, the Immigration Act of 1965 set a limit on the number of Latin American (including Mexican) legal immigrants at 120,000 per year, however American business leaders, primarily those in agri-business, failed to lose their desire for cheap, disposable Mexican labor. Additionally, the rise of aforementioned maquiladoras near the Mexico-U.S. border ran almost concurrent with this new immigration legislation and subsequent to the demise of the Bracero program that brought millions of Mexicans into the United States between 1942 and 1964, serving as another example of how American businesses desired cheap, accessible, and disposable Mexican labor while United States legislation defined Mexicans and other Latin Americans as a group that should now be limited numerically in contrast to prior immigration legislation.

Therefore, over the past century in the United States, the color of one's skin became an indicator, if not a stereotype, that a person is of foreign lineage. The National Origins Act defined desired immigrants as Northern and Western Europeans using its quota system accordingly while maintaining rigidity in limiting Mexicans' abilities to nationalize, while the Immigration Act of 1965 greatly reduced the number of Mexicans who could immigrate as authorized individuals. Subsequently, having brown skin and Spanish names evoke suspicion

[34] Mae M. Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2004; Martha Menchaca, *Naturalizing Mexican Immigrants: A Texas History*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011.

that one is foreign in nature, regardless of citizenship status. Federal immigration laws over the past century serve as indicators of how the United States views its own desired citizenry.

Fort Worth's Mexican Population

Prior to 1960, Mexicans established communities several decades earlier primarily in Fort Worth's North Side and in South Fort Worth. Fort Worth's historic stock yards and meat packing plants, Swift & Co. and Armour provided jobs to Northsiders in the early-to-mid-twentieth century, serving as a source of income for many of these residents while others often worked as blue collar laborers, tailors, and in the restaurant and hotel industries. In fact, the North Side held almost half of Fort Worth's Mexican population by 1960 and would continue to serve as the primary location for Mexican population growth for the remainder of the twentieth century.[35] Meanwhile Mexican communities on Fort Worth's Southside were drawn to jobs at Texas Steel, a foundry established in 1908 while on the near Southside, Texas & Pacific Railroad provided jobs and economic opportunities for Mexicans who lived just south of downtown.[36] During the 1960s and in the decades that followed, Mexican communities developed far beyond where they had been prior 1960.

First, researching Mexican populations in areas where Mexicans make up a minority can be difficult since the United States Census did not officially start counting Mexicans (or "Hispanics") until the 1980 census. At that time, the term Hispanic was selected by the United

[35] Robert H. Talbert, *Fort Worth Area Census Tract and Market Fact Book*, Fort Worth: Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce, 1972.
[36]Carlos Eliseo Cuéllar, *Stories from the Barrio: A History of Mexican Fort Worth*, Fort Worth: TCU Press, 2003.

States in order to lump together a variety of populations whose origins go back to Latin American countries, but consequently, a number of disparate people with varying backgrounds and different cultures were grouped together based upon a common language that may or not have been spoken by the Hispanic individual. After all, Puerto Ricans, Cubans, Mexicans, and those from South and Central America (among other Latin American territories) have little in common outside of their historical relationship with the Spanish Empire. Fortunately, publications local to Fort Worth provide census data prior to 1980 since business and local governance accounted for this rising population. Of course providing a term when accurately assessing Mexican populations has been difficult for sociologists, political scientists, and historians alike so often times terms that were utilized may not be as exact as we would like. Before the terms "Hispanic" and "Latino/a" became prevalent, it was common for people of Mexican descent to be referred to as Mexicans, Spanish, or perhaps Mexican American given the right circumstance. In Fort Worth, where the vast majority of Latinos are of Mexican descent, one term used to describe the Latinos by the early 1970s was "Spanish-American." For the purposes of this research, the term "Spanish American" when applied to people of Spanish-speaking ancestry in Fort Worth will be used interchangeably with Mexicans (or Mexican Americans) because people of Mexican descent have consistently comprised close to, if not over, ninety percent of "Spanish Americans" in Fort Worth throughout the twentieth century.

With a little over 16,000 residents out of Fort Worth's total approximate population of 356,000, by 1960 Fort Worth's "Spanish-American" population made up close to 5 percent of Fort Worth's total population, (See Figures 2-4). In 1960, African Americans easily outnumbered Mexicans but the Mexican population in Fort Worth grew at a rapid pace for the remainder of

the century as a result of the aforementioned immigration issues while the African American population developed at a steady pace and the white population remained relatively constant. Between 1960 and 2000, the Mexican population grew at an average rate of 78 percent every ten years while the African American population, with the exception of the 1960s, grew at an average pace of about 11 percent every ten years. In the 1960s the African American population grew by close to 40 percent. As was common in the U.S. during the second half of the twentieth century as "white flight" became a solution for a significant portion of white urban residents who fled to the suburbs, between 1960 and 2000 the white population actually saw a loss of almost 40,000 residents.[37] By the end of the twentieth century, the Fort Worth's Mexican population easily outnumbered the African American population and was on pace to soon outnumber white Fort Worth residents as well. In fact, Mexicans comprised about 30 percent of Fort Worth's total population by 2000 while the white population dropped from encompassing almost an 80 percent majority of Fort Worth's population in 1960 to only maintaining a simple plurality of the population, holding about 46 percent of the population at the end of the century.[38]

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[37] For more information pertaining to "white flight," read Kevin M. Kruse, *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005; Christine H. Rossell and Willis D. Hawley, "Policy Alternatives for Minimizing White Flight," *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* Vol. 4, No. 2 (Summer, 1982), 205-222; William H. Frey, "Central City White Flight: racial and Nonracial Causes," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 44, No. 3 (Jun., 1979), 425-448.

[38] Table DP-1. Profile of General Demographic Characteristics: 2000; Table DP-1. Profile of General Demographic Characteristics: 2000; http://www2.census.gov/prod2/decennial/documents/1980a_txAB-03.pdf (accessed March 17, 2017); Talbert, Robert H. *Fort Worth Area Census Tract and Market Fact Book*. Fort Worth: Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce, 1972.

Figure 2: Fort Worth Population by Race - 1960 to 2000

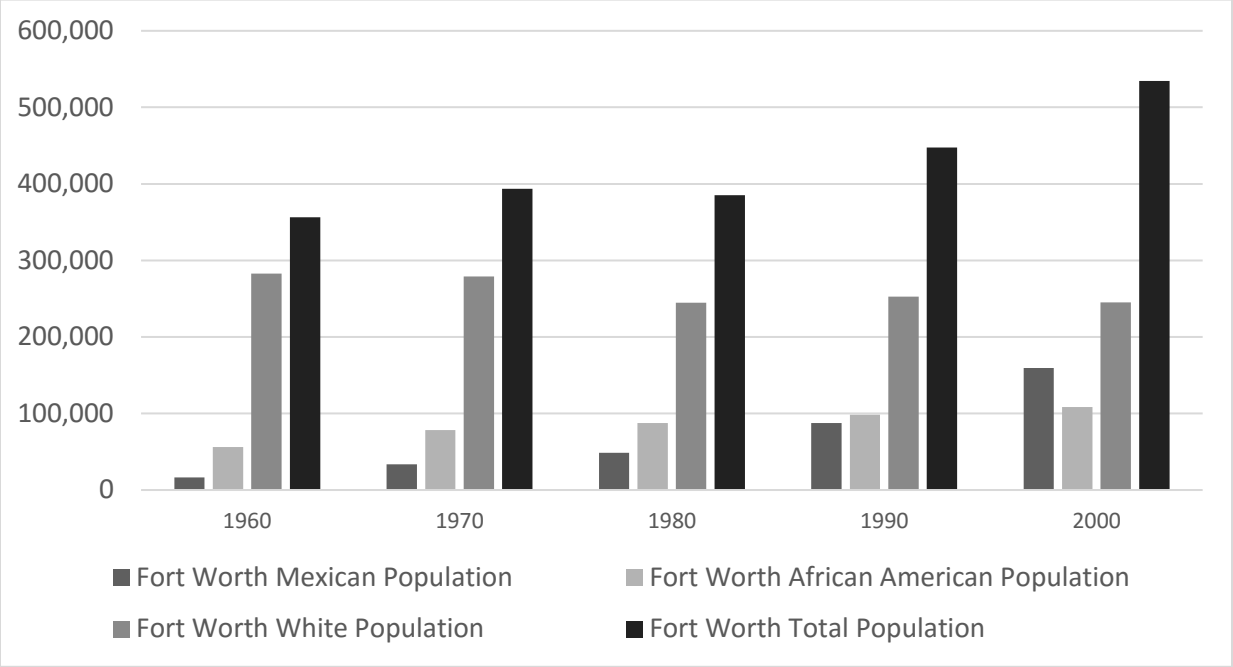


Figure 3: Fort Worth Race Percentage - 1960

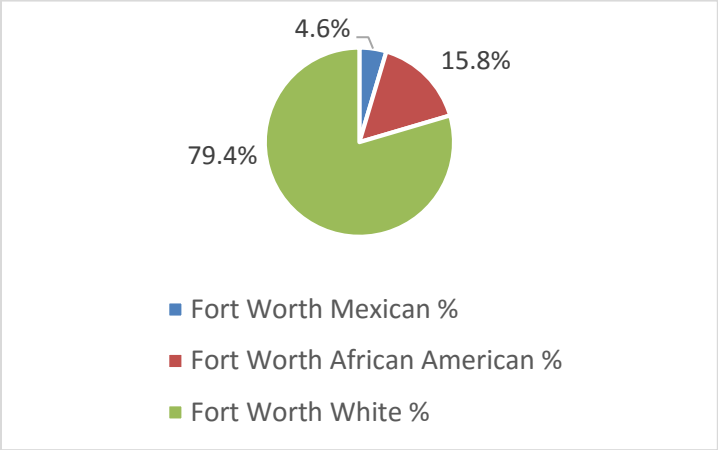
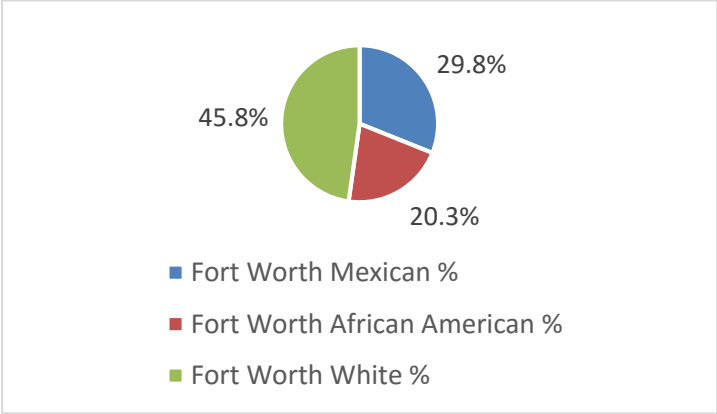


Figure 4: Fort Worth Race Percentage - 2000



As a result of the rapidly increasing Mexican population in Fort Worth, and Dallas alike, city leaders and law enforcement officials began to take notice. In 1971, the *Dallas Morning News* reported several times on the "alien epidemic" and "illegal alien problem" that resulted from the rising "brown tide" of Mexican immigrants in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. In 1971, the National Immigration Service reported that almost 10,000 undocumented Mexican immigrants had been apprehended in the Dallas-Fort Worth area in 1970 with the number of apprehensions continuing to be on the rise through June of 1971.[39] At this time, Jim Collins, a U.S. Representative who represented part of Dallas from 1968 to 1983, argued that the Dallas-Fort Worth area had become a haven for "Mexican 'wetbacks' who drive up unemployment figures and welfare costs."[40] However, the unemployment rate in Fort Worth in 1970 was under 4 percent overall with just over a 6 percent unemployment rate for African Americans and a little over 4 percent for Mexicans.[41] Furthermore, another article published in the *Dallas Morning News* about three years later stated that despite the fact that the Dallas-Fort Worth area was still "the second largest in-land destination for illegal aliens in the nation," (only trailing Los Angeles) the Dallas unemployment rate remained below 3 percent.[42]

Additionally, using census tracts, Mexicans did not appear to be a direct drain on the welfare system in 1970 Fort Worth. Out of approximately 145 census tracts, eight tracts held communities in which at least 25 percent were Mexican (or Spanish American). The tract

[39] "Brown Tide Rising," *Dallas Morning News*, June 22, 1971.
[40] Washington Bureau of the News, "Alien Epidemic Cited by Collins," *Dallas Morning News*, May 14, 1971.
[41] Earl Brown, *Cowtown 1977: A Social Analysis of Fort Worth, Texas*. (Master's Thesis, Texas Wesleyan College, Dept. of Sociology, 1978).
[42] Kingston, Mike, "Any End to the Illegal Alien Problem?" *Dallas Morning News*, June 21, 1974.

numbers for each of these communities were 2.02, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 45.03, and 53. The tract with the highest percentage of households using Public Assistance Welfare out of the aforementioned was tract number ten at 7.4 percent while the average percentage of households on welfare among these eight tracts was about 4.7 percent which was certainly above the 2.9 percent overall average in Fort Worth but well below the highest tracts. Out of the ten tracts that were most dependent on the welfare system, seven were majority African American and the other three were majority white (or Anglo American). These ten tracts ranged from 8.2 percent to 19.8 percent with an average of 10.8 percent. Furthermore, Mexicans only comprised an average of 4.8 percent of the population in these ten tracts while African Americans made up an average of 69 percent and Anglo Americans were around 25 percent. Certainly the claims that Mexican immigrants were contributing to high unemployment rates and significant increases in dependence on the welfare system did not appear to be the case, although it is clear that many African Americans were facing major economic challenges in 1970.[43]

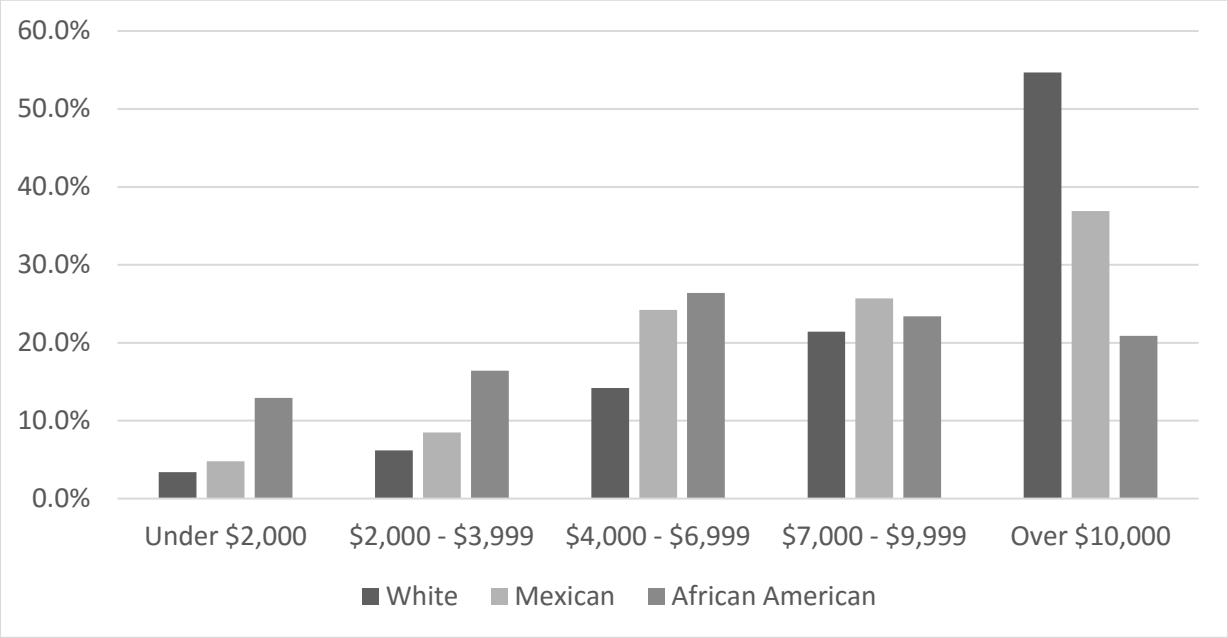
Undoubtedly, Mexicans in Fort Worth by-and-large had economic advantages over African Americans during the 1960s and 1970s even though Mexicans often experienced similar segregation issues before the 1960s.[44] In 1960, the median income in Fort Worth was $5,697,

[43] Talbert, Robert H. *Fort Worth Area Census Tract and Market Fact Book*. Fort Worth: Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce, 1972.
[44] Raúl Durán, interviewed by Moisés Acuña-Gurrola, Fort Worth, January 1, 2014, "Segregation in Fort Worth," *Civil Rights in Black & Brown Oral History Project*, https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/segregation, (Accessed March 19, 2017); Prior to the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) case, there were two separate schools built for Mexican children in the Fort Worth Independent School District.

which was close to the national median income of $5,620.[45] However, the Mexican (or Spanish) population in Fort Worth held a median income of $4,723 with about 12 percent of Mexican households bringing in less than $2,000 per year while Fort Worth's "nonwhite" population, the vast majority of whom were African American, had a median income of $3,038 with almost 30 percent of households making less than $2,000 per year.[46] About a decade later as the '60s came to a close, the national median income rose to a little over $9,400 with the median income for white households in excess of $10,000 versus a little over $6,000 per year for African American households. Similarly, Fort Worth's white population showed significant income advantages over both the Mexican and African American populations (See Figure 5). Over 54 percent of white households held annual incomes above $10,000 while about 37 percent of Mexican households and only 21 percent of African American households made that much money. In contrast, well over half of African American households in Fort Worth received less than $7,000 per year going into the 1970s, a decade in which political African Americans and Mexican Americans would compete for power in the educational and political arenas.

[45] "100 Years of U.S. Consumer Spending," United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, http://www.bls.gov/opub/uscs/1960-61.pdf (Accessed March 19, 2017).
[46] Thomasson, David Larry, "The Changing Economic Structure of the Fort Worth Metropolitan Area as Reflected by Changes in the Workforce," TCU: Department of Economics, 1964, 38.

Figure 5: Median Income by Race in Fort Worth - 1969



The Transition from Exogenous to Citizen?

In order for African Americans and Mexicans to gain economic equality and the rights of true citizenship, it was important to gain positions of power in educational and political spheres of influence. By taking strides toward equality in education, African Americans and Mexicans could create better economic opportunities for their communities by making it more possible to gain financial power through higher education. Furthermore, increasing employment opportunities within the Fort Worth Independent School District also made it possible to provide economic improvements within Mexican and African American communities, especially if those jobs were not previously available. Additionally, political power made it possible to improve economic conditions within African American and Mexican communities as well as improving economic opportunities by making it easier to open employment opportunities in municipal government jobs.

As such, African Americans and Mexicans sought to improve their respective conditions through improvements in educational progress and political representation in the 1960s and 1970s. This is not to say there were no efforts prior to the 1960s, but measurable success was realized in the 1960s with favorable legal efforts toward school integration as well as the rise of African American political representation on the Fort Worth City Council. Not wanting to be left behind, Fort Worth's Mexican leaders recognized the rise of opportunities for educational and political advancement during this civil rights era, especially in light of the Chicano movement of the 1960s and 1970s in which the fight for equality based upon legal whiteness was all but abandoned in favor of a movement based upon equality using protections afforded to minorities under civil rights legislation. Fort Worth's rapidly rising Mexican population saw some early successes in gaining the attention of Fort Worth's Anglo power structure during the 1970s but achievements were often short-lived and nominal.

CHAPTER III

MEXICAN EDUCATION ISSUES – THE FOUNDATION

Ever since the United States Supreme Court declared *de jure* segregation unconstitutional in the landmark case *Brown v. Board of Education*, Americans and American school systems have struggled to sufficiently integrate American schools and have argued repeatedly as to whether or not integration was even needed. For generations African Americans have led minority groups in fighting for equality in education and employment opportunities. Studying America's schools can reveal some of these struggles that minorities have endured in both educational equality and in proper representation within local school districts. As a large part of America's minority population, Mexicans in the United States have labored against prejudice and injustice in education systems across the United States for decades. Between the 1970s and 1990s in Fort Worth, Texas – one of the largest "southern" cities in America – Mexican leaders, parents, and children battled the Fort Worth Independent School District (FWISD) for equality and justice on behalf of Mexican American children and for employment and representation within the ranks of the FWISD.[47] Although Fort Worth's Mexican Americans realized some measurable success in their eventual recognition as a distinct minority group, the FWISD failed to address the Mexican child's need for a relatable role model in everyday life.

[47] "Population of the 100 Largest Urban Places: 1980." United States Bureau of the Census, http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0027/tab21.txt. (Accessed March 19, 2017). According to United States Census figures, Fort Worth was the 33rd largest city in the United States in 1980 but only nine cities from old Confederate states had higher populations.

Placing the Fort Worth Fight in Historical Context

Since the legal system in Texas from the time of the state's inception recognized a dual-race system, black and white, schools were segregated beginning in the 1800s just as they were across the southern United States. Unlike the rest of the old South however, Texas held a considerable number of Mexicans thus throwing a proverbial wrench into the duel-race arrangement. Despite the fact that people of Mexican descent were legally considered white beginning with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, "Mexican" schools sprouted up across Texas in the nineteenth century and expanded during the early twentieth century. The American southwest, from Texas to California, has historically held relatively high numbers of Mexican American residents, yet Mexicans in this part of the country regularly "faced segregation in, or exclusion from… movie theaters, restaurants, and public accommodations" during much of the twentieth century. [48] In providing a historical background for his text on Mexican American court cases, Richard R. Valencia, argued that Mexican students were intentionally segregated from Anglos almost immediately after the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848. According to Valencia, Anglos treated Mexican Americans as "non-peers" so that Anglos could "maintain their system of privilege and domination."[49] Marcos Pizarro, another Mexican American scholar writes, "From the earliest interaction between the United States and Mexico, the Mexican was viewed as inferior on multiple levels:

[48] Richard R. Valencia, *Chicano Students and the Courts: The Mexican American Legal Struggle for Educational Equality*, New York: New York University Press, 2008.
[49] Valencia, 7.

socially, politically, culturally, economically, religiously, and intellectually."[50] Because of segregationist tendencies, Mexican children and their families had a tough fight against unequal education ahead of them.

As far back as the early twentieth century, Mexicans in Texas fought against inadequate educational facilities. Mexican children staged a walk-out from 1910 to 1915 in San Angelo, Texas in protest of their deplorable facilities and substandard education.[51] San Angelo was just one example of many that Valencia lists in describing the poor environment in which Mexican American students were forced to endure if they desired an education. Valencia also notes that in mid-1920s Santa Paula, California, there were nearly 1,000 Mexican students who were taught in a facility that housed only eight classrooms with two bathrooms and one administrative office. Conversely, there were less than 700 Anglo students in Santa Paula who were spread out over twenty-one classrooms with a separate cafeteria, a training shop, and several administrative offices. Valencia also makes note of a school in Weld County, Colorado where Mexican American children were taught in basements that had no windows, bad ventilation, and poor lighting; while Anglo children were educated in more traditional above-ground rooms with much better ventilation and lighting. [52] Mexicans had a difficult time

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[50] Marcos Pizarro, *Chicanas and Chicanos in School: Racial Profiling, Identity Battles, and Empowerment*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005. 15.

[51] Valencia, 10.

[52] Outside of southwestern border-states, according to the United States Bureau of the Census. *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930. Population*, Volume II, Colorado had the highest Mexican American population in the United States by 1930. Colorado was a popular destination for Mexican migrant laborers because of the rich agricultural land in eastern Colorado. Mexicans were especially known for laboring on Colorado's sugar beet farms. For more information about Mexican immigration labor, see Mark Reisler, *By the Sweat of Their Brow: Mexican Immigrant Labor in the United States: 1900-1940*, Westport, CT: Greenwood Press,

accessing equal, or even close to equal, facilities as the aforementioned San Angelo protests did almost nothing to improve their educational conditions.[53] Mexicans in the United States witnessed a great deal of failure over the next several decades.

The Mexican immigration boom in the 1910s and 1920s provided large numbers of Mexican communities over the next few decades. According to the United States Census, between 1910 and 1930 the United States' Mexican-born population rose from 221,915 to 641,462, although one study published in 1930 claimed that there were nearly 1,000,000 Mexican-born immigrants in the United States prior to 1930.[54] In addition the Mexican-born population, the United States Census counted close to an additional 800,000 domestically born Mexicans in the United States by 1930 providing a total of just under 2,000,000 Mexicans and Mexican Americans in the United States by 1930.[55] Growing numbers of Mexican American communities produced greater numbers of segregated schools, particularly in the Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, California, and Colorado, where over 90 percent of ethnically Mexican people resided in the United States.[56] Valencia noted that by 1930 ninety percent of Texas schools were segregated.[57] Census figures show that at least twelve Texas counties had over 10,000

1976 and Dennis Nodín Valdés, *Al Norte: Agricultural Workers in the Great Lakes Region, 1917-1970*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1991.

[53] Information regarding inadequate conditions in San Angelo, Santa Paula, and Weld County was extracted from Valencia, 10-11.

[54] United States Bureau of the Census, "Region and Country or Area of Birth of the Foreign-Born Population, With Geographic Detail Shown in Decennial Census Publications of 1930 or Earlier: 1850 to 1930 and 1960 to 1990." http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0029/tab04.html (accessed April 26, 2009).

[55] United States Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930. Population*, Volume II.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Valencia, 9.

Mexicans by 1930. So by 1930 there were already quite a few Mexican children isolated from their Anglo counterparts. [58]

During the 1920 to 1930 time-period, as Mexican communities grew rapidly, Adolfo Romo, Jr. initiated the first Mexican American desegregation case in Tempe, Arizona. Romo sued the Tempe Elementary School District No. 3 after visiting his children's segregated "Spanish-Mexican" school and discovering that the school was used as a training ground for student teachers who were not yet certified teachers. The courts ruled in favor of the plaintiffs in *Romo v. Laird* (1925) and declared that Mexican American plaintiffs were entitled to similar terms and conditions as the Anglo children. Although the case appeared to be a victory for the Mexican population, instead of desegregating, Tempe's Board of Trustees decided that the schools would remain segregated and the "Spanish-Mexican" school would simply hire certified teachers as the official instructors while the student teachers would remain at the school as observers.[59]

Just a few years after *Romo*, Texas witnessed its first Mexican American desegregation case. In *Independent School District v. Salvatierra* (1930), Jesús Salvatierra and other Mexican American citizens in Del Rio, Texas filed suit against the Corpus Christi Independent School District (CCISD) because the CCISD wanted to use bond money to expand educational facilities to perpetuate segregation rather than allowing Mexican American students to attend Anglo campuses that were already constructed. The plaintiffs, with the aid of a legal team provided by

[58]United States Bureau of the Census. *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930. Population*, Volume II. The 1930 census uses the term "Mexican" to describe anyone of Mexican ethnicity regardless if they were born in the United States.
[59] Information regarding *Romo v. Laird* (1925) was obtained from Valencia, 13-15.

the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), argued that Mexican American children could not legally be segregated since the State of Texas considered Mexican Americans to be "other white," hence the CCISD could not segregate their children based on color. While the plaintiffs won in District Court, the CCISD appealed to the Court of Civil Appeals of Texas where Judge J. Smith overturned the District Court's ruling. Smith accepted the CCISD's argument that Mexican American children could be segregated on the basis that Mexican children's education was "retarded" by virtue of their migratory lifestyle. Furthermore, Smith felt that due to the fact that many Mexican American children spoke Spanish as their primary language, they should not be educated with Anglo children. For approximately the next forty years Mexican Americans argued desegregation cases based upon the fact that they were not considered "colored" by their various home states or by the United States of America, but this argument achieved limited success.[60]

By the late 1920s, Houston, Texas had several "Mexican" schools to instruct the children in the over 14,000 "Mexican" resident population.[61] Historian Guadalupe San Miguel conducted an extensive study of Houston's Mexican American educational integration movement that resulted in a book published in 2001 entitled *Brown, Not White: School Integration and the Chicano Movement in Houston*. San Miguel wrote about Houston's Mexican schools, "Despite their location in the barrios, the schools were alien to the community and did not serve its specific needs. School Board members were non-Mexican, did not speak Spanish, and were

[60] Information regarding *Independent School District v. Salvatierra* (1930) was obtained from Valencia, 15-19.
[61] United States Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930. Population*, Volume II.

indifferent or, at times hostile to these children."[62] San Miguel also wrote, "Most educators viewed Mexican children as racially or culturally inferior."[63] Houston schools remained segregated and Mexican American students suffered from a lack of attention to their needs. During the late 1960s, things appeared to be changing.

Like many areas around the country, Houston's Mexican Americans, inspired by *Brown v. Board* and the Civil Rights Act of 1964, altered the way they approached educational improvements. Marcos Pizarro, Professor of Mexican American Studies, argued, "During the late 1960s and early 1970s the Chicana/o community… went through a significant transformation with regard to social identity."[64] Pizarro claimed that Mexicans, or Chicanos, developed more of an identity which contributed to eminent cases in the 1970s in which Mexican Americans departed from their former "other white" arguments and instead sought minority rights. The NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund initially filed the desegregation case *Ross v. Eckels* (1970) in 1956, but in 1970 Houston Mexican Americans joined in the suit. The Houston Independent School District (HISD) planned to integrate HISD schools by grouping African American and Mexican American schools together. Since Mexican Americans were legally considered white, the HISD utilized Mexican American communities to protect predominantly Anglo communities from integration. Mexican Americans won a small victory when, in 1972, "the school board voted to recognize Mexican Americans as an ethnic minority, but only for student transfer purposes."[65] In other words, the district refused to recognize

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[62] Guadalupe San Miguel, *Brown, Not White: School Integration and the Chicano Movement in Houston,* College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 2001, 19.
[63] Ibid., 19.
[64] Pizarro, 7.
[65] San Miguel, 185.

Mexican Americans as minorities if it meant a change in hiring practices or educational curriculum, but if a Mexican American child wanted to attend an Anglo school he or she could apply for a transfer. According to San Miguel, the Mexican American community as a whole accepted this concession and did not unify to press for any further change. Several in Houston's Mexican American leadership were disappointed in the overall outcome.

In response to Houston's educational problems some Mexican American leaders felt the Mexican American community should have pressed for much more. Ben Canales, an official with the United Organization Information Center believed "the district should hire Mexican American principals, counselors, and teachers in those schools with large numbers of Mexican American students."[66] Houston's first Mexican American board member, David López, and Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF) lawyer Abraham Ramírez "believed that the court should end the school pairing and require increased hiring of Mexican American teachers, who comprised only 3 percent of the district's instructional staff."[67] Considering the fact that around 15 percent of HISD's student population had Spanish surnames, the Mexican American community was poorly represented in educational leadership. MALDEF continued to fight for minority recognition until 1981, but to no avail, when the local district court finally declared HISD to be a unitary district, twenty-seven years after the NAACP initially filed *Ross*.

Two other cases of note preceded the problems Mexican Americans confronted in the FWISD in the 1970s. The first case is *Cisneros v. Corpus Christi Independent School District*

[66] Ibid., 61.
[67] Ibid., 185.

(1970). José Cisneros, along with several other Mexican American fathers in the Corpus Christi Independent School District (CCISD) filed suit against the CCISD claiming that the school district was in violation of the 14th Amendment and Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. The CCISD had a practically even number of Mexican American and Anglo students (47.2 percent to 47.4 percent) but out of the five high schools in the CCISD, two were about 20.7 percent Anglo and 3.6 percent Anglo while the other three schools ranged from 76.1 percent to 90.5 percent Anglo. The plaintiffs won the case but the CCISD did little to adhere to the court's decision. Although in practice the decision may not have been significant, Judge Woodrow Seals' declaration that the "Mexican American students are an identifiable, ethnic-minority class to bring them under the protection of *Brown*"[68] was certainly a momentous declaration.

In *Cisneros*, the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas concluded that Corpus Christi's Mexican American students were an "identifiable, ethnic minority" around the same time that Houston's local court refused to recognize Mexican Americans as a separate minority. Just a few years later the highest court in the country recognized Mexican Americans as a minority group. The case *Keyes v. School District No. 1 of Denver, Colorado* (1973) originated as an African American desegregation case in 1969, but the District Court and United States Supreme Court deemed that Mexican Americans – called Hispanos in *Keyes* – were also victims of deliberate segregation. Justice William J. Brennan wrote in the opinion of *Keyes* "that Hispanos constitute an identifiable class for purposes of the Fourteenth Amendment."[69] As Valencia wrote, "The issue of whether Mexican American students are an identifiable minority

[68] Valencia, 62.
[69] *Keyes v. School District No. 1 of Denver, Colorado*, 413 U.S. at 197 (1973)

class sufficient to bring them under the protection of *Brown* had been finally settled – and by the nation's highest court."[70] Only a few years later, the FWISD confronted rising pressure from Mexican Americans who wanted better education and representation in the FWISD.

The Fort Worth Case: The Historical Backdrop

For Mexicans who created homes for themselves in Fort Worth during the early part of the twentieth century, education would be needed for their children. Although there were several reports written regarding Fort Worth schools during the 1920s and 1930s, the Mexican population was largely ignored by these publications. This is telling considering the fact that the United States census tells us that Fort Worth's Mexican families tended to be relatively large with a median family size of 4.63 in 1930. In fact, over 60 percent of Fort Worth's Mexican families had at least four people in the household and there were well over 1200 Mexican children under the age of ten in 1930 compared to just over 3300 African Americans under the age of ten. Yet, while the elementary school enrollment for African American students was around 4,000, there were only 662 Mexican children enrolled in Fort Worth elementary schools and a miniscule 21 Mexican students enrolled in junior high and senior high schools.[71] If the numbers would have been remotely proportional then one would expect to see at least twice as many Mexican students enrolled than what was reported.

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[70] Valencia, 67.

[71] United States Census Bureau, "Special report on foreign-born white families by country of birth of head with an appendix giving statistics for Mexican, Indian, Chinese, and Japanese families," Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1933, http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/decennial/1930.html (Accessed April 22, 2012).

Furthermore, out of the 662 Mexicans enrolled in elementary schools, thirty-six were between the ages of thirteen and eighteen. In fact, according to a publication commonly referred to as *The Strayer Report*, during the 1930-1931 school-year, the Fort Worth Independent School District (FWISD) assigned at least one eighteen year-old Mexican to low second grade and another to high third grade while low first grade included a fourteen year-old Mexican adolescent. While nearly 40 percent of Fort Worth's African American and Euro-American students were teenagers, fewer than 10 percent of Fort Worth's Mexican students were teenagers. *The Strayer Report* included a breakdown of the Mexican population at three Fort Worth elementary schools that account for approximately one-third of the Mexican elementary school population and the breakdown shows us that out of the 231 Mexican students enrolled at these three elementary schools, almost 73 percent were between kindergarten and second grade while the other 27 percent of Mexican students were enrolled in third through sixth grade indicating a significant drop-off for Mexican students after second grade.

Meanwhile George D. Strayer stressed the importance of giving Mexican students a solid two years of education so they could sufficiently learn English before they were old enough "to be of great economic value to his family."[72] Another report provides evidence of how people in Fort Worth viewed this era when the author wrote, "If the child is worth educating, one of the greatest problems is to find where he can make the most of himself."[73] In

[72] George D. Strayer and N.L. Engelhardt, *Report of the Survey of the Schools of Fort Worth, Texas*, New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1931.
[73] Marguerite A. Utley, "Administrative Problems of the Fort Worth Public Schools," (Master's thesis, Texas Christian University, 1926), 33.

other words, not all children were worthy of a good education and a second grade education was the primary goal established for Fort Worth Mexicans.

In another report published for the FWISD in 1930, it is clear that not all students were viewed similarly. The two primary goals established by the FWISD were as follows:

1. To furnish training in basic and fundamental subjects which is necessary for practically everyone
2. To unify or integrate by means of the common fundamental training the masses of the people so that they can live and work together in peace and prosperity.[74]

In order to mold students into good citizens, the school district aimed at socially developing the individual and training students in establishing social customs while encouraging homogeneous grouping for class work.[75] This homogeneous atmosphere was conducive to the idea of educating two races since schools were primarily constructed for either black students or white students, however Mexicans did not fit into this two-race paradigm.

In order to address some of the Mexican population, prior to 1931 there was only one school maintained specifically for Mexican students and that school was simply called "the Mexican school." Built as an annex to Peter Smith Elementary within blocks of Fort Worth's downtown area during the 1926-1927 school-year, the Mexican school was used to educate first and second-grade Mexican children with the intention of integrating older Mexican children into Peter Smith Elementary if Mexican children passed the second grade. The original Mexican school was a two-room, temporary wooden structure valued at about $1,700 in 1929 which was comparable to the cost of the pathetic school buildings constructed for black Fort

[74] Fort Worth Independent School District, *Report of the Public Schools of the Fort Worth Independent School District – 1930*, Fort Worth: FWISD, 1930, 5.
[75] Ibid., 7-11.

Worth children. In contrast, even the smallest white school in Fort Worth was valued at about $7,000 in 1929 with many of the white schools valued at close to $20,000.[76]

When Strayer studied the Fort Worth schools, he recommended moving the students out of the Mexican school and incorporating them into the vacant rooms at Peter Smith Elementary. Peter Smith was a brick building with twenty classrooms that housed an under-populated K-6 school. The school was under-populated because the average daily attendance dropped from 621 in the 1925-1926 school-year to 443 in the 1930-1931 school-year. Another recommendation Strayer made in his report was to build another elementary school in the southern section of Fort Worth to address the growing population in that part of town.

In response to these suggestions, the FWISD instead closed the Mexican school around 1931 and almost simultaneously built Katy Lake Elementary School on the south side of Fort Worth near South Fort Worth Elementary School. Katy Lake was the new Mexican School and was used to instruct Mexican students from grades one to three. For a little over twenty-five years, Katy Lake Elementary was used to educate a segment of the Mexican population in South Fort Worth. The FWISD had to fight off accusations that the school was meant to segregate Mexican students from the white community with a spokesperson claiming, "Pupils of Anglo-American descent living in that area are at liberty to attend the school if they so desire." Additionally, the spokesperson also contended that "Latin Americans" who did not want to attend Katy Lake could apply to go elsewhere, although there was no guarantee that the application would be approved.[77] Ultimately, Katy Lake Elementary closed its doors in June of

[76] Ibid. Values are for buildings and equipment and do not include land value.
[77] "Segregation not Intended at Katy Lake Elementary," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, July 29, 1948.

1954, just a few weeks after *Brown v. Board of Education* was decided. Consequently, the FWISD sold the property on which Katy Lake Elementary stood and Katy Lake's students were moved to Worth Heights Elementary, a school that would soon hold a high number of Mexican students in Fort Worth's South Side.[78]

The FWISD's Response to *Brown*

Like many southern cities, Fort Worth was slow to respond to school integration. Through the twentieth century, Fort Worth evolved into a highly segregated city with a Racial Residential Segregation Index value over "94" by 1960.[79] The Segregation Index measures what percent of either white or black people would have to move in order to achieve an even distribution of the two races. In an evenly distributed population center, the index would be "0," while in an area where no African Americans lived in communities with Euro-Americans (or vice-versa) the index would be a "100." Fort Worth was almost entirely segregated in 1960 thus *de facto* segregation was practically inevitable in the years following *Brown v. Board*. Five years after the *Brown v. Board* decision, African American community leaders began mounting an aggressive campaign in Fort Worth to integrate schools against the desires of much of Fort Worth's white establishment although one of the key members of this struggle was new to Fort Worth.

In September of 1959, an African American man named Weirleis Flax, Sr. attempted to enroll his daughter, Arlene, in Burton Hill Elementary School but was told he could not. Flax was

[78] "PTA Honors Teachers at Katy Lake School," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, June 1, 1954.
[79] Williams, Joyce E. *Black Community Control: A Study of Transition in a Texas Ghetto*. New York: Praeger, 1973.

a Sergeant who resided at Carswell Air Force Base (now the Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base) and had recently relocated to Fort Worth from Wichita Falls, Texas. Instead of allowing his daughter to attend Burton Hill, which was only about two to three miles from his military housing unit, the principal informed Flax that he would need to enroll Arlene at Como Elementary School which was about twice as far as Burton Hill from Flax's residence. Since the United States armed forces were desegregated a decade earlier, Flax was not willing to allow his daughter to be segregated from the other children in her community. Along with local civil rights activist, Herbert Teal, Flax filed a class action lawsuit against the FWISD in order to fight against segregationist policies.[80] The court case is referred to as *Arlene Flax, et al. vs. W.S. Potts, et.al*. The FWISD sought to have the case dismissed arguing the following:

> For more than 78 years Fort Worth public schools have been operated under a dual system for white and colored. This pattern of procedure has become a fundamental part of the educational process in Fort Worth, and by experience, training and habit it is a part of the culture of all the citizens, both white and colored.[81]

In its appeal to dismiss the Flax suit, the FWISD not only confirmed a rigid belief that the existing culture of a segregated school system was the most effective and acceptable form of education, but it also reinforced the notion that Fort Worth saw its citizens as black and white without mention of any other colors. Without a doubt, the FWISD, as was the norm for southern U.S. cities, had historically been much more focused and spent far more money on educating white children over black children, each of which were considered "citizens," while those who did not fit into the binary establishment would have to claim their rights as non-

[80] Tina Nicole Cannon, *Cowtown and the Color Line: Desegregating Fort Worth's Public Schools*. (PhD diss., Texas Christian University, 2009).
[81] "Need for State High Court Ruling is Cited," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, November, 19, 1959.

citizens or assert their own citizenship without fitting into the black-white paradigm. Furthermore, this plays into both Stoler's approach to the construction of racialization in maintaining Euro-American hegemony and power in Fort Worth while also keeps the Fort Worth situation in line with Veracini's discussion of exogenous and indigenous others. As more exogenous Mexicans entered Fort Worth in the coming decades, as a non-white and non-black population, Mexicans would be pitted against African Americans in the coming decades as each group sought privileges and benefits associated with citizenship and representation.

After a two-year court struggle, Judge Leo Brewster ordered the FWISD to desegregate its schools with a desegregation plan due in December of 1961. Another two years later the FWISD began a "stair-step plan" that in its first year started by integrating first graders in its first year, followed by integrating second graders the following year. It was not until 1968 that FWISD black and white high schools were integrated.[82] A major part of this stair-step plan involved busing children from white schools to black schools and black children to white schools since communities were so heavily segregated. In order to appease African American families in Fort Worth, the FWISD proposed significant expenditures in educational facilities but representatives from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the Southern Christian Leadership Council (SCLC) opposed construction of these new facilities in the historically black Morningside and Stop Six communities. The NAACP and SCLC were concerned that these appeasement methods would weaken the struggle for equality and

[82] Cannon, 124; Williams, 149-150; "*Flax v. Potts* Timeline," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, February 20, 1988.

integration and used the proposed spending increase as a rallying cry for African American activists in Fort Worth.[83]

In 1971, African American community leaders were still dissatisfied with the FWISD's efforts toward integration. In a June school-board meeting, black leaders provided a list of demands including their desire for single-member district school-board elections, improved education for black students, and they wanted FWISD superintendent, Julius Truelson, to step down from his position.[84] The following day Truelson expressed his fear that if he and the FWISD did not take more aggressive steps toward appeasing the African American community, the Texas Education Desegregation Technical Assistance Center (TEDTAC) would become an active participant in the FWISD desegregation plan, thus reducing the FWISD's ability to create their own plan. After all, TEDTAC had recently interceded in Dallas Independent School District's (DISD) desegregation plan and took an active role in the DISD desegregation case. Truelson, however, expressed hope that if the FWISD increased busing as an integral part of the integration effort that busing would not exceed two miles or fifteen minutes.[85] The following year, a new busing plan was established in the FWISD that would ultimately make many Fort Worth families unhappy.

The Mexican Response

Under the new busing plan, ninety-nine out of the 118 FWISD schools were included. During that first school year under the new plan, over 10,000 African American students and

[83] *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, December 3, 1964.
[84] "Blacks Rail at School Board," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, June 29, 1971.
[85] "School System Eyeing New Integration Plan," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, June 30, 1971.

around 22,000 “white” students were bused in a school district that held approximately 78,000 students. The new busing plan called for white students in the designated busing schools to travel out of their area one year in elementary school, one year in middle school, and one period for two semesters in high school. Meanwhile, African American students were to travel out of their area for four years in elementary school, two years in middle school, and one period for two semesters in high school.[86] Moreover, the vast majority of bused children had to travel over fifteen minutes to get to the new schools and all of them had to travel over two miles. In the 1972 busing plan, the Fort Worth population was seen as black and white with no mention of brown. Clearly the new plan did not recognize Mexicans as a distinct group but instead Mexican students would be considered white for busing purposes, however, by the early 1970s Fort Worth’s Mexican community had organized in response to the obvious lack of attention to their needs and desires under this black-white paradigm.

By the time Mexican Americans intervened in *Flax v. Potts*, U.S District Court Judge Woodrow Seals had already declared that Mexican American students in Corpus Christi were an identifiable minority that could be brought under the protection of *Brown*. Less than two years later the Supreme Court stated that Mexican Americans could be placed under Fourteenth Amendment protection. In December of 1971, Mexican Americans under the leadership of the Mexican-American Education Advisory Committee (MAEAC) intervened in what was by this time a twelve-year old desegregation case. Fort Worth’s Mexicans alleged “denial of equal educational opportunities and discrimination in violation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the

[86] “Schools Bare Busing Plan,” *Fort Worth Press*, December 12, 1972; Department of Planning Services, “Fort Student Populations and Related Statistics,” Fort Worth Public School, Billy W. Sills Center for Archives, Fort Worth Independent School District, Fort Worth, Texas.

14th Amendment to the United States Constitution."[87] Fort Worth's rapidly growing Mexican population wanted a better life and future for their children and leaders within the Mexican community rose up to take on that challenge.

In the fall of 1972, Truelson, requested that the Department of Research and Evaluation "begin collecting data relative to Mexican American students."[88] This research was conducted in response to problem areas that were pointed out by seven community members who were actively involved in "local Mexican American affairs."[89] Rufino Mendoza, Mary Lou López, and Eddie Herrera, all of whom were early members of MAEAC, initially met at All Saints Catholic Church in May of 1971 to discuss strategies in their efforts to fight for the rights of Mexicans, especially Mexican children, in North Fort Worth.[90] Their persistence, along with other members of MAEAC, contributed heavily to the ongoing educational rights struggles for Fort Worth's Mexican community in the subsequent decades. In fact, after Rufino Mendoza passed away in the early 1990s, his son, Rufino Mendoza, Jr. continued to keep MAEAC active into the twenty-first century.

In addition to community activists, James Lehman, Coordinator of FWISD's Career Opportunities Program, and Dr. Paul Geisel, Professor and founder of the Institute of Urban Studies (now the School of Urban and Public Affairs) at the University of Texas at Arlington,

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[87] *Flax v. Potts*, 915 F.2d 155, 157 (5th Cir. 1990).
[88]Fort Worth Independent School District and Charles Lee Evans, *Mexican American Education Study* (Fort Worth, TX: Fort Worth Independent School District, Department of Research and Evaluation, 1974), 1.
[89] Ibid., 1.
[90] Carlos E. Cuéllar, *Stories from the Barrio: A History of Mexican Fort Worth*. Fort Worth: TCU Press, 2003.

provided data and guidance for the investigating committee.[91] Part of the reason for this study was to compare Mexicans in Fort Worth schools with schools in other parts of the American Southwest. During the 1972-73 school year, about one in five Mexican-American students in Texas and one out of ten in the Southwest attended schools that were at least 95 percent Mexican American. This condition did not exist in Fort Worth as no school in the FWISD had a percentage that high. In fact, only two elementary schools out of seventy-eight held Mexican populations in excess of 80 percent during the 1972-73 school year and only five other elementary schools held population in excess of 50 percent. None of FWISD's eighteen middle schools or eleven high schools had as much as 50 percent in the 1972-73 school year although three middle schools and three high schools held Mexican populations that exceeded 25 percent of their respective schools. Of course, since the Mexican population was growing at close to an 80 percent rate every ten years while the Euro-American population remained relatively static, these numbers were bound to increase dramatically over the subsequent decades.

By 1973, approximately 13.2 percent of FWISD's elementary school student population was Mexican, while Mexicans comprised 9.6 percent of middle school students and 7.3 percent of the high school population (See Table 1). Naturally the higher percentage of younger Mexican American children could be used as an indicator that in a few years, Mexican percentages would likely increase in middle school and high school grades in addition to the Fort Worth's rapidly growing Mexican population. This would especially be the case if the

[91] "Paul Geisel," *UTA Magazine*, University of Texas at Arlington, http://www.uta.edu/publications/utamagazine/winter_2005/storiesbe12.html (Accessed March 19, 2017).

district addressed Mexican needs and did a good job of keeping kids from dropping out at an early age. Additionally, with a relatively static Euro-American population and a more slowly growing African American population, it would be easy to see the percentages skyrocket over the next few decades, particularly since by the mid-1970s suburban areas would begin to see substantial growth east and northeast of Fort Worth. Existing factors that substantiate the growth of suburban areas were the 1973 establishment of Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport in Grapevine, Texas and the rising prominence of Arlington, Texas following the 1972 relocation of Major League Baseball's Washington Senators to Arlington in 1972.

While the white population remained relatively consistent through the latter half of the twentieth century in Fort Worth, it boomed in eastern and northeastern Tarrant County during that same time-frame. Between 1970 and 1990, despite the fact that Fort Worth's overall population only increased by about 14 percent, Tarrant County's population grew by about 63 percent with a population of 716,317 in 1970 and increasing to 1,170,103 by 1990. Meanwhile, as Fort Worth's Mexican (or Hispanic) population made up about 20 percent of Fort Worth's total population in 1990, the rest of Tarrant County held only about a 7 percent Hispanic population. Moreover, Tarrant County, excluding Fort Worth, only held about a 5 to 6 percent African American population in 1990 while the white population made up about 84 percent of the total population outside of Fort Worth in Tarrant County. Fort Worth was clearly transitioning into a city that would be a "minority-majority" city as the late twentieth century progressed.[92]

[92] "Texas: Population of Counties by Decennial Census: 1900 to 1990," United States Bureau of the Census, https://www.census.gov/population/cencounts/tx190090.txt (Accessed March 19, 2017).

Table 2. Enrollment of Mexican-American Students by Instructional Level in 1973

	Total Students	Mexican-American Students	Percent Mexican American	Percent Mexican American in the Southwest
Elementary School	37401	4943	13.2 percent	18.6 percent
Middle School	19658	1895	9.6 percent	16.0 percent
High School	24312	1778	7.3 percent	14.8 percent
Total	81371	8616	10.6 percent	17.2 percent

Information for this table gathered from Fort Worth Independent School District and Charles Lee Evans, *Mexican American Education Study* (Fort Worth, TX: Fort Worth Independent School District, Department of Research and Evaluation, 1974).

When compared to the rest of the American Southwest, the percentage of Fort Worth's Mexican population versus the total number of residents was below average. This is indicative of the fact that Fort Worth's burgeoning Mexican population was a result of migration that built upon a relatively small Mexican population that existed in the mid-twentieth century. As such, Fort Worth presents an interesting case-study since the Mexican population continues to grow and expand across the country. Accordingly, when Fort Worth's population is considered, it must be examined as a consequence of a migratory people as opposed to traditional schools of thought that tend to see Mexicans in the United States as an internal colony, conquered and perhaps even subjugated by Euro-Americans. Instead, historians should recognize that North American Native Americans should be seen as indigenous populations who were conquered and displaced by Euro-Americans who brought with them African American slaves. Once slaves were granted freedom in the 1860s with passage of the 13th Amendment to the United States Constitution, they began in earnest attempts to gain equality and citizenship with a fleeting rise

of representational power during the Reconstruction era of the late 1860s and into the 1870s. Following Reconstruction, African American leaders sought equality and citizenship through representational elected officials but as Mexican populations were introduced, the struggle became more nuanced, particularly in the Southwestern United States.

As part of this American Southwest, Fort Worth's Mexican population serves as an example of one that developed over time in an area that was predominantly white from the beginning of colonial settlement. Moreover, the white population in the mid-1800s brought with them African Americans so Fort Worth's primary inhabitants during the first century in existence were white and black with a small minority of Mexicans in the mix. Mexicans could thus be seen as an exogenous population in Fort Worth by both the Euro-American majority and African American minority populations that had already staked claim to Fort Worth's geographical and socio-political space. Thus, Fort Worth presents itself as a newer area of study for Chicano historians since Fort Worth's Mexicans often are not fighting to maintain power where once they were dominant but instead Mexicans migrate to Fort Worth as part of an economic structure that pushes Mexicans further into the United States and in these new environments, exogenous Mexicans must compete with existing minority populations for power and to claim cultural and political rights including citizenship. These claims inherently weaken the power structure of both white and black populations.

When evaluating FWISD's student population, it is noteworthy how polarized Mexican children were in 1973 despite the fact that none of FWISD's schools held a 95 percent Mexican majority. The FWISD had seventy-eight elementary schools in 1973 with a grand total of 4,943 Mexican American elementary students. Out of those 4,943 Mexican American children, 2,570

attended one of seven elementary schools. In other words, almost 52 percent of FWISD's Mexican American children attended fewer than 9 percent of FWISD's elementary schools. Conversely, twenty of FWISD's elementary schools had fewer than ten Mexican American students per school with a grand total of sixty-six Mexican American students in those twenty schools. These twenty schools, which all together held over 30 percent of FWISD's total elementary school population (11,287 out of 37,401), only contained 1.3 percent of the Mexican American elementary school population.[93] Clearly, Mexican children were separated from Anglo children at an early age.

Additionally, without busing, Mexican children were also segregated from African American children. As evidence, the three largest African American majority elementary schools during the 1972-73 school year were Morningside, A.M. Pate, and Carroll Peak. The combined student population for those three schools was 3,547 but there were only five Mexicans altogether in those three schools, far less than 1 percent of the school population. The reason for this developed over the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as restrictive housing covenants created parts of Fort Worth that were predominantly African American while Mexicans moved to specific areas in hopes of finding employment as was discussed earlier. These places of employment were not particularly close to African American communities so the Mexican migration to Fort Worth over the twentieth century led them to communities that were separate from African American communities, although restrictive housing covenants and

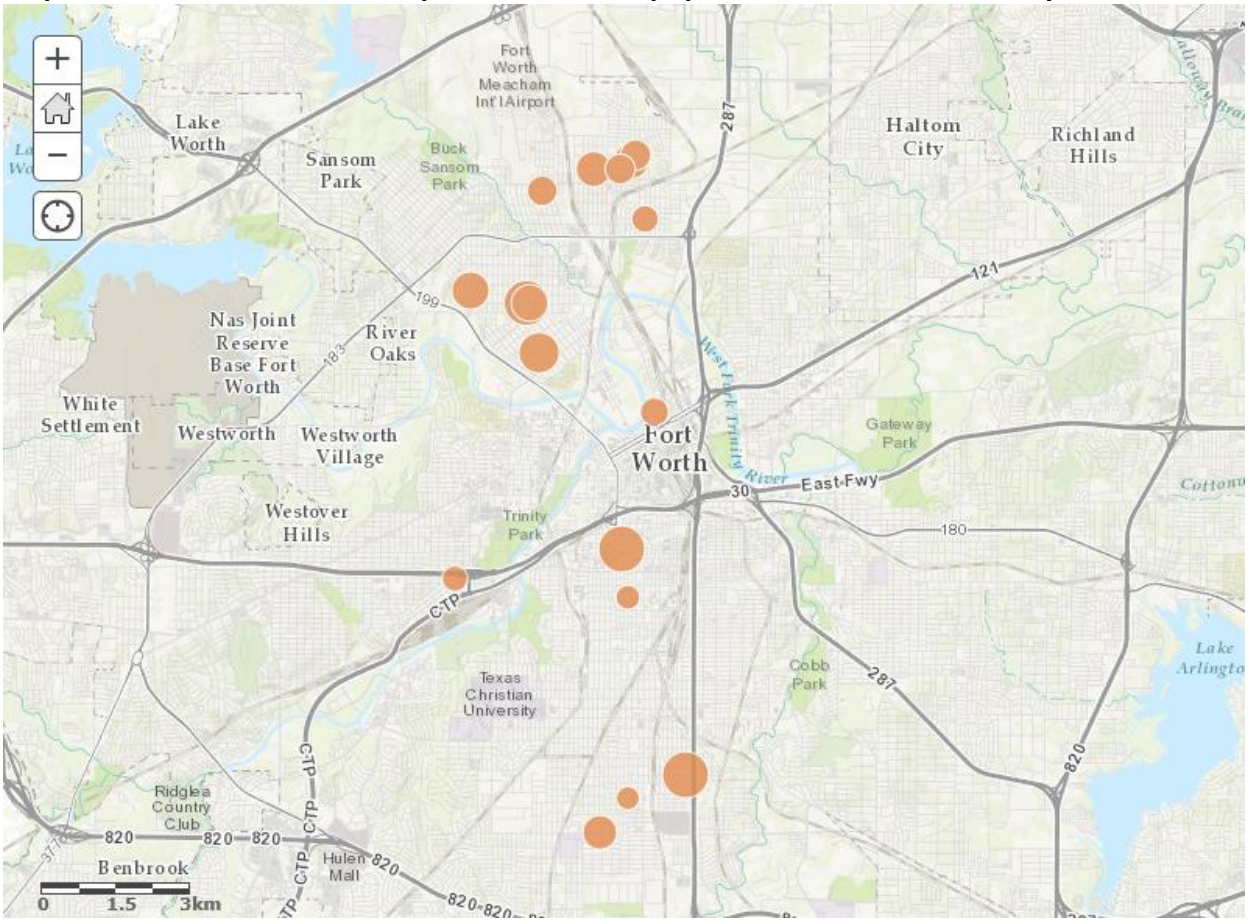
[93] Ibid., Fort Worth Independent School District and Charles Lee Evans, *Mexican American Education Study* (Fort Worth, TX: Fort Worth Independent School District, Department of Research and Evaluation, 1974), 7-9.

property restrictions often kept Mexicans out of middle class white neighborhoods during the early-to-mid twentieth century also.[94]

While Mexican communities tended to be in North Fort Worth and South Fort Worth, the vast majority of African Americans lived in East Fort Worth. No schools that held at least a 25 percent Mexican population with over 100 Mexican students were east of I-35W (which was constructed in the 1960s). On Map 1, each circle represents a FWISD school that had at least a 25 percent Mexican population and over 100 Mexican students. The larger the circle, the higher the number of Mexican students. The bold grey line moving vertically that is marked "287" toward the top of the map is also I-35W and as can be seen on the map, the schools with the highest number of Mexican students are all to the west of I-35W. The schools with the highest number of Mexicans in the 1972-73 school year was Trimble Technical High School on the near Southside with 627 Mexican students and Worth Heights Elementary School with 608 Mexican students further south and right next to I-35W. There were seventeen schools in the FWISD that held over 100 Mexican students and were over 25 percent Mexican and, although the two schools with the highest Mexican populations were on the Southside, eleven of the seventeen were north of downtown with ten of them in what would be considered North Side.

[94] Cuéllar, 11.

Map 1: Schools with at least 25 percent Mexican population in 1972-73 school year.



Date for this map is taken from Fort Worth Independent School District and Charles Lee Evans, *Mexican American Education Study* (Fort Worth, TX: Fort Worth Independent School District, Department of Research and Evaluation, 1974).

An article printed in the Fort Worth *Star Telegram* in 1987 provides evidence that Mexican Americans, like African Americans, were deliberately segregated from Anglos.[95] The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development found restrictive covenants barring sales of homes to "non-whites" still on the books in ten Fort Worth neighborhoods in 1980. Eight of these neighborhoods are in the FWISD and were in the FWISD in 1973. This

[95] *Star Telegram*, October 19, 1987.

research has disclosed at least twenty-four elementary schools from 1973 that are less than 1.75 miles from these eight neighborhoods.[96]

Historically, restrictive covenants were known to keep African Americans out of neighborhoods, but evidence suggests that these same covenants kept Mexican Americans away also.[97] Out of the twenty-four closely situated elementary schools, only 4.7 percent (548 out of 11,775) of the student population was Mexican American in 1973. Nine of the aforementioned twenty elementary schools that had fewer than ten Mexican Americans are among these twenty-four schools. This information suggests that schools that had low percentages of Mexican Americans were also likely to have small percentages of African Americans since "restricted" neighborhoods traditionally kept out all "non-whites." Consequently, the remaining schools would have taught the African American and Mexican American children. The remaining sixty-four elementary schools then instructed close to 4,400 Mexican Americans and the majority of the roughly 7,000 African American students.[98] Mexican Americans and African Americans probably made up over 40 percent of the rest of the district's elementary schools outside of the twenty-four.

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[96]The researcher used http://www.tad.org/Datasearch/subdivision_search.cfm to find the *Star Telegram*-named restrictive covenant neighborhood locations used, and using an address in the community, attempted to find nearby elementary schools using http://www.mapquest.com.

[97] For further reading on the rise of Mexican American populations in an area where there already existed a substantial African American population, read Albert M. Camarillo, "Cities of Color: The New Racial Frontier in California's Minority-Majority Cities," *Pacific Historical Review* 76, no. 1 (2007): 1-28.

[98] *Star Telegram*, December 19, 1980. This article quotes a source who claims that African American students comprised 18 percent of the FWISD in 1970 and intimates that African Americans made up around 30 percent of the FWISD by 1980. The 7,000 number would be about 18.7 percent of the 37,401 total elementary school students but most likely the percentage was higher by 1973.

Similar to the elementary schools, Mexican American middle school students were lumped in just a few schools. The vast majority of Mexican American middle school students attended three of FWISD's eighteen middle schools. Rosemont, Elder, and Meacham Middle Schools taught 1,268 (67 percent) of FWISD's 1895 Mexican American middle school students. Those same three schools only contained about 18 percent (3,584 out of 19,658) of FWISD's middle school students. As expected, the trend continued at the high school level where 72.5 percent (1,289 out of 1,778) of FWISD's Mexican American high school students attend three out of thirteen high schools.[99] These numbers plainly show a segregated district and evidence that Mexican American needs had to be addressed. Although these student numbers are disturbing, FWISD's employment statistics were probably more frightening.

The Lack of Mexican Teachers in the FWISD

One key issue that has hurt Mexican American education for years is the fact that they often learned under educators who did not understand them as individuals. Communication breakdowns were due to language barriers or a simple ignorance and/or disregard of Mexican American culture. In an article published in the *Dallas Morning News* in 1969, a Rice University professor named Dr. Manuel Ramírez argued that many Anglo teachers taught Mexican American students that they would have to give up their culture to take advantage of America's educational and economic benefits. The article expounds on Mexican-American problems in "winning acceptance" from Anglos "while still maintaining his own identity as a Mexican

[99] Ibid.

American."[100] Gary Orfield wrote, "It is impossible to consider the future of Hispanic education without considering the future of Hispanic educators."[101] Orfield goes on to argue that Hispanic teachers, counselors, and staff are important role models to Hispanic students. Pizarro interviewed a number of Mexican American students and his conclusions are in line with Ramírez and Orfield.

In one of Pizarro's interviews, a student discusses a situation when an entire class was acting unruly, but the teacher pointed out this particular Mexican American student and the only other Mexican American student in the class and told each of them, "If you don't like it, you can go back where you came from."[102] Another interviewee is told that she was not an exceptional student, but since she was minority she might be given special privilege by a university.[103] Pizarro argues that experiences like these can limit the Mexican American student's educational possibilities. As Matthew D. Davis writes, "Too often and too quickly, non-Mexican whites have assumed that all Mexicans were recent immigrants."[104] A. Reynaldo Contreras states that historically, "Local educators provided Hispanic children schools that were staffed by instructors who were insensitive or oblivious to the cultural and special educational needs of these children."[105] With so many scholars in agreement that Mexican American children benefit by having understanding, Mexican American instructors and role models

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[100] Richard Beene, "Brown Power Sought" *Dallas Morning News,* August 17, 1969.
[101]Orfield, 22.
[102] Pizarro, 52.
[103] Ibid., 53.
[104] Matthew D. Davis, *Exposing a Culture of Neglect: Herschel T. Manuel and Mexican American Schooling*, Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing, 2005, 66.
[105] A. Reynaldo Contreras, "Impact of Brown on Multicultural Education of Hispanic Americans," *The Journal of Negro Education* 73, Special Issue: Brown V. Board of Education at 50 (Summer, 2004), 319.

present, this study shall now explore where the FWISD stood as far as the employment of Mexican American teachers.

As was mentioned previously, approximately 10.6 percent of FWISD's students were Mexican American in 1973. At the same time, the FWISD employed sixty-eight Mexican American teachers out of 3,127 total teachers throughout the entire district meaning that only 2.2 percent of FWISD teachers were Mexican Americans. Furthermore, only 2.2 percent (31 out of 1,392) of elementary school teachers were Mexican Americans compared to the 13.2 percent of Mexican American elementary school students. The ratio of Mexican American students to Mexican American teachers was 159 to 1. Worth Heights Elementary School had the highest percentage of Mexican American students, with approximately 84 percent (608 out of 728) of the student population. Despite the high number of Mexican students, Worth Heights only had four Mexican-American teachers, giving that heavily Mexican-American school a ratio of 182 Mexican American students to one Mexican American teacher.[106]

While the statistics were not quite as bad at the middle school level, where 2.6 percent of teachers were Mexican American and the ratio of Mexican American students to Mexican American teachers was 95 to 1, the high school numbers are comparable to the elementary school statistics. Only 1.7 percent of all high school teachers were Mexican American and almost a third (5 out of 17) of those teachers taught at Diamond Hill High School where Mexican Americans still only made up about 13 percent of Diamond Hill's staff. In fact Diamond Hill High School was the only high school that employed more than two Mexican American

[106] The numbers used for this paragraph can be found in the aforementioned Fort Worth Independent School District study, Table 4, 12-14.

teachers. The high schools with the two highest percentages of Mexican American students (North Side and Technical) had a combined three teachers in comparison to their combined 1,036 Mexican American students amounting to a 345 to 1 student to teacher ratio for those two schools.

This FWISD *Mexican American Education Study* compared the situation in Fort Worth with the condition of Mexican students in Texas and across the Southwest. While the FWISD held a 128 to 1 Mexican student to Mexican teacher ratio, the ratio across Texas at that time was 98 to 1 and for the Southwest the ratio was 120 to 1. Not only did the FWISD maintain a lower ratio of Mexican teachers when compared to Texas and the Southwest, despite the fact that neither Texas nor the rest of the Southwest did an adequate job of hiring Mexican teachers for their schools, but the Mexican teachers employed by the FWISD were not necessarily employed in schools that held higher numbers of Mexican students (See Table 3). Instead of placing higher numbers of Mexican teachers in schools where Mexican students attended in high numbers, they seemed to be placed in schools without much regard for the Mexican composition of the student body. About 30 percent of Mexican teachers taught in schools that held less than a 25 percent Mexican student population during the 1972-73 school year while only 13 percent taught in schools that held higher than an 80 percent Mexican student population.[107]

[107] Fort Worth Independent School District and Charles Lee Evans, *Mexican American Education Study* (Fort Worth, TX: Fort Worth Independent School District, Department of Research and Evaluation, 1974).

Table 3: Location of Mexican Teachers by School Composition, 1972-73 School Year

Percent Mexican Students in School	Number of Mexican American Teachers			Percent Distribution Mexican American Teachers		
	FWISD	Texas	Southwest	FWISD	Texas	Southwest
0% - 24%	20	629	3812	30.0%	12.3%	32.6%
25% - 49%	20	276	1443	29.0%	5.4%	12.3%
50% - 79%	19	1121	2526	28.0%	21.8%	21.6%
80% - 100%	9	3107	3907	13.0%	60.5%	33.4%
Aggregate	68	5133	11688	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Date for this table comes from Fort Worth Independent School District and Charles Lee Evans, *Mexican American Education Study* (Fort Worth, TX: Fort Worth Independent School District, Department of Research and Evaluation, 1974.

In order to provide a better understanding of the situation, Table 4 provides a list of eleven schools that held relatively high numbers of Mexican students that had few, if any, Mexican teachers. These eleven schools held 3,421 Mexican students but only employed thirteen Mexican teachers, a ratio of 263 to 1. For example, Trimble Tech High School had 627 Mexican students during the 1972-73 school year but there was only one Mexican teacher in the whole school. The last four schools listed had absolutely no Mexican students but employed six Mexican teachers. All four of these schools were historically black schools meaning that despite the fact that the FWISD employed such a small number of Mexican teachers, 20 percent (4 out of 20) of FWISD's Mexican middle school teachers were in schools where they would not encounter a single Mexican student unless the student was bused to his/her school.[108]

[108] Fort Worth Independent School District and Charles Lee Evans, *Mexican American Education Study* (Fort Worth, TX: Fort Worth Independent School District, Department of Research and Evaluation, 1974).

Table 4: Mexican Teacher-Student Discrepancy Schools, 1972-73 School Year

School Name	Mex. Students #	Mex. Students %	Mex. Teachers #	Mex. Teachers %
Worth Heights Elem.	608	84%	4	15%
Stephen F. Austin Elem.	79	31%	0	0%
DeZavala Elem.	128	30%	0	0%
Diamond Hill Elem.	189	40%	0	0%
South Fort Worth Elem.	108	27%	0	0%
M.H. Moore Elem.	263	33%	0	0%
Rosemont Middle	337	26%	2	4%
Daggett Middle	101	20%	0	0%
Elder Middle	572	43%	4	7%
North Side High	409	31%	2	4%
Trimble Tech High	627	34%	1	1%
R. Vickery Elem.	0	0%	2	12%
Morningside Middle	0	0%	2	4%
Dunbar Middle	0	0%	1	2%
Como Middle	0	0%	1	5%

Date for this table comes from Fort Worth Independent School District and Charles Lee Evans, *Mexican American Education Study* (Fort Worth, TX: Fort Worth Independent School District, Department of Research and Evaluation, 1974.

In addition to accounting for the lack of Mexican teachers, the *Mexican American Education Study* also pointed out the lack of Mexican employees in the FWISD both among professional staff and administrative personnel. In fact, out of the thirty-six FWISD schools that held at least a 10 percent Mexican student population, there was only one Mexican principal. Moreover, within these thirty-six schools (in which the average schools was about one-third Mexican), there were no Mexican assistant principals, librarians, or secretaries and only one Mexican counselor. Out of the thirty-six schools evaluated in this part of the study, principals, assistant principals, counselors, librarians, and secretaries accounted for 165 jobs and out of

those 165 positions, there were only two Mexicans employed. Furthermore, the cafeteria staff and custodian crews also made up less than 10 percent of the workforce despite the 33 percent Mexican population in these particular schools. Across Texas and the rest of the Southwest, Mexicans comprised a miniscule 3.3 to 3.4 percent of principals but even those small percentages were markedly higher than what the FWISD presented during the 1972-73 school year.

As years passed and as one would expect when looking at 1973's elementary school population figures, the Mexican American student population grew steadily after 1973. By 1980 Mexican Americans comprised approximately 18 percent of FWISD's student population, yet FWISD officials and their counsel repeatedly delayed committing to giving Mexican Americans minority status.[109] By 1978, Lyndon Rogers, speaking on behalf of the Mexican American Education Advisory Committee, "called for action on the question of identifying Mexican Americans as a separate ethnic group for integration purposes" as well as expressing dissatisfaction with the FWISD Administration's refusal to take direct action.[110] A FWISD representative countered by arguing, "Classifying Mexican-American children as white does not discriminate against them," and further argued "there is no basis for any kind of remedy."[111]

One of the main points of contention was whether or not to consider Fort Worth's Mexican students as minorities when evaluating minority educational needs within the school

[109] Unknown author, "Hispanics, Board near School Integration Deal'" *Dallas Morning News*, December 19, 1980.
[110] Unknown author, "Group Blames School Officials as Talks Fail," *Dallas Morning News*, October 14, 1978.
[111] Unknown Author, "School Officials Deny Bias in Labeling Hispanics White" *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, May 9, 1979.

district. These needs included MAEAC's desire to hire more Mexican employees at all levels with an emphasis on employing more Mexican teachers in in the classroom. MAEAC's leadership originally wanted 12 percent while the FWISD was pushing for 10 percent at least as recently as October of 1979.[112] Considering the fact that the Mexican student population in the FWISD already stood at 16.5 percent in 1979 and that Mendoza, Sr. believed this percentage would reach 20 percent by 1982, the 12 percent goal was generous.

Mexican Employment in the FWISD

As MAEAC leaders continued fighting for educational rights on behalf of Fort Worth's Mexican population, African American leaders were doing the same for their community. Unfortunately, these two groups had very different goals. While Mexican leaders wanted more Mexican educators and employees to be hired in the FWISD in order to address the Mexican student population, African American leaders sought more funds and integration while also pushing for higher percentages of African American teachers. Representatives from MAEAC were against busing and without busing, it would be difficult to integrate schools. In an interview conducted in 2013, Renny Rosas, a long-time Mexican civil rights activist in Fort Worth, claimed that during the 1970s Mexicans and African Americans began working together against the Euro-American dominated leadership in Fort Worth. Late in the 1970s though,

[112] This information was discovered on a proposal in the *Sam García Papers* in the Fort Worth Public Library archival holdings. The proposal was sent from the Law Office of Morgan, Gambill & Owen to Geoffrey Gay, lead counsel for the MAEAC. Fort Worth Library, *Sam García Papers*, 1958; Unknown Author, "Mexican American Committee Rejects Fort Worth Panel's Proposal," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, November 4, 1979.

Mexican leaders, especially those in MAEAC, separated themselves from the *Flax v. Potts* lawsuit which sought to continue busing and forced integration in the late 1970s. Rosas argued that this split left a "sour note" with African American leaders, particularly those within the NAACP, and thereafter created a level of distrust toward Mexican-American leaders in Fort Worth.[113]

Ultimately, in January of 1981, the FWISD and the MAEAC agreed to a settlement that established a Mexican-American employment quota at 11 percent within the FWISD, a relatively low percentage considering the fact that the Mexican student population had grown 18 percent by 1981. Additionally, the 11 percent quota was to be re-evaluated after four years to insure that the FWISD made progress in hiring more Mexican American employees in relatively short time without having to terminate any of its existing employees.

Despite the fact that the 11 percent quota seems to have been a low goal considering the number of Mexican American students in the FWISD, the school district fell short in reaching that goal. According to a Staffing Report dated April 9, 1986, in January of 1981 about 7.1 percent of FWISD's employees were Mexican American. Only 5.4 percent of FWISD's teachers were Mexican American while "Support Personnel" held the largest percentage of Mexican American employees at 8.9 percent. In fact, out of the 519 Mexican-American employees in the FWISD, 301 (about 58 percent) were "Support Personnel." This Staffing Report shows that in 1986 the FWISD had failed to reach the 11 percent quota that was agreed upon in 1981. Instead Mexicans only comprised 9.5 percent of all FWISD employees while

[113] Renny Rosas , Interviewed by Caleigh Prewitt, Fort Worth, March 21, 2013, "Black-Brown Effort," *Civil Rights in Black & Brown Oral History Project*, Texas Christian University. https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/black-brown-effort. (Accessed September 12, 2016).

African Americans held over 37 percent of FWISD jobs and Euro-Americans made up the remaining 53 percent of all district employees. Of course, during the 1960s and 1970s, African American leaders sought improved educational opportunities through integration and increased funding but increasing the number of African American employees was not a great concern. In fact, in evaluating student population figures from the 1970s through the 1990s, African Americans consistently made up between 31 and 37 percent of FWISD's student population so the 37 percent employment figure in 1986 was relatively proportionate, if not generous, when compared to the percentage of African American students in the FWISD.[114]

Consequently, Rose Herrera, a Fort Worth community leader who was elected to the FWISD Board of Trustees in 1992 and by 2002 was elected Vice President of the FWISD Board of Trustees, argued that personal agendas kept African Americans and Mexicans from working with one another during this time. [115] On the other hand, by negotiating with and appeasing Mexican leadership, the FWISD effectively weakened integration efforts by removing a growing portion of minorities from the integration efforts, thereby establishing a rapidly growing ally in the fight against African American struggles.

Despite the attempts to improve Mexican employment and educational needs for Mexican children in Fort Worth, negotiation with FWISD's Euro-American leadership proved to result in limited success. The 9.5 percent number is disappointingly low for the Mexican population, especially since the FWISD increased African American employment rate from 31.4

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[114] Department of Planning Services, *Student Populations and Related* Statistics, Fort Worth Public Schools; Billy W. Sills Center for Archives of the Fort Worth Independent School District.
[115] Rose Herrera, interviewed by José Angel Gutiérrez, Arlington, January 28, 2003, transcript, *Tejano Voices*, University of Texas at Arlington Center for Mexican American Studies Oral History Project, Arlington, Texas.

percent in 1981 to 37.1 percent in 1986 while increasing the number of African American personnel by over 400 employees, raising the employment figure from 2,297 to 2,739. During this same span of time, the FWISD only increased Mexican employees from 519 to 701. During the 1980s, the number of African American students within the FWISD consistently hovered around 24,000 so by the mid-1980s there was one African American employee for every nine African American students while the ratio of Mexican employees to Mexican students was in excess of twenty-to-one. Moreover, the ratio of white employees to white students was close to that of the African American population with approximately six or seven employees for every white student.

Breaking down where Mexicans were employed makes matters appear even more incongruous. In 1986, Mexicans only made up 6.86 percent of FWISD teachers at a time when the district held over a 20 percent Mexican student population. [116] Furthermore, only 8.69 percent of Central Administrators were Mexican and Mexicans made up fewer than 5 percent of Field Administrators. While "Support Personnel" was still the most common place of employment in the FWISD, Mexican Americans only constituted 11.9 percent of all "Support Personnel" increasing from 301 to 400 employees between 1981 and 1986. The one area of relative strength was the dramatic increase in Site Administrators (principals and vice principals). The number of Mexican American Site Administrators almost tripled from twelve to

[116] Employment figures from 1981 to 1986 were obtained using the *Sam García Papers* in the Fort Worth Public Library archival holdings. The information is in memo form and is addressed to Dr. James Bailey from Hardy Murphy and is noted in the top right corner as an Affirmative Action document.

thirty-five between 1981 and 1986, giving Mexicans 19.23 percent of FWISD's Site Administrator personnel.

Obviously the FWISD failed to reach the hiring goals set forth by the January, 1981 settlement by 1986. One might argue that the 11 percent hiring quota may have been difficult to reach in less than five years considering the fact that part of the settlement was to reach that goal by natural attrition. On the other hand, the FWISD still had not managed to achieve that goal by 1990. By 1990 Mexican students constituted just over 27 percent of the FWISD's total student population however with African American and Euro-American students each making up around 35 percent, yet Mexican employees still only made up less than 9 percent of FWISD's workforce. Factoring in the aforementioned arguments that Mexican teachers are crucial to the success of the Mexican American students, the most important employee is the teacher who sees and communicates with students on a daily basis, building relationships with the young and impressionable students. Just two years after the 1990 report, Rose Herrera joined the school board in part because she believed that educators needed to understand the student's culture.[117] Since Herrera was not an educator herself, she wanted to join the school board in hopes of influencing FWISD policies and helping the Mexican community in the FWISD. The 1990 report showed that Mexicans only comprised 7.51 percent of all FWISD teachers. In relation to the number of students this number is pathetic. The ratio of African American students to African American teachers was about 24 to 1 (23,532 to 988), while the ratio of Euro-American students to Euro-American teachers was about 9 to 1 (25,433 to 2,767).

[117] Rose Herrera, interviewed by José Angel Gutiérrez, January 28, 2003, transcript, *Tejano Voices*, University of Texas at Arlington Center for Mexican American Studies Oral History Project, Arlington, Texas.

Meanwhile, the ratio of Mexican students to Mexican teachers was a deplorable 60 to 1 (18,312 to 305). When adding all of the numbers together, the overall ratio of teachers to students was approximately 17 to 1 so African Americans were slightly underrepresented while Euro-Americans were greatly overrepresented and clearly Mexicans had a pitiful teacher-to-student ration almost twenty years after the *Mexican American Education Study* was published.[118]

As was stated earlier in this work, one of the primary reasons Mexican educators are desired is to address the needs of Mexican students by using teachers who understand the student's culture. Additionally, by providing an educated, Mexican authority figure in the classroom, students see a daily example that Mexicans can also be respected, educated leaders. Dropout figures support the lack of attention given to Mexican students' needs. According to the aforementioned *Mexican American Education Study*, a "mini-study" suggested that the Mexican dropout rate in the FWISD was around 4 percent while African Americans and Anglos were each closer to a 1 percent dropout rate in the early 1970s.[119] By 1990, the FWISD saw little change in its dropout rates from nearly twenty years earlier. The Texas Education Agency reported that "slightly more than 1 percent of Anglo and black students and 3.6 percent of Hispanic students dropped out in 1990-91"[120] in the FWISD. By 1997, twenty-three years after the *Mexican American Education Study* was published, the Mexican dropout rate was still 3.3

[118] These numbers were obtained using the *Sam García Papers* in the Fort Worth Public Library archival holdings. The document is entitled "Meeting with Dr. Roberts" and is dated December 10, 1990. The Agenda is "pursuant to information from the District's Bi-Annual Report: June 5, 1990."
[119] *FWISD Mexican American Education Study*, 41.
[120] *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, September 17, 1992.

percent.[121] These dreadful numbers coincide with FWISD's failure to hire Mexican American teachers to serve as role models for their Mexican American students.

By the mid-1990s, the FWISD had still failed to reach the 11 percent teacher quota. In 1994, 68 percent of teachers were Anglo-American, just over 22 percent were African American, and a little under 9 percent were Mexican. Meanwhile, the student population was around 27 percent Anglo-American, 34 percent African American, and 36 percent Mexican. Assistant superintendent, J.D. Shipp, argued that the reason the racial breakdown for teachers did not come close to matching the student population was because "the minority pool of teacher candidates (was) small, compared with the number of prospective teachers who (were) Anglo."[122] Not until the end of the twentieth century did the FWISD finally reach the 11 percent Mexican American teacher rate, but by this time Mexican students made up a plurality of the FWISD comprising approximately 41 percent of the district's student population.[123] The FWISD knew for years that Mexican American students' needs had to be addressed, but the FWISD's hiring habits from the 1970s to the 1990s showed an appalling neglect in dealing with these needs. By the mid-1980s, the FWISD's appeasement efforts showed little in the way of improved employment opportunities for Mexicans but by negotiating with Mexican leadership and essentially dividing Mexicans and African Americans, the attempt at reducing African American integration efforts were well on their way.

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[121] *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, October 19, 1998.
[122] Jack Douglas, Jr and Roland S. Martin, "Judge Lifts Court Order on Schools – Decision End 35 Years of Fort Worth Enforcement," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, February 19, 1994.
[123] *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, December 19, 1999.

Mexicans on Their Own

As the FWISD was forced to address desegregation issues with the African American population beginning in the early 1960s, the school district paid little heed to Mexican students prior to 1973. In fact, in addressing *Flax v. Potts*, the Judge Eldon Mahan, who took over the case in 1975, declared "there has never been a contention nor a finding by the Court that de jure discrimination against Hispanics has been practiced in the Fort Worth Independent School District, nor has there ever been a finding that the district violated the constitutional rights of Hispanics."[124] Despite the fact that the FWISD did such a poor job of employing Mexicans and the correlative fact that Mexican students were dropping out in high numbers, the courts clearly would not be a great help to Fort Worth's Mexican population in the same manner that the courts were making an effort to address African American concerns. If Mexicans were dissatisfied with how the FWISD was treating them they could not expect the courts to help since the courts did not hold the FWISD under the same legal obligations to Mexicans as existed for African Americans. As a result, Mexicans, expressly those within MAEAC, worked directly with the FWISD's administration and departed from garnering support to African Americans in the 1970s.

While African Americans worked through the courts in their effort to accomplish their goals, Mexicans had little success through the courts. Mexicans, although recognized as a minority group through the justice system by the late 1970s, were unable to gain judicial traction using similar methods employed by African Americans. Since the courts were not

[124] "Memorandum Opinion and Order by U.S. District Judge Eldon Mahan: Regarding Fort Worth District School Desegregation Suit/Plan," June, 1988. Billy W. Sills Center for Archives of the Fort Worth Independent School District.

providing justice in the MAEAC's eyes, MAEAC, primarily through both Mendozas, felt compelled to work directly with the district. Mexicans did not have the leverage afforded to African Americans who worked through the courts. As such, the FWISD had to maintain approval for their actions in order to maintain power over the decision-making process relative to *Flax v. Potts*. As interveners, Mexican leadership was obliged to be part of the decision-making process and had to be considered when alterations and amendments to *Flax v. Potts* were established, but that did not mean Mexican issues had to be addresses. On the contrary, by serving as an intervener, Mexicans provided leverage for the Anglo-led FWISD against African Americans since by appeasing Mexicans, the FWISD could assuage the Mexican interveners while eliminating their presence in *Flax v. Potts*. By satisfying Mexican leadership, the FWISD could eventually compel federal courts to refrain from forcing the school district from employing new methods at appeasing the African American community.

CHAPTER IV

MEXICAN EDUCATION ISSUES: THE FWISD BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND THE END OF *FLAX v. POTTS*

By 1983, the Fort Worth Independent School District (FWISD), which covered approximately 176 square miles, was the third largest school district in Texas and one of the fifty largest districts in the United States with over 65,000 students, despite the fact that the FWISD lost about 12,000 students over the course of the previous decade. In 1983, the FWISD Board of Trustees established the Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) in order to review FWISD's desegregation plan and answer the following question, "What desegregation plan would produce the best possible educational opportunities for all of our children, whether they are black, or brown, or white?" Eleven people were appointed to the CAC, nine by each of the nine members of the Board of Trustees and two by the plaintiffs and interveners in the *Flax v. Potts* suit. By the early 1980s, seven of the nine board members were elected within single-member districts. In fact, the FWISD Board of Trustees only began being elected to represent single-member districts in 1978.

The Rise of Single-Member Districts

Prior to the 1978 school board election, the only African American to serve on the board was Reby Cary, who at the time he was elected served as an Associate Dean of Student Life at the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA). Before his appointment as Associate Dean, Cary taught history at Dunbar High School in the FWISD and subsequently served as an Associate Professor of History at UTA. Cary defeated the incumbent Bobby L. Bruner by taking a little over 52 percent of the 11,259 votes cast to win Place 1 on the school board in April of 1974. In

addition to taking widespread support from Fort Worth's African American community, Cary also had the support of labor and many teachers. Cary benefitted from the Tarrant County Central Labor Council's (part of the AFL-CIO) concerted effort to beat Bruner, a business owner who was accused of poor business practices in low-income areas.[125] Furthermore, key members of the Classroom Teachers Association endorsed Cary leading up to the election. Following the loss, an emotional Bruner publicly lashed out, accusing a fellow board member of stabbing him in the back and complaining that leaders of the Classroom Teachers Association invited Cary to a meeting leading up to the election but did not invite him.[126] Ted Webb, another losing candidate from the 1974 election, further alleged that part of the reason he and Bruner lost was because "a small clique of teachers" wanted to take control of the board.[127]

While Cary was the first African American elected to the FWISD Board of Trustees, no Mexican had ever been elected to the board prior to the rise of single-member districts. In 1976, African American leaders, led by NAACP attorney Clifford Davis, demanded that the FWISD establish a school board that would be elected using single-member districts in hopes that the school board would better represent Fort Worth's demographics. In January of 1977, Judge Eldon Mahon ordered this group of African American leaders to submit a plan for holding single-member district elections.[128] Davis and other African American leaders responded by

[125] Carl Freund, "Cary's School Win Tied to Labor, Teacher Support," *Dallas Morning News*, April 9, 1974.
[126] Fort Worth Bureau of the News, "Defeated Candidate Hits 'Sabotage' of Campaign," *Dallas Morning News*, April 14, 1974.
[127] Fort Worth Bureau of the News, "Teacher Plot Charged," *Dallas Morning News*, April 10, 1974.
[128] Fort Worth Bureau of the News, "Blacks Told to Outline Plans," *Dallas Morning News*, January 30, 1977.

proposing a plan that the FWISD expand to nine single-member districts but in October of 1977, the FWISD Board of Trustees unanimously adopted a plan that held seven single-member districts and two at-large districts.[129]

Under this new plan, two of the seven single-member districts (Districts three and four) were located in southeast Fort Worth which was overwhelmingly African American, thus virtually assuring the African American community that they would have two board members every election cycle for the foreseeable future. District one was located in Fort Worth's North Side, an area that had a relatively high, but not a majority, Mexican population, and as such District One offered the best chance for Mexican representation on the school board. As excitement grew for the historic 1978 school board race, a record number of thirty-three candidates filed for six open seats on the school board. Consequently, the *Dallas Morning News* claimed that a "spirited contest between Mexican Americans and blacks" was developing by February of 1978.[130]

Two African Americans, Robert Starr and Reverend Alfred G. Sanford, filed for the District One race that also included two Mexican Americans, Carlos Puente and Joe Ávila. By early March, Ávila and Starr each withdrew from the school board race resulting in a race that pitted Sanford versus Puente along with an Anglo-American candidate named Charles Cox. Puente was a Vietnam veteran, father of four, and Chicano activist who had earned a Master's Degree in Urban Affairs from the University of Texas at Arlington in 1973. Additionally, Puente

[129] "Board Seeking Ideas on Districting Plan," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, 7 July 1977; Pat Svacina, "Adoption of Single-Member Plan Seen," *Dallas Morning News*, October 20, 1977.
[130] Fort Worth Bureau of the News, "Trimble Opponent Sought," *Dallas Morning News*, February 26, 1978.

won an official endorsement after a runoff against Cox from the Fort Worth Classroom Teachers Association political action committee for the District One seat about a week-and-a-half before the April 1 election-day.

Despite the fact that Cox presented the bigger challenge to Puente for the endorsement from the Teachers Association, it was Sanford's supporters who made it difficult for Fort Worth's Mexican community to see its first representation on the school board. With Cox running a close third on election-day, District One did not see a majority winner, leading to a runoff between Puente and Sanford. Predictably, Districts Three and Four saw African American candidates claim victory with Maudrie M. Walton, a retired principal, and Reverend Nehemiah Davis claiming school board seats so if Sanford were to beat Puente, Fort Worth's African American community would be represented by three school board members out of nine while the Mexican population would not be represented at all.

Leading up to the runoff election, the FWISD predicted a large turnout. In fact, over 10,000 Fort Worth residents returned to the polls for the April 22 runoff election. Puente was declared victorious following an excruciatingly close ballot count, winning by only sixteen votes, 724 to 708, however the election results were challenged soon thereafter. Shortly after releasing the vote count, it was discovered that an election judge named Hillery Hardeman found twenty-two uncounted ballots in the back seat of his car. Hardeman claimed that these loose ballots had been placed in the back seat of his car after a janitor found them in the floor near the counting room. Yet, despite the fact that twenty-two ballots were discovered, the vote tally increased by nineteen for Sanford but remained unchanged for Puente. As a result of Hardeman's discovery and amended report, Sanford was declared the winner defeating Puente

727 to 724.[131] Puente subsequently asked for a recount at which point he had to pay a $100 fee to cover the costs of the recount.[132] The FWISD then appointed a three-member committee to recount the ballots for District One with the date of the recount to be May 1, 1978.

Following the recount, Puente was again declared to be the winner but this time by only five votes, 719 to 714.[133] District legal advisors instructed the recount committee to disregard the twenty-two "lost ballots" since they had not been handled properly according to election code. Election code specified that cast ballots were to be placed in sealed or locked containers when cast and after being counted they were to be placed in another sealed box. At no point were they to be left out in the open and there was no way to tell if those twenty-two ballots had ever been placed in a sealed container. Consequently, Sanford along with his attorney, Clifford Davis, filed a law suit arguing that the twenty-two ballots should be counted and that he, not Puente, should be declared the winner, however within a few weeks the lawsuit was dropped based on Davis's recommendation. As ca be seen, the struggle between brown and black was clear when the FWISD introduced single-member districts.

While serving as a board member, Puente introduced several agendas in hopes of benefitting Fort Worth's Mexican population but sometimes he was fighting an uphill battle. One particular case in which Puente was unsuccessful in appealing for Fort Worth's Mexican population arose in September of 1979. State law declared that no state funds could be used to

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[131] Carl Freund, FW Court Battle Expected to Resolve Disputed Runoff," *Dallas Morning News*, April 25, 1978.
[132] Fort Worth Bureau of the News, "Apparent Loser Seeking School Election Recount," *Dallas Morning News*, April 26, 1978.
[133] Fort Worth Bureau of the News, "Puente Declared Winner," *Dallas Morning News*, May 2, 1978.

educate children of undocumented immigrants meaning that only local funds could be used to pay the cost of educating the children of undocumented immigrants, most of whom were from Mexico. Puente raised a motion to abolish school district restrictions on admitting children of undocumented immigrants arguing, "We're in the business of education… regardless of race, religion, or national origin."[134] Despite the pleas of Mexican community leaders like Samuel García who served as local chairman of the American G.I. Forum, Mary Lou López, director of the Wesley Community Center, and Leo Sauceda, president of Image de Fort Worth (an organization concerned with public employment of Hispanics), Puente's motion was denied by a vote of 5 to 3 with African American trustee Nehemiah Davis as one of the outspoken dissidents. Davis contended that there were "too many open ends" to allow children of aliens to be admitted into FWISD schools thus displaying opposition to a key issue for Fort Worth's rising Mexican community.[135] Regardless of his struggles on the school board, Puente ran unopposed in 1980 and was subsequently re-elected to a four-year term but declined to run for a third term.

Fort Worth's Mexicans and Integration

While Fort Worth's recognized African American community leaders continued to fight for school integration through the 1980s, Mexican leaders sought an end to busing as did many in the Anglo-American community. Judge Mahon allowed the FWISD to end busing for the remaining 1200 students who were still subject to the practice in 1988, pleasing both the

[134] Ed Timms, "School Board Upholds Rule against Aliens," *Dallas Morning News*, September 13, 1979.
[135] Ibid.

Mexican and Anglo-American communities while raising the ire of African American leaders. Shortly before Mahon made this decision, school officials argued that there had been a mass exodus of white students from the 1970s through the 1980s partly because of busing concerns. In fact, the number of Anglo-American students in the FWISD dropped from around 44,000 in 1973 to approximately 28,000 in 1981 and down to about 24,000 by 1989, while the school district population of African American students remained around 24,000 in each of those years although whether or not busing led to this exodus is uncertain. [136] Leading up to the decision to stop busing, the FWISD advised the court that there was a 43 percent decline in enrollment for first and second graders in the elementary schools that were utilized for busing since the new busing plan had been established in 1983. Furthermore, the district claimed that the median round-trip for bused students was over an hour with at least one student spending over three hours per day on a school bus. Finally, the FWISD was happy to see the end of busing because the annual cost of busing was over $300,000 with a net cost of $175,000 to the district itself.[137]

In September of 1989, just a few months after ending busing in the FWISD, Judge Mahon took another major step by officially declaring the FWISD to be a unitary school district, thus ending regulations and restrictions placed upon the district by *Flax v. Potts*. In his decision, Mahon wrote the following:

> A district is unitary when it is devoid of racial discrimination in pupil assignment, faculty and staff, transportation, extracurricular activities, and facilities… In each of these areas, the FWISD has completely dismantled the old "dual system" and

[136] This data was obtained by reviewing *Student Populations and Related Statistics* published by the Department of Planning Services for corresponding years at the Billy W. Sills Center for Archives, Fort Worth Independent School District , Fort Worth, Texas.
[137] *Flax v. Potts*, 864 F.2d 1157 (1989).

> removed its invidious vestiges. Today, the FWISD is free of any policy or practice of racial discrimination.[138]

Mahon added in his decision, "The FWISD operates under race-conscious employment goals, and black educators and administrators currently occupy numerous and various positions throughout the school district. All phases of hiring and assigning faculty and staff are free of discrimination on the basis of race in the FWISD."[139] Prior to Mahon's announced decision, MAEAC leaders agreed not to contest a finding of unitary status so long as the FWISD agreed to address the needs of the Mexican population going forward, so ultimately, Mahon did not have to overly concern himself with addressing Mexican needs in the decision to declare the FWISD a unitary district.[140]

In addition to student assignment and employment issues, Mahon once again took into consideration financial issues. Mahon argued:

> The $1.5 million saved from the elimination of the massive desegregation busing of the 1970's has been spent on quality education programs in high-minority attendance schools who were not subject to the more limited cluster busing. Additional monies saved by the elimination of cluster busing in 1988 were designated for enhanced educational programs at those schools whose students, regardless of race, received the lowest achievement scores on the state-mandated TEAMS test.[141]

Furthermore, Mahon acknowledged a report published by the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* earlier in the year that presented the case that the FWISD had done an adequate job of increasing spending in minority schools. In fact, according to the March, 1989 report, the FWISD spent an average of $1843 per student at the thirty-five schools that were predominantly white while

[138] *Flax v. Potts*, 725 F. Supp (N.D. Tex. 1989).
[139] Ibid.
[140] Ibid.
[141] Ibid.

spending $2175 per student in twenty-nine predominantly black schools and $2202 per student at the twenty-two predominantly Hispanic schools.[142]

In response to this announcement, African American leaders proclaimed great displeasure and disappointment. Dee Jennings, an NAACP member and Chairman of the Fort Worth Metropolitan Black Chamber of Commerce, declared, "It is a tragedy to declare these schools unitary when our (minority students') test scores – locally and nationally – reflect there is no unitary learning."[143] Pamela Dunlop, president of the Fort Worth Minority Leaders and Citizens Council added, "(Mahon's) ruling is insulting because it made desegregation the issue. That's not the issue. The issue is equal educational opportunity for all Fort Worth children, and we don't have that."[144] Additionally, Fort Worth NAACP president Ray Bell criticized the decision by stating, "We weren't expecting anything different from him than what he did. He has never gone in favor of black people. Just look at his past decisions." [145] Meanwhile, the MAEAC conformed to the decision and remained silent, essentially joining Anglo-American leaders in the fight against African American leadership as African American and Mexican leadership clearly had different agendas. In joining with the Anglo-American leadership, Mexican leaders utilized racial distinctions in separating themselves from the African American community while also declaring a desire to claim their space as their own. While not quite white, Mexicans also declared definitively that they were not black but instead they sought to allow their children to remain in schools where their communities had already claimed a space.

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[142] "Minority Schools Rate High in Money," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, March 16, 1989.
[143] "FWISD Wins Ruling," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, September 27, 1989.
[144] Selwyn Crawford, "Judge Rules School in FW Desegregated," *Dallas Morning News*, September 28, 1989.
[145] Ibid.

By creating this split between Mexicans and African Americans, Mahon and the FWISD more confidently, and with minimal backlash, placed *Flax v. Potts* on the path to its end.

On appeal, the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ordered the case to remain in place for at least three years to ensure the district continue to comply with the court order but in 1994, *Flax v. Potts* was revisited. Despite complaints from African American students and parents, Glenn Lewis, general counsel for the NAACP argued that there was no case for further legal action unless it could be proved that the district was actively promoting or maintaining segregation. Ray Bell, still president of the local NAACP chapter, again expressed his discontent with Mahon's ruling stating, "We do not feel that it (the school district) is altogether desegregated."[146] The MAEAC, which was led by Rufino Mendoza, Jr by this time after the passing of the senior Mendoza in 1992, again was acquiescent with the FWISD's desire to be rid of the government restrictions and oversight that went along with being held to the decisions related to *Flax v. Potts*. Despite its apparent tractability, however, the younger Mendoza stated, "We're not satisfied that the school district is doing a wonderful job with minority children." Mendoza added, "I don't think we have reached the point that we are receiving a quality education."[147] Despite this sentiment, Mendoza and other Mexican leaders continued the fight for improved education and representation within the FWISD.

Improved Representation on the School Board?

[146] Jack Douglas, Jr and Roland S. martin, "Judge Lifts Court Order on Schools – Decision End 35 Years of Fort Worth Enforcement," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, February 19, 1994.
[147] Ibid.

While Fort Worth's Mexican leadership was clearly disappointed with the FWISD's efforts toward providing adequate representation in the classroom through the 1990s, some of the same leadership worked toward enhancing Mexican representation on the nine-member school board. By the early 1990s, Mexican students accounted for around 30 percent of the FWISD's student population, but there was only one Mexican trustee on the school board. Eva Herrera was appointed to the FWISD Board of Trustees in 1989 and at that time, the school board was still using the plan that was established prior to the 1978 election with seven single-member districts and two members voted at-large. While the MAEAC had already existed for two decades and focused on working within the FWISD, a group called the United Hispanic Council (UHC) began to rise in prominence in the early 1990s with the intention of "challenging community leaders and elected officials to identify issues that (would) improve the conditions for Hispanic residents."[148] Eloy Sepúlveda, a Fort Worth attorney who also served as president of the Mexican-American Bar Association, expressed concern over the small number of contracts awarded to Hispanic-owned businesses by Tarrant County in the early 1990s and also wanted the UHC to focus its efforts on applying pressure to Tarrant County schools and school districts to hire more Hispanic teachers, principals, and administrators.

While serving as a trustee, Eva Herrera, pushed the school board to explore options on changing the structure of the FWISD Board of Trustees. Mexican and African American organizations pressed for a change from the 7-2 school board to a 9-0 or 8-1 school board where either none or only one of the trustees would be elected as an at-large member. Since

[148] John G. Penn, "New Hispanic Council President Calls for Help from Tarrant leaders," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, January 26, 1991.

the 1978 structure was established, the school board consistently had two African Americans and one Mexican member, meaning that two-thirds of the school board each election cycle was Anglo, despite the fact that the percentage of Anglo students had consistently gone down beginning in the 1970s.

In April of 1991, Herrera raised a motion to the school board to re-evaluate how the school board was comprised and, despite no votes from three members, the board agreed to research the proposed options.[149] Three months later, the school board voted on whether or not to change the electoral system and by a vote of 5-4, the school board decided to keep the existing 7-2 structure in place. Only one Anglo member, Marsha West, voted against keeping the 7-2 format with both African American trustees (Christene Moss and T.A. Sims) joining Herrera in her quest to change and make the electoral system more representative of Fort Worth's population. After seeing the results of the vote, West stated, "I got a knot in my stomach… I thought there'd be some other Anglo board member who'd come forward and vote for the fair and just plan."[150] Unfortunately, it is difficult to ascertain the reason for the metaphorical "knot." It could have been because Ms. West felt disillusioned with her Anglo colleagues whom she felt failed to do the right thing or it could have been because the next school board election was less than a year away and the board was in the process of redistricting in preparation for the next election. If West betrayed her Anglo colleagues (who

[149] Kara Rogge, "School Board Agrees to Look at Voting Plans," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 24, 1991.
[150] Indira A.R. Lakshmanan, "School Trustees Vote 5-4 to Keep Electoral System," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, July 24, 1991.

were in the majority) on the board, the redistricting map may not be friendly towards her district.

Following the 5-4 vote, Mexican leaders including Terry Meza, deputy state director of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) threatened to file a lawsuit based upon the Voting Rights Act. In response to the possible forthcoming lawsuit, FWISD board president, Gary Manny, responded:

> If they file suit, they file suit. I don't think they can win. The Hispanic population has grown, but not necessarily in concentrated areas that would allow the carving out of 'safe' seats. I'm not even sure if the carving out of 'safe seats' is good educational policy… Besides, you cannot come from a narrow group and hope to appeal to a majority of voters.[151]

Manny, of course, maintained that Anglos were the majority of voters but at the same time, by the early 1990s, black and brown students easily outnumbered white students in the FWISD by an almost two-to-one margin, comprising over 63 percent of the district's student population by 1991.[152] Applying Manny's argument could then be flipped on himself since when considering student populations, Anglo-Americans were in the so-called "narrow group," hence the difficulty would then be in appealing to the majority of students. Manny's contention focused on adults who may or may not have children instead of directing his goals toward addressing the needs and desires of the students themselves.

Redistricting Issues – Black vs. Brown

[151] Ibid.
[152] Indira A.R. Lakshmanan, "Hispanics Sue School District over Board Representation," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, November 26, 1991.

Less than a month after the board voted to keep the same 7-2 structure, another vote was placed before the school board in which the board had to approve an updated redistricting plan. The proposed redistricting plan passed by a vote of 7-2 with the two dissenting votes coming from Herrera and West. Both African American trustees reluctantly voted for the redistricting plan, knowing that the same five votes that kept the 7-2 structure in place a month earlier would win out even without their votes. On principle, Herrera voted against the new map saying, "It's not fair; it's not right; it's not working."[153] As Herrera's term was coming close to an end, she announced that she would not run for re-election in 1992 but instead she wanted to provide an opportunity for other Mexicans in Fort Worth's North Side to represent the children in their community. Rose Herrera (no relation to Eva Herrera) took advantage of this opportunity running unopposed in District One and becoming the fourth Mexican on the FWISD Board of Trustees.

While Eva Herrera voted against the redistricting map on principle, West voted against the map for different reasons. West thought the map had been drawn up in a disadvantageous way in regards to her district, declaring, "My district was cut up the most… I was put in a lose-lose situation." In fact, as a result of the newly drawn district map, West faced an uphill battle in her attempt to retain her position as District 7 trustee. Under the new plan, West lost several of the neighborhoods that she formerly represented from the eastern portion of her district while about half of her district was new territory.[154] As a result of these district changes, West

[153] Indira A.R. Lakshmanan, "Redistricting Grudgingly Approved," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, August 15, 1991.
[154] Thomas Korosec, "District 7 Incumbent Competing in New Territory," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 29, 1992.

had far and away the most difficult contest on election day of all the incumbent trustees. Despite winning re-election by a 55 percent to 45 percent margin, West was unable to win a majority in the newly added territory. Her competitor, Don Judd, beat West by eighty votes in the new portion of her zone, but fortunately for West, the area of District 7 that West retained from before the redistricting gave her an overwhelming majority of their votes.

In between the decision to maintain the 7-2 election format and the subsequent 1992 school board election, two Hispanic advocacy groups filed suit against the FWISD, initially asking for a halt to the 1992 school board elections until the election system was changed. Eloy Sepúlveda, representing the UHC, did not believe the 7-2 election system provided adequate opportunity for equality within the FWISD arguing, "If you don't have people on the school board advocating your position, you don't have people addressing Hispanic employment and curriculum needs."[155] Additionally, representatives from the MAEAC reiterated their belief that the existing electoral system was discriminatory and violated the Voting Rights Act.

As a result of the redistricting lawsuit, the FWISD began mediation talks with the UHC and the MAEAC about a year and a half after the suit was initiated in hopes of avoiding a trial. Albert Pérez, representing both the UHC and the MAEAC, expressed optimism following negotiations in early June of 1993.[156] Unfortunately, the mediation never fully progressed leaving the issue outstanding going into 1994.

[155] Indira A.R. Lakshmanan, "Hispanics Sue School District over Board Representation," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, November 26, 1991.
[156] Gracie Bonds Staples, "Hispanic Groups, Mediator Meet on School Board Lawsuit," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, June 3, 1993.

A little over a year after Pérez expressed optimism that the issue would be resolved through mediation, the election process was placed once again before the school board as no resolution had been reached. In July of 1994, three years after Eva Herrera fought for a more minority-friendly voting process, the school board was given the responsibility of deciding how the district would proceed in its response to the now two-and-a-half-year-old lawsuit in hopes of avoiding a costly trial. School board president, Gary Manny along with trustees Jack Morrow, Marsha West, and Rose Herrera voted to approve a new structure that would grant eight single-member districts and only one member - the president- to be voted at-large. Three members voted against this change including both African American board members, T.S. Sims and Christene Moss.

Again, Fort Worth's African American and Mexican community were at odds despite the fact that three years earlier Sims and Moss expressed support for Eva Herrera in her quest to change the school board's composition. Moss claimed the reason she voted against the 8-1 structure was because she believed that had the issue gone to court the entire school board would be voted by single-member districts. Moss contended the 8-1 structure was "just a way the majority of the board decided to appease Hispanics." Additionally, Moss expressed belief that there was too much voter apathy in Fort Worth's Mexican community so the result of the 8-1 structure ultimately would not help the Mexican community. Furthermore, the result of the vote opened the possibility of appointing a Mexican trustee to fill the newly established eighth single-member district for the remaining eighteen months of the election cycle but Moss and Sims objected to the proposed appointment. Instead they believed the eighth member should

be elected despite Moss's stated belief that apathetic Mexican voters may not elect a Mexican to fill the position. Two board members were not present for the vote.[157]

Despite objections from Moss and Sims, a five-member committee set out to find someone who would represent the newly established eighth single-member district. Rose Herrera led this search committee as they attempted to fill the position before the end of the calendar-year. Herrera expressed disappointment with what she believed was a relatively small number of Hispanics who expressed an active interest in the position.[158] Regardless, Herrera was pleased with the quality of the four candidates who stepped forward. Rita Rodríguez-Utt, co-host of a cable television show titled *Hispanics Today* who was politically active having run as a Democratic Party candidate for judge in 1992, Lee Saldívar, a small business owner who served as Chairman of Democratic Precinct 4155 and as a chairman for the city's Community Development Council, Juan Rangel, a former director of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and Rachel Newman (who was Hispanic), an executive with Southwestern Petroleum Corporation who had three adult children that previously attended FWISD schools.

A Controversial Mexican on the School Board?

Ultimately, the Board of Trustees voted unanimously to appoint Newman to fill the newly created position. Members of Fort Worth's South Side Mexican community were puzzled by the selection since she did not have a history of being actively involved in Fort Worth's

[157] Ruth M. Bond, "Hispanics Win School District Spot – Trustees' Move Expected to Avert Long Court Battle," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, July 9, 1994.
[158] Ruth M. Bond, "Hispanics Seek School Board Seat," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, November 29, 1994.

Mexican community up to this point. In fact, leading members of Fort Worth's Southside, the portion of Fort Worth that Newman would represent her, knew nothing about Newman. Roberta Florez, a member of multiple Southside community groups stated, "I've never heard of her. I thought the important thing was that whoever they nominated was active in the neighborhood."[159] Florez supported Saldívar over the "soft-spoken" Newman who admittedly was "not well-versed in statewide education issues."[160] Rufino Mendoza, Jr., the only member of the search committee who voted against Newman's appointment, also argued that Newman lacked the district-wide knowledge that he felt the candidate should have going into the job.[161] One Southside resident went so far as to write a letter to United States Attorney General, Janet Reno, in hopes that the Department of Justice would open an investigation into Newman's appointment to the board of trustees. Despite Mendoza's objection to Newman's appointment, he did not agree with the request to open a federal inquiry into the process saying, "I don't think divisiveness in the community is of any benefit… She should be given the support and the opportunity to show her qualifications and competence."[162] Francisco Hernández, Jr., a Fort Worth attorney who served on the search committee, defended Newman arguing:

> I wanted to put her in there because she looked like she was committed to really working hard for the schools. She moved up in the ranks of a large corporation, she knows the corporate structure. The conduct that you have to follow in the corporate world is very similar to the kind of discipline that you need to get things accomplished in the school board.[163]

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[159] Ruth M. Bond, "Fort Worth School Trustee Tackles Uncharted Territory," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, December 26, 1994.
[160] Ibid.
[161] Ruth M. Bond, "School Board Inquiry Sought - Appointment Draws Criticism," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, December 28, 1994.
[162] Ibid.
[163] Ruth M. Bond, "Fort Worth School Trustee Tackles Uncharted Territory," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, December 26, 1994.

Newman moved to Fort Worth from Beeville, Texas at the age of eighteen in 1966 and gained employment with Southwestern Petroleum as a bilingual Dictaphone typist in 1976. Over the next twelve years, Newman was able to work her way up to Vice President, despite the lack of any college education.

When the 1996 school board elections arrived, both Newman and Rose Herrera ran unopposed for their seats on the FWISD Board of Trustees. Despite predictions to the contrary from trustee Christene Moss, the newly created District 8 remained represented by a member of Fort Worth's Mexican community so following the 1996 election, the FWISD Board of Trustees was comprised of five Anglos, two Mexicans, and two African Americans. In 2000, Herrera was re-elected to her position on the school board, but Newman decided against running for District 8 because of personal reasons, one of which was dealing with the recent death of her husband.

Despite the controversy surrounding her appointment in 1994, Fort Worth's Mexican leaders were sorry to see her leave. Mendoza, who voted against her appointment in 1994, said, "I would not have supported anybody that ran against Rachel… I tried to talk her into staying."[164] Roberta Florez, who was vehemently against Newman's appointment in 1994 added, "I didn't know her at the time, but she's accomplished a lot in this district… She pushed for a lot of new ideas, like after-school programs. She was very receptive to neighborhood input."[165]

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[164] Martha Deller, "District 8 School Trustee to Leave Board after this Term," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, February 25, 2000.
[165] Ibid.

As Newman was about to leave her position on the school board, Herrera, Newman, and the rest of the board of trustees approved construction of four new elementary schools. Two of those elementary schools were named after Mexican labor activist icons in Dolores Huerta and César Chávez, at least symbolically providing evidence that history pertinent to Fort Worth's Mexican population was being recognized.[166] Moreover, in 1998 with Herrera leading the way, the FWISD Board of Trustees approved changing the name of an existing elementary school, Denver Avenue Elementary, to Rufino Mendoza Elementary School, to honor the late Rufino Mendoza, Sr.[167] The idea of naming a school after Mendoza first gained steam about five years earlier, thanks in part to a group called Amigos in Action, an organization that sought to build up Fort Worth's Mexican community by addressing their needs and recognizing Mexican accomplishments in Fort Worth.[168] Juan Rangel, who in 1998 served as chairman of the UHC of Tarrant County, declared, "(Rufino Mendoza) was our role model. He was the César Chávez of education for our city."[169]

A Lack of Apathy

After Newman announced that she would not run for re-election, District 8 was open to a newcomer so Moss's expressed belief that Mexican voters were apathetic and that District 8

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[166] Crystal Yednak, "Names of 4 New Schools Approved - Naming Policy Waived for Manny," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, May 24, 2000.
[167] José Angel Gutiérrez, Michelle Meléndez, and Sonia Adriana Noyola, *Chicanas in Charge: Texas Women in the Public Arena*, Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, 2007, 244.
[168] Gracie Bonds Staples, "Friends' Strategy Campaign Activates Community Group," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, October 13, 1993.
[169] Michelle Meléndez, "Denver Avenue School to be Renamed for Mendoza," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, December 9, 1998.

would be taken over by an Anglo trustee could again be a concern. Todd Dailey, Sr., an Anglo mortgage banker who financed his own campaign filed to run for the open District 8 seat following Newman's announcement. Dailey's son did not attend a Fort Worth ISD school for kindergarten but instead attended a Montessori school, but Dailey served the FWISD as a volunteer mentor at Daggett Elementary. Dailey proposed that all new FISD schools become a magnet school, with special curriculum and higher standards than traditional public schools.[170] Running against Dailey was Juan Rangel, Jr. Rangel had by this time established a history of serving Fort Worth's Mexican community despite the fact that he failed to gain the District 8 seat when it first became available in 1994. Rangel earned degrees in political science and public administration from the University of North Texas prior to his involvement with the UHC. Rangel also previously served as chairman of Tarrant County's Southwest Voter Registration Project, an organization that had deep roots in Texas's Chicano movement of the 1960s and 1970s, and he directed the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce in the 1990s.[171]

Would Fort Worth's District 8 Mexican voters be too apathetic to elect a member of their own community? The answer was a resounding "no." Rangel easily beat Dailey in the May 6, 2000 election, taking over 63 percent of the votes cast. In fact, Herrera had a much tighter race in District 1 as she was dealing with a well-publicized delinquent tax problem that forced her to consider withdrawing from the race altogether. Herrera won her race by only forty-one votes, but by 2002 Herrera would recover strongly, serving as acting president after the demise

[170] Michelle Meléndez, "District 8 Candidate Favors Building Magnets," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 18, 2000.
[171] Martha Deller, "Hispanic Leader Seeks District 8 School Board Seat – The Incumbent is not Running to Retain the Fort Worth Post," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, March 11, 2000.

of sitting president, Gary Manny, and subsequently becoming the first Mexican vice president on the FWISD Board of Trustees.

Fort Worth's Mexican community fought for several years for recognition as a distinct and protected minority group after high courts had already declared Mexican Americans to be distinct minorities in other areas in 1970 and 1973. In 1981 the FWISD finally agreed to give Mexican Americans minority status while agreeing to increase the number of Mexican American employees, including "teachers, librarians, counselors, medical personnel, and other administrators"[172] Historically, Mexicans who were often referred to statistically as "other white," "Spanish," Spanish American," "Mexican," and "Mexican American," "Hispanic," and "Latino," have had difficulty fitting into Anglo American society and these problems often resulted in conflict and misunderstanding. Legally people of Mexican descent were considered white immediately after the United States took possession of Texas and the Mexican Cession in the mid-nineteenth century, but the brownness of their skin and their Spanish linguistic background marked them as different from traditional whites in the minds of Anglo Americans. This interpersonal and psychological frustration has repeatedly led to educational impediments and sometimes outright failure. Although the FWISD gave recognition to and included Mexican Americans in the decision-making process, particularly in matters of desegregation, the FWISD failed to give Mexican American children a congruous number of Mexican American role models that could have served as examples of Mexican Americans who had succeeded in education.

[172] *Flax v. Potts*, 915 F.2d 155, 157 (5th Cir. 1990).

At the end of the twentieth century, the FWISD board of trustees was comprised of two Mexicans, two African Americans, and five Anglos. While Mexicans in Fort Worth proved they were not as apathetic as they were sometimes accused of being, the school board still did not come close to matching the district's student population. By 2000, the FWISD's student population was 43 percent Mexican (Hispanic), 32 percent African American, and only 23 percent Anglo. Despite the fact that Anglo students made up less that one-fourth of the student population, the school board was still filled by a white majority that had the ability to win any vote placed before them if they chose to do so. As has been seen in the past also, the white majority at times was able to use Mexicans and African Americans against one another to maintain the status quo as African Americans sought to retain the power (albeit a relatively small amount of power compared to the white majority) they had beginning in the 1970s.

The Mexican-American population, particularly the young population boomed over the last three decades of the twentieth century, but the representational power did not grow in a corresponding manner. It was not until the Mexican community had almost 30 percent of the student population that Mexican representation on the FWISD Board of Trustees held over 11 percent of the board and with over 40 percent of the student population at the end of the century, the board only held a 22 percent Mexican population. Thanks to the likes of Rufino Mendoza, Sr., Rufino Mendoza, Jr., Carlos Puente, Eva Herrera, and those who gave rise in the 1990s, the Mexican population has made its presence known, but power sufficient to match their numbers eluded them. Part of this was because the white majority fought to hold on to its power while simultaneously, African American leaders waged their own battles that often kept the Mexican community from gaining momentum.

CHAPTER V

READY TO RUN

Before explaining the Chicano situation in late twentieth-century Fort Worth, one should first understand a little about how the city council is comprised and when these standards were established. In December of 1924, with the prodding of local businessmen, the city of Fort Worth moved from a city-commission form of government that held five commissioners and one mayor to a council-manager form of government with nine elected council members who were voted at-large, one of which would be elected mayor by the council itself and a city manager that would be hired by the council. Early on this form of government was accused of being a "rich man's government" since wealthy businessmen, often directly associated with the conservative Good Government League (GGL) beginning in the 1920s, were feared to have much influence on who would be elected to city council.[173] City council terms have always been set at two years and, until 1989, elections for city council were held in April of each odd year when election-day was pushed back to early May.

Despite the fact that Fort Worth's population was almost five times larger in 2010 than it was in 1925, the size of the city council had not changed since the first elections under the council-manager form of government that was first utilized in the 1925 election; however, in 1964 Fort Worth voters approved a change to the city charter that allowed for the mayor to be elected by direct vote. Moreover, from 1925 to 1975, all council positions were voted in by at-large elections making it difficult for any minority to gain office since council members were not

[173] Eric Wake, "A Study in Conservative Politics: The Fort Worth City Council, 1925-1938," (Master's Thesis, Texas Christian University, 1967), 11.

responsible to communities. Understandably then, going into the 1970s the City of Fort Worth had never seen an elected Mexican official in office but that does not mean the Mexican community had not previously endorsed a Latino to take office in Fort Worth.[174]

Prior to Fort Worth's Chicano Movement, Harold Valderas, who was born in New York City in 1923 to a Chilean father and Irish-Polish mother, moved to Fort Worth, Texas in 1955 after serving in the Korean War and he quickly made a name for himself. Valderas graduated with a law degree from Southern Methodist University and became the only Latino attorney with a private practice in Fort Worth when he moved there. In 1969 Valderas ran for Mayor of Fort Worth finishing with a disappointing 12.8 percent of the total vote, losing to R.M. Stovall and not taking enough votes to force a runoff between Stovall and the runner-up, DeWitt McKinley.

Although not technically a Chicano, Valderas was well-known in the Chicano community due to his involvement with local Latino organizations like the American GI Forum which would influence future Chicano political players. Valderas along with established Fort Worth Mexican businessmen like Manuel Jara, Samuel García, and Gilbert García represented the more conservative Latino generation that would both mentor and clash with rising Chicano politically active players in Fort Worth.[175] Valderas went on to become the first Latino judge in North Texas when he was appointed municipal judge for the city of Fort Worth in 1971.[176]

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[174] I use the term Latino here because Harold Valderas was not of Mexican origin but he became a leader for the Mexican community.

[175] José Gonzales, interview by author, Arlington, Texas, March 25, 2012; Carlos Puente, interview by author, Fort Worth, Texas, March 15, 2012.

[176] Courtney Mahaffey, "Harold Valderas," *Voces Oral History Project*, The University of Texas at Austin, http://www.lib.utexas.edu/voces/template-stories-indiv.html?work_urn=urn

A Minority on the At-Large Elected Council

While Fort Worth's Mexican community failed to see the visible and measureable success in the 1960s that comes along with having representation on the city council, Fort Worth's African American community realized tangible success in 1967 when Dr. Edward Guinn became the first African American elected to city council. Guinn, who earned his medical degree from the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston, Texas in 1956, ran for city council in 1965 after a group of black students from Texas Christian University prodded him to run for office.[177] The 1965 election actually witnessed two African Americans vie for city council seats with Guinn seeking a victory in Place 3 and Reverend L.C. Henegan running in Place 5. Although Fort Worth's African American community made up less than 20 percent of the city's total population, Guinn won over 30 percent of votes for Place 3 while Henegan only took about 7 percent of the votes in Place 5. Since all city council positions were voted at large and Fort Worth's Anglo population held a dominant majority in the 1960s and through the 1970s, the likelihood of an African American being elected to a seat on the council was slim unless important/influential members of the white community aided in the election process.

By the time the 1967 election arrived, a new version of the Good Government League had arisen. Although the 1960s' version of the Good Government League (GGL) had no affiliation with GGL of the 1920s, the new version would prove to be highly influential. The new

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percent3Autlol percent3Awwlatin.425&work_title=Valderas percent2C+Harold (Accessed April 13, 2012).

[177] Gary Cartwright, "Community – Edward W. Guinn: When Duty Calls in Fort Worth's Worst Neighborhood, the Doctor Is In," *Texas Monthly*, September, 1999, http://www.texasmonthly.com/articles/community-%e2%80%a2-edward-w-guinn/ (Accessed January 29, 2017)

GGL was created in 1966 and was inspired by the Citizens Charter Association of Dallas. The GGL consisted of Fort Worth business and professional leaders who endeavored to put together their resources in an effort to "encourage qualified men to seek local offices" such as positions on the city council, Fort Worth School Board, and the Tarrant County Water Control and Improvement Board.[178] GGL members were required to pay a $12 membership fee and all members were required to vote for the candidates the GGL supported. Guinn decided to run for city council again in 1967 and is credited by one historian as being a "team player."[179] As such, Guinn garnered the support of the GGL in his quest for the Place 6 city council position in 1967 as he ran against Tommy Thompson, a controversial ex-councilman who "sharply criticized municipal policies" for Place 6.[180] Although Thompson received more votes than Guinn in the April 4th election, he failed to win the majority resulting in the need for a run-off election. Moreover, out of the eight contested city council positions, six required run-off elections as the GGL had a difficult time fighting off accusations from independents that the organization was a power-hungry group that wanted to take over Fort Worth city politics.

Following the April 4th election, GGL-backed candidates began using a more aggressive approach to win their places. Guinn alleged that "a powerful clique of so-called independents is attempting to take over city hall at the expense of tax payers." Another GGL-backed candidates named Frank G. Dunham, Jr. added, "There cannot help but be a conflict of interest and self-

[178] Carl Freund, "April Vote to Test Government Group," *Dallas Morning News*, December 27, 1966; Unknown author, "Fort Worth's New League," *Dallas Morning News*, December 28, 1966.
[179] Richard Selcer, *A History of Fort Worth in Black & White*, Denton, TX: University of North Texas Press, 2015, 485.
[180] Carl Freund, "Fort Worth Voters to Decide on Bid by Negro Physician," *Dallas Morning News*, April 2, 1967.

gain which will affect the pocketbook of every Fort Worth taxpayer and property owner."[181] As emotions ran high, Fort Worth's electorate responded by voting in record numbers. Over 36,000 Fort Worth residents voted in the April 18 run-off election, destroying the previous run-off election record by over 12,000 votes. The result of the election was a clean-sweep for all GGL-backed candidates. Additionally, Guinn received more votes than any other candidate in the run-off election and was helped by "heavy numbers" of African American voters along with feelings of discontent towards the controversial Thompson.[182] About a month after Guinn won a seat on the Fort Worth City Council, President Lyndon B. Johnson invited Guinn to the White House as a celebration of the momentous event from Johnson's home state.

After the election of Fort Worth's first African American councilman, evidence that the City of Fort Worth was making a point of being a more visibly race-conscious city arose quickly. During Guinn's first year in office, he helped draft a controversial race ordinance that passed through city council with GGL council members voting unanimously to pass the ordinance. The ordinance stated:

> It is hereby declared to be the public policy of the City of Fort Worth that all of its residents… should enjoy equal freedom to pursue their aspirations and that discrimination against any individual or group because of race, creed, color or national origin is detrimental to the peace, progress and welfare of the city.[183]

While several white Fort Worth residents were concerned that businesses could be adversely affected by the new ordinance simply by falling prey to false accusations, Guinn responded, "I

[181] West Texas Bureau of the News, "League Candidates Taking Offensive," *Dallas Morning News*, April 12, 1967.
[182] Carl Freund, "League Sweeps Election," *Dallas Morning News*, April 19, 1967; Carl Freund, "Victorious 'League' Faces Uncertainty," *Dallas Morning News*, April 20, 1967.
[183] Carl Freund, "Race Ordinance Given Council OK," *Dallas Morning News*, July 4, 1967.

feel their apprehension is baseless… We had dire predictions over what would take place when we began to integrate our schools. These predictions did not come true. And I'm sure that much of the concern we're hearing over this ordinance is just as baseless."[184] While on the council, Guinn attempted to represent minority concerns while simultaneously mollifying Anglo concerns.

In addition to trying to assuage anxious Anglo residents, Guinn also served as a buffer against African American criticism when allegations of unnecessary police violence against African Americans became a hot issue in 1968. Under the direction on Reverend James Davis, a fifty-member African American delegation drafted a resolution that alleged "black citizens of the All-American city of Fort Worth are not safe, not protected and not the true recipients of law and order."[185] Guinn replied by telling the delegation, "I don't think there has been any deliberate attempt to execute anyone. We must remember that, while incidents may trigger riots, so may words."[186] Guinn proceeded to defend the Fort Worth police by reminding the delegation that the Fort Worth Police Department had recently opened a neighborhood office specifically for the African American community in addition to the fact that the police chief (Cato Hightower) had made a point of hiring more African American police officers and training officers on how to handle minority groups. By adding a black voice to the city council, Fort Worth employed a voice for the city that racially represented a discontented population that comprised almost 20 percent of the people it represented.

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[184] Carl Freund, "'White Backlash' Looms over Fort Worth Law," *Dallas Morning News*, November 28, 1969.
[185] Fort Worth Bureau of the News, "Negro Councilman Replies," *Dallas Morning News*, October 29, 1968.
[186] Ibid.

After serving on the city council for a little over a year, Guinn expressed to his friends that he was already considering retiring from public service. According to his close acquaintances, Guinn needed more time to devote to his medical practice and he also believed there were more qualified African Americans who should gain the opportunity to serve on the city council, although there was no guarantee, or even a likelihood, that in an at-large voting system another African American would be elected. At the same time, there was also speculation that other GGL-backed candidates were considering stepping down from the city council following their two-year term, in part because they were tired of the "constant fighting and bickering between the majority faction and the minority (faction)." This minority faction allegedly ran as independents but "were supported by a coalition of real estate developers and ultra-conservative groups."[187] Ultimately, Guinn ran unopposed for re-election in 1969 leading to a second term on the Fort Worth City Council.

Following Valderas' run for mayor and on the coattails of Guinn's decision not to run for re-election in 1971, Place 6 represented a city council seat that appeared to serve as an opportunity for continued minority representation, setting the stage for a black versus brown race. As such, Dick Salinas, a South Side record shop manager who served on the Fort Worth Community Relations Board that was created following the rise of the new race ordinance, decided to run for the open vacant seat. While serving on the Community Relations Board, Salinas spoke up for the Mexican community. Salinas reported a widespread belief that Fort Worth needed to address alleged discriminatory practices against Fort Worth's Mexican

[187] Carl Freund, "Negro Councilman Talks of Retiring," *Dallas Morning News*, September 10, 1968.

population from banks, large department stores, and school officials in Fort Worth.[188] Running against Salinas was an African American who resided in southeastern Fort Worth named Leonard Briscoe.

While Guinn had the backing of downtown businessmen, he lacked the support of real estate developers. In contrast, Briscoe, himself, was a real estate dealer and he also had the backing of downtown business leaders.[189] Despite the fact that four other candidates were also vying for Place 6 leading to predictions that a run-off would be likely, Briscoe won the majority of votes in the April 6, 1971, keeping African American representation on the city council while keeping Mexicans out of office.

In addition to Salinas, two other Mexican community leaders sought a seat on the city council in the 1971 election. Joe Lazo also placed his hat in the ring, running for Place 7 on the city council. Lazo owned a downtown restaurant and was an active, long-time member of All Saints Catholic Church, the same church where Rufina Mendoza first met with the first MAEAC members in 1971. Lazo was also actively involved with the Political Association of Spanish-Speaking Organization (PASSO) and would spend a lifetime in service of the Mexican community, eventually serving as president of the International Good Neighbor Council and president of LULAC Fort Worth.[190] In addition to his own personal involvement, Lazo used the basement of his restaurant to host meetings for Mexican leaders like Sam García and Gilbert García during the 1960s. At these meetings about a half-dozen Mexican community leaders met

[188] West Texas Bureau of the News, "Fort Worth Race Board Asks for More Negroes," August 2, 1967.
[189] Carl Freund, "Stovall, Challengers Begin to Heat up Mayoral Contest," *Dallas Morning News*, April 5, 1971.
[190] Zapata interview; Joe Lazo Obituary, January 30, 2005.

monthly in order to plan ways that they could help improve the position of Mexicans in Fort Worth. Gilbert García said in an interview, "We had no chairman. No treasurer. No secretary. We just wanted to sit down and talk and exchange ideas."[191]

The other Mexican candidate in the 1971 election was Juanita Zepeda. Both Juanita and her husband, Pete, were active in Fort Worth's Mexican community. Both Juanita Zepeda and Lazo were well known on Fort Worth's North Side, which, beginning in the late 1960s, started to see a lack of representation in the council. In fact, not only were Mexicans not represented on the city council, but the two parts of town that held the highest numbers of Mexican residents witnessed a lack of representation from the late 1960s through the mid-1970s. After the 1969 municipal election, the North Side had no representation and the two council members (DeWitt McKinley and Harris Hoover) who were considered to be "North Siders" before 1969 actually did not live in the North Side, but instead they owned businesses in the North Side and participated in North Side civic affairs.[192]

Following the 1971 election, Mexicans, North Siders and South Siders were still absent from the city council. Out of the three Mexicans running for city council in 1971, Lazo gained the highest percentage of votes at 25 percent. Neither Lazo nor Mrs. Zepeda would run for city council again and Dick Salinas ran once more in 1973 where he again faced Leonard Briscoe. In the 1973 election, Salinas took nearly 25 percent of the vote but was still easily beaten by the incumbent, Briscoe. While Lazo and Zepeda were linked to Fort Worth's traditional North Side

[191] Gracie Bonds Staples, Hispanic Club Alters Format for Meetings," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, August 18, 1992.
[192] Fort Worth Bureau of the News, "New Fort Worth Council Left without 'North Sider,'" April 10, 1969.

community, where the densest Mexican community resided and still resides today, Salinas lived on the South Side and was one of the founding members and the first president of the Fort Worth Mexican-American Chamber of Commerce (now the Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce) in downtown Fort Worth.[193] Juanita Zepeda was also actively involved in the Mexican-American Chamber of Commerce. In fact, both Juanita and her husband Pete Zepeda along with Salinas, Ron Fernández, and Manuel Jara served as co-founders of the Mexican-American Chamber of Commerce in 1974. Clearly, business-minded Mexicans had an active desire to see Mexican representation on the Fort Worth City Council by the early 1970s and were taking steps to see this happen.

Instead of representing all sections of Fort Worth, the 1971 city council had several members who were relatively close to one another instead of representing different parts of Fort Worth. The southwestern part of Fort Worth was represented by three members and Fort Worth's East Side had two council members. Another member lived just about two or three miles from the southwestern part of the city where the first group of three lived while one member lived in western Fort Worth and Briscoe lived in Southeast Fort Worth.[194] After the 1973 election, five out of the nine city council members were practically neighbors with each of them living on the southwestern part of Fort Worth and still the North Side and South Side lacked representation (See Map 2). Those who were victorious in the 1973 election won in large part thanks to an organization referred to as the "Downtown group" as the GGL was no longer

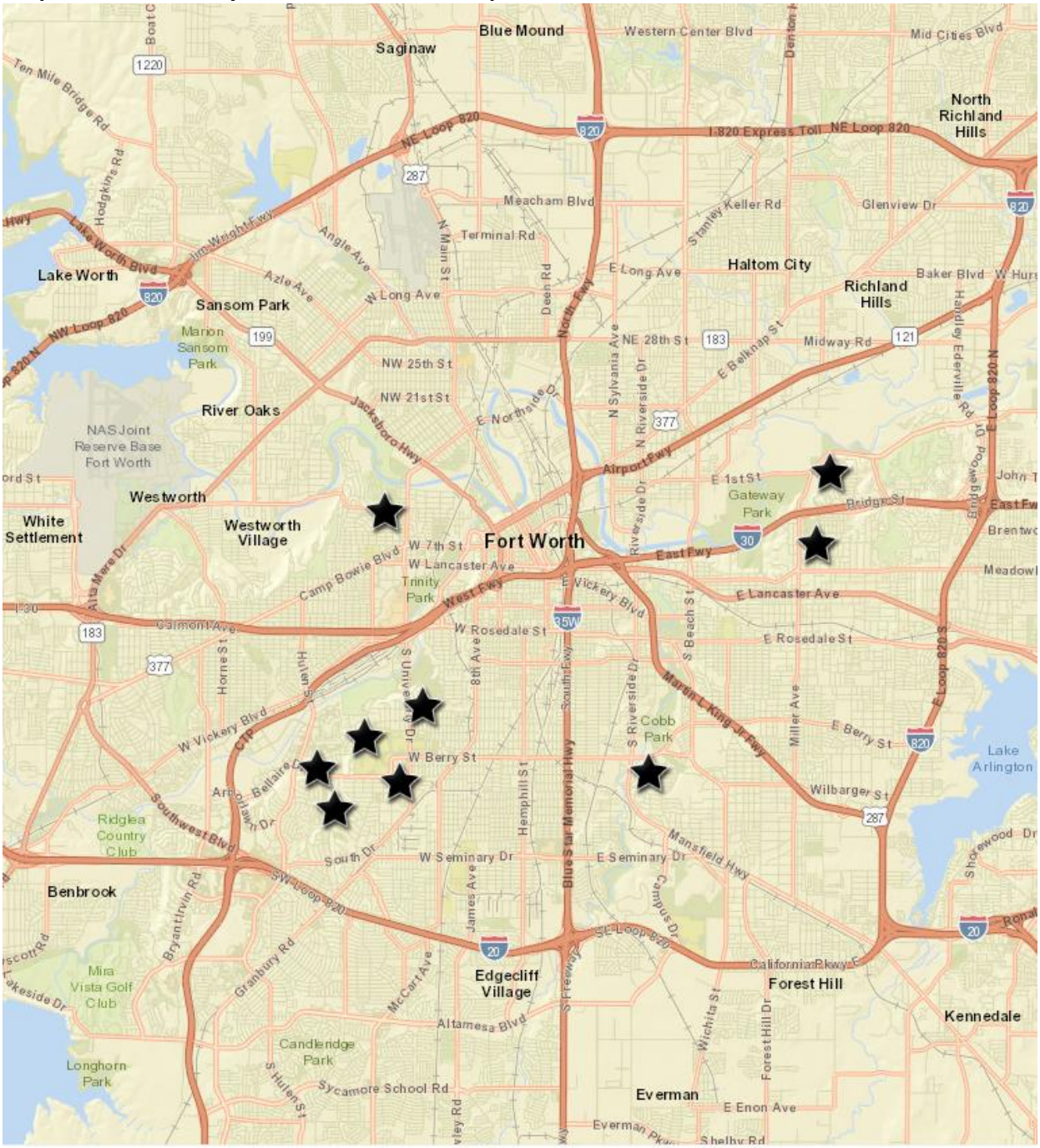
[193] Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, "Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce History," http://www.fwhcc.org/Mission-History.145.0.html (Accessed April 13, 2012)
[194] Carl Freund, "Fort Worth Councilmen Distributed in Wide Area," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 11, 1971.

active. As evidence, eight of the nine candidates who won their places were supported by the "Downtown group."[195]

Certainly, by the early 1970s, as the Mexican population began to grow in both the North Side and the South Side, those parts of Fort Worth had lost their representation. On Map 2, it is easy to see that in 1973 the areas directly north and south of downtown Fort Worth show a lack of council representatives. Meanwhile, the area close to Texas Christian University on the city's Southwest side reflects a noticeable cluster of members who, while making decisions on behalf of their city, would clearly be affected by their similar and shared environment. Texas Christian University is located at the intersection of W Berry Street and S University Drive almost centrally located among the cluster of five stars on Map 2, each of which represented the address where city council members resided in 1973. It is almost as though the two primary spaces being occupied by Mexicans were losing their space in Fort Worth as part of the preferred citizenry. In 1975, Map 3 shows that most of the power structure remained in the near southwest/TCU vicinity while almost all power was removed from the east Fort Worth's eastern half as only one city council member resided east of Interstate 35. Still, the North Side, immediate South Side and the city center lacked representation. Nevertheless, momentum was beginning to build for a movement to establish single-member voting districts in Fort Worth in the mid-1970s while the City of Dallas, Texas was in the process of fighting a lawsuit to keep from moving toward single-member districts.

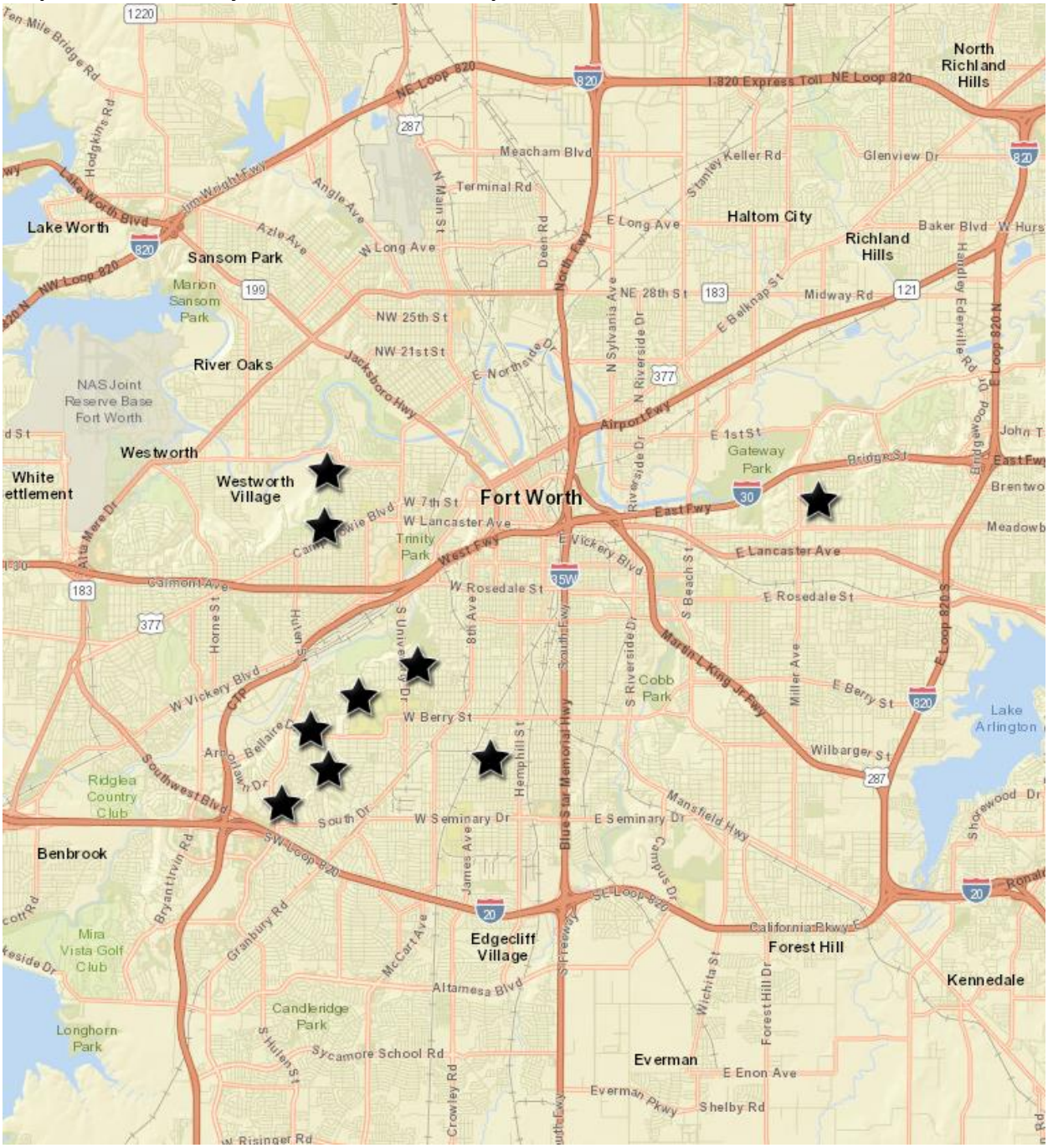
[195] Carl Freund, "'Downtowners' Victorious in City Election," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 5, 1973.

Map 2: 1973 Fort City Council Residence Map



Information for this map was gathered using descriptive accounts through the *Dallas Morning News* and by utilizing R.L. Polk & Co., *Fort Worth, Texas, City Directory*, Dallas: R.L. Polk & Co., 1973.

Map 3: 1975 Fort City Council Residence Map



Information for this map was gathered using descriptive accounts through the *Dallas Morning News* and by utilizing R.L. Polk & Co., *Fort Worth, Texas, City Directory*, Dallas: R.L. Polk & Co., 1975.

Raza Unida and Fort Worth

Entering the 1970s many young Mexicans in Fort Worth did not think the established leadership had done enough to politically educate Fort Worth's Mexican population. Of course the early 1970s was a time when the more aggressive Chicano movement was rising up in Texas and beyond. Although Fort Worth clearly had an established group of leaders who were making efforts toward equality and progress, these established leaders tended to be highly involved in the business world as many of them had ties to the Chamber of Commerce and were generally associated with organizations like the American GI Forum and LULAC. Like many other parts of the American Southwest, and certainly similar to other areas of Texas, the youthful, energetic Chicano movement was taking shape in Fort Worth.

Instead of pursuing political power through organizations like the American GI Forum, José Gonzales, born in 1934, took a separate path by joining the Tarrant County Chapter of the Mexican American Youth Organization (MAYO) in 1969 and subsequently forming the Raza Unida Party (RUP) in Tarrant County in October, 1971. After previously joining the American GI Forum and giving the Forum what he thought was "some needed blood," Gonzales left the Forum, feeling disillusioned and often times angered by the established, business-like organization that held much of the Mexican-American power structure in Fort Worth. Soon after leaving the Forum, Gonzales entrenched himself in the rising Chicano movement led by José Angel Gutiérrez and Mario Compeán in South Texas. Gonzales felt a special affinity for Compeán and deeply admired two-time Raza Unida gubernatorial candidate Ramsey Muñiz. Considered as a possible, if not likely, Raza Unida gubernatorial candidate in 1972 had Muñiz

declined the nomination, Gonzales went as far as to name one of his sons Ramsey shortly after Gonzales and Muñiz were introduced to one another.[196]

After establishing the Raza Unida Party in Tarrant County, Gonzales, along with other members like Delores Geisel, Michael Suárez, Becky Pedroza, Carlos Puente, and Jesse Aguilera focused on educating Mexicans in the Fort Worth area and driving voter registration. Raza Unida members argued that there was too much apathy among Mexican Americans in Tarrant County and they wanted "to get the young voters to the polls."[197] Moreover, one major concern Raza Unida attempted to overcome was the problem that "some Mexican Americans who have run for office… won't admit to being 'Mexicano, much less Chicano.'"[198] Furthermore, Raza Unida party members called for voting rights to be extended to undocumented residents who had lived in the United States for at least five years, thus attempting to remove the "foreignness" of being Mexican in the United States. Gonzales himself claims the reason he became involved in Raza Unida was not to pursue an avenue that would benefit him, but instead he wanted to encourage Mexicans to be politically active in the Fort Worth area.[199]

Although Raza Unida members were intent on helping North Texas Mexicans remove their perceived foreignness, they had their work cut out for them. During the early 1960s, over 200,000 Mexicans were welcomed into the United States each year through the Bracero Program and regular admissions for permanent residency so when the Immigration Act of 1965 set an annual quota of 20,000 Mexican immigrants, the U.S. federal government virtually

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[196] Gonzales interview.
[197] Bob Ray Sanders, "Raza Ponders County Race," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, October 14, 1971, Morning edition.
[198] Ibid.
[199] Gonzales interview.

created "illegal" Mexicans.[200] In fact for most of the twentieth century up until the Immigration Act of 1965, Mexicans were encouraged to enter the United States in large numbers in order to provide cheap labor, mainly for large agricultural employers. Once this new quota was set, crossing the border without documentation became a much more viable option for many Mexican immigrants. During the early 1970s the "alien epidemic" in the Dallas-Fort Worth area was such a cause for concern that it was not uncommon for police officers to randomly interrogate groups of Mexicans, questioning their citizenship status and asking for documentation.[201] Documented Mexicans were partly blamed for this "epidemic" since they did not report undocumented Mexicans to local authorities. G.L. Duarte, a columnist for *El Sol*, a Dallas area Spanish language newspaper, claimed that documented Mexicans in the Dallas-Fort Worth area "don't recognize the Rio Grande as anything but an artificial boundary. The two countries are one in their mind."

Through the early 1970s, the Dallas-Fort Worth area was "the second-largest inland destination for illegal aliens in the nation" with only Los Angeles, California receiving more undocumented Mexicans.[202] Mexicans, perceived as cheap labor alternatives to American workers, were blamed for driving up unemployment but Dallas' unemployment rate was exceptionally low in 1974 with less than three percent of the population jobless. Instead of taking jobs white Americans wanted, undocumented Mexicans often took jobs that in previous

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[200] Ngai, 261.
[201] Washington Bureau of the News, "Alien Epidemic Cited by Collins," *The Dallas Morning News*, May 14, 1971.
[202] Mike Kingston, "They Keep Coming: Any End to the Illegal Alien Problem?" *The Dallas Morning News*, June 21, 1974; Unknown Author, "Brown Tide Rising," *The Dallas Morning News*, June 22, 1971.

days were reserved for African Americans. In 1972, activist and North Texas Mexican community leader René Martínez said that wealthy Dallas suburban matrons wanted Mexican maids because "you can't get a black anymore so you have to look for a Mexican girl."[203] By this time, African Americans were no longer considered exogenous labor so importing "help" was a simple solution for those who had the means, and this mentality enhanced the image of Mexicans as non-American, imported laborers.

Using Martínez's comments while evaluating the position of Mexicans in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, it is clear that Mexicans were seen as exogenous people. As such, the Euro-American population failed to see Mexicans as citizens, but instead Mexicans were seen as tools of an American economy that sought cheap, exogenous labor in ordwer to replace the fading African American labor that fled the field for the cities and was in the midst of claiming citizenship through a well-publicized and wide-spread civil rights movement. This repositioning of people is in line with Veracini's analysis of settler colonies while also satisfying Ngai's contentions that Mexicans, like various Asian groups before them and in the contemporary setting, were subjects of an imperial structure who were not assumed citizens based upon their ethnic background and racial construction.

In preparation for Raza Unida's state convention in June, 1972, Tarrant County's Raza Unida members elected new delegates and officers in May, 1972. José (then referred to as Joe) Gonzales, was elected Chair, Joe Ortega vice-chair, Evey Chapa secretary, and Carlos Puente was elected treasurer. Additionally, Jesse Aguilera, who would much later become involved in

[203] Maryln Schwartz, "Illegal Labor Surfaces in Posh Suburbs," *The Dallas Morning News*, December 24, 1972.

Fort Worth city politics, was elected as one of Tarrant County's six delegates. In September, 1972 the Raza Unida Party established its Tarrant County headquarters at 1540-B North Main Street, in the heart of Fort Worth's North Side community. By April, 1974, Carlos Puente took over as Tarrant County Chair while also serving as state vice-chair for Raza Unida. By this time, Raza Unida in Tarrant County was trying harder "to dilute the image that it's solely a Chicano Party, especially in North Texas."[204] Puente argued that the Raza Unida Party "has strength in Tarrant County because its local organization has been maintained year-round (and) because it's involved in Fort Worth issues such as… drawing up single-member districting plans."[205] Soon single-member districting would become a significant issue in Fort Worth in general and specifically for Chicanos in Fort Worth.

The Rise of Single-Member Districts in the Fort Worth City Council

In the summer of 1974, the City of Fort Worth was considering moving toward single-member districts, although understandably, there were many in power who did not want the change. City Attorney S.G. Johndroe went as far as to say that he could not advise the city council on moving forward with adopting a single-member district plan because he argued single-member districts violated the state constitution. Johndroe argued that "the state constitution prohibits cities from electing councilmen on a single-member district basis" despite the fact that Harold D. Hammett, chairman of the Fort Worth Charter Review and Revision Commission, stated that single-member district seats do not conflict with the Texas

[204] Kathy Miller, *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 28, 1974; Mike Kingston, "Fueling Mexican-American Problems?" *The Dallas Morning News*, May 19, 1971.
[205] Ibid.

Constitution.[206] Hammett explained that there had been a series of cases beginning as early as 1885 that upheld single-member districts.

Over the next few months, city council members began considering their options on how to handle the established nine-person council. In early January of 1975, the city council was leaning toward establishing a 5-4 system in which the council would be built upon five single-member districts, three at-large districts, and a mayor that would also be voted at-large but by the end of the month the council expressed a desire to place an 8-1 option on the ballot for the voters.[207] The 8-1 option would create eight single-member districts with only the mayor voted at-large. Part of the reason for this move was because minority group leaders stated that if Fort Worth did not create eight single-member districts they would file a suit through the U.S. District Court, essentially following the lead of Dallas' minority leaders.

Meanwhile, City Attorney Johndroe advised council members they could ask voters to approve an authorization to create "up to eight" single-member districts. Johndroe argued that if the "up-to-eight" measure passed, then Fort could see how the Dallas case, among others, would be handled in the courts prior to obligating the city to create eight single-member districts if they truly did not desire that many.[208] One of the main proponents on the 8-1 plan was the lone minority on the council, Leonard Briscoe. City councilman Joe Bruce Cunningham led the push for the 5-3-1 plan. Briscoe contended that the 5-3-1 plan would result in districts

[206] Fort Worth Bureau of the news, "Chairman Sees 'No Conflict': Single-Member Seats Cited," *Dallas Morning News*, July 28, 1974.
[207] Fort Worth Bureau of the News, "Charter Election Vote Scheduled," *Dallas Morning News*, January 7, 1975; Carl Freund, "FW Mayor Favors 8-1 Council Plan," *Dallas Morning News*, January 26, 1975.
[208] Carl Freund, "FW Mayor Favors 8-1 Council Plan," *Dallas Morning News*, January 26, 1975.

that would be too large with as many as 80,000 Fort Worth residents in some of the districts. Mayor R.M. Stovall threw his support behind the 8-1 plan saying he wanted to give the voters a "clear cut decision," although later statements provide evidence that Stovall may have wanted to provide an ultimatum to Fort Worth voters. Ultimately, the council decided to place the 8-1 plan on the ballot for voters to approve or deny.[209]

As the April 8 election drew near, outgoing Mayor Stovall (who decided not to run for re-election) "blasted" the 8-1 plan that he supported placing on the ballot just a few months earlier. Perhaps the decision to support the idea of placing the 8-1 plan before voters was simply to kill the idea by having the people of Fort Worth defeat the measure before minority populations became too populous. Stovall supported the majority of charter changes that were on the ballot but he said, "the issue of single-member district would do more harm than good."[210] In fact, Stovall believed the implementation of single-member districts would be disastrous for the City of Fort Worth since councilmen and councilwomen would focus too much on what was good for the people of their district instead of what was best for the city as a whole. Apparently, Stovall did not believe that people who lived in areas like the North Side and South Side, where representation was nil-to-scarce, should be as concerned for their homes and neighborhoods as they should have felt for Fort Worth's business leaders. Stovall further expressed concern that in order to get votes, council members would have to appease their constituents, or as Stovall put it, "'back scratch' to get the required votes for their district projects."[211]

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[209] Pat Svacina, "Voters to Make Decision," *Dallas Morning News*, January 28, 1975.
[210] Pat Svacina, "Single-Member Proposal Blasted," *Dallas Morning News*, April 7, 1975.
[211] Ibid.

In the 1975 Fort Worth municipal election, African American councilman Leonard Briscoe lost his re-election bid and, furthermore, no Mexicans ran for city council. As a result, the 1975 Fort Worth City Council consisted of eight white men and one white woman (Margret Rimmer). Despite the lack of "minority" representation, the 1975 election was crucial for future representation. Fort Worth voters approved the charter amendment that created eight single-member districts with a mayor who would still be voted at-large by popular vote. By the slimmest of margins, about 50.3 percent (13,336 to 13,171) of Fort Worth voters passed the single-member district plan. Unfortunately, records do not indicate what kind of effect Chicano voters had on the passage of this plan, but with such a small margin, every vote truly counted.

Money and Single-Member Districts

Following the 1975 election, Carl Freund of the *Dallas Morning News* declared, "The new procedure will let a candidate campaign within his district in a limited budget. He will put the views if groups within his district above those of downtown leaders."[212] Freund added that minority groups and liberals spearheaded the campaign to get voter approval for the 8-1 plan in part because they though councilmen gave too much control over City Hall to the "Seventh Street Gang." The Seventh Street Gang was a nickname given to downtown businessmen, like those from the earlier Good Government League and the later "Downtown Group." Essentially, by creating eight single-member districts, the idea was to weaken the power of the rich,

[212] Carl Freund, "Redistricting May Topple FW Power Structure," *Dallas Morning News*, April 10, 1975.

powerful downtown businessmen but history shows us that this truly did not happen. Over the last three or four years of the 1990s, from the beginning of 1996 through April of 1999, close to $767,000 was donated to city council members (This number would skyrocket in the early 2000s). Out of the $767,000, over 34 percent of donations (approximately $261,000) were given by Political Action Committees, Trade associations, and businesses. Moreover, about 24 percent of all reported political contributions to city council members, regardless of district, came from the 76102 zip code in downtown Fort Worth. Additionally, contributors from the four zip codes that stretched from downtown into Southwestern Fort Worth (where city council members were prominent in the late 1960s and for most of the 1970s) contributed almost 52 percent of all donations. Clearly, single-member districts would not stop downtown financiers from playing a major role in city politics.[213]

After the 1975 election, five members again lived in close proximity to one another in Southwestern Fort Worth including Mayor Clif Overcash. Since the mayor would still be voted at-large, there was a good chance that the remaining four members would likely have to face one another if each were to seek re-election in 1977, although one of the councilmen, Henry Meadows, could have been moved to a district just to the east that would have placed him in competition with another councilman, Woodie Woods, who now represented South Fort Worth.[214] In 1975, South Fort Worth had representation on the council but North Side did not, and as a result of Briscoe's loss, Southeast Fort Worth also lacked representation.

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[213] Kristin N. Sullivan, "Firefighters PAC leads Fort Worth Donor List," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, May 2, 1999.
[214] Fort Worth Bureau of the News, "4 May Clash for Council," *Dallas Morning News*, May 6, 1975.

Almost immediately following the 1975 election, the city council began exploring ways to draw up district maps. Out of Fort Worth's 185 voting precincts, African Americans held a majority population in seventeen. Twelve of the seventeen precincts were southeast of downtown while Mexicans only held a majority population in four precincts - three on the north side and one on the south side. Furthermore, four precincts held a majority-minority population in which Mexicans and African Americans could theoretically join together to keep Anglos from maintaining a supermajority.[215]

While the rise of single-member districts held promise for both African Americans and Mexicans, funding campaigns and driving voters would still be an issue. Fortunately for those who sought African American representation on the city council, Fort Worth created two districts, Districts 5 and 8, that held supermajorities for African Americans meaning that so long as African Americans wanted political representation on the council, they would safely have control of two districts. Meanwhile the Mexican population was more dispersed and in the 1970s was considerably smaller and younger than the African American population. The African American population also had a well-organized group of leaders under the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) whereas Mexicans were already split between the more youthful, radical Raza contingent versus the relatively more conservative and business-oriented LULAC/GI Forum crowd. As would soon be discovered, many of these Mexican community leaders were not as interested in seeing Mexican representation on the council, but instead their interests often lay in electing people who were responsive to their

[215] Fort Worth Bureau of the News, "Boundary Drawing Started," *Dallas Morning News*, May 8, 1975.

desires, even if their desires were more in line with business/economic interests over socio-political power.

During the late 1960s and through most of the 1970s, evidence shows that African American and Mexican populations had taken strides toward taking power in the City of Fort Worth through representation on the city council. In fact, two African American men, Edward Guinn and Leonard Briscoe, gained seats on the council with each of them winning two terms prior to the rise of single-member districts. African Americans comprised less than 20 percent of the population during the 1960s and 1970s so it is remarkable that African Americans were able to gain seats on the council at all. However, with the backing of organizations like the Good Government League and the Downtown Group, Guinn and Briscoe successfully brought confirmation that African Americans were indeed an integral part of Fort Worth's political power structure.

On the other hand, Fort Worth's Mexicans had not yet come close to gaining a seat on the council. Of course, through a legalistic point of view, Mexicans were considered white, but when noted Mexican business and community leaders like Juanita Zepeda, Joe Lazo, and Dick Salinas faced off against Leonard Briscoe in 1971 and 1973, Briscoe easily beat the legally white Mexicans. This Anglo support of Briscoe over his Mexican counterparts serve as evidence that Fort Worth's Euro-American voters and business leaders did not support "white" Mexican candidates the same way they had historically supported Anglo candidates. It would take the introduction of single-member districts for Mexicans to claims their space in the city and on the council.

CHAPTER VI

READY TO REPRESENT

In preparation for the 1977 election, despite the controversy and turmoil surrounding the Raza Unida Party after Ramsey Muñiz's arrests in 1976, Fort Worth's Mexican community celebrated the chance of participating in city politics in a way Mexicans had never been able to in the past.[216] In October, 1976, Carlos Puente - by this time no longer associated with the Raza Unida Party - began editing a monthly bilingual newspaper entitled *El Reporter* that he and his wife, María Esther, widely distributed to Fort Worth's North Side Mexican community. The primary purpose of *El Reporter* was to better educate its readers and to promote scholastic education among the Mexican community. In fact, education was so important to the Puentes that next to the newspaper's masthead was the phrase "For a Better Informed Community." Each issue contained a section that provided facts and information regarding something that happened in Chicano history and many issues of *El Reporter* recognized Mexican students who were doing well in school by including pictures and information regarding the student's achievement. *El Reporter* informed its readers of issues under consideration by the city council and school boards that directly affected the lives of Northsiders.

Since education was such an important component of *El Reporter*, it should come as no surprise that when single-member district voting drew near in April, 1977, Puente used the February, 1977 issue to educate his readers about the upcoming election. Using the district

[216] For more information regarding the Raza Unida Party and Ramsey Muñiz, read Ignacio M. García, *United We Win: The Rise and Fall of La Raza Unida Party*, Tucson: MASRC, The University of Arizona, 1989.

map to cover about half of the front page, Puente explained that "there appears to be a good possibility that in District 2 a Mexican American can be elected to city council." Puente went on to explain the significance of single-member voting districts since "there will be representatives from areas of the city which have never had members on the city council and that now people of these areas will have an 'official' voice on the city council." Finally, and this point will be reflected upon later in this essay, Puente argued, "Perhaps the most important thing that this new system will bring about (and one that is often overlooked) is that it will begin to break up the existing power structure and relationships that have existed under the at-large system." [217]

When Puente wrote about breaking up the existing power structure, he was primarily referring to Fort Worth's so-called Seventh Street Gang. The roots of the Seventh Street Gang go back to the 1850s but the most prominent names include twentieth century men like Amon Carter and Sid Richardson along with a group of select bankers and businessmen, most of whom had offices on 7th Street in downtown Fort Worth. After Richardson passed away in 1959, he passed his fortune on to his nephew Perry Bass and since then the Bass family has been one of the wealthiest and most powerful families in Fort Worth.[218]

In the March issue of *El Reporter*, Puente took the opportunity to further educate Northsiders by including mini-biographies with answers to questions from five of District 2's eight candidates. Puente did not endorse anyone in the March issue as four of the eight candidates were of Mexican descent, but instead he wanted readers to be educated and

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[217] Carlos Puente, *El Reporter*, February, 1977, Vol. 1, No. 5.
[218] Puente interview; Katie Sherrod, "Power Who Runs Fort Worth," *D Magazine*, November, 1, 1995, http://www.dmagazine.com/Home/1995/11/01/POWER_WHO_RUNS_FORT_WORTH.aspx (Accessed April 15, 2012).

politically involved. These four candidates included former Raza Unida county chairman José Gonzales, Mexican-American Chamber of Commerce co-founder Pete Zepeda, Pete (Ayala) Herrera, and a man named Louis Zapata, Sr. who was not only new to Fort Worth politics, but he was new to politics altogether. Although Zapata was new to politics, he grew up in North Side and was well known to important community leaders as well as influential Anglo businessmen through his work as a United Auto Workers union member and while working for Bell Helicopter. As such, Zapata garnered enough votes in the April 2 city election to earn a runoff election against Anglo candidate, Wade Banowsky scheduled for April 16, 1977. The initial election saw over 3,800 votes cast in District 2 which at the time held approximately a 30 percent Mexican population. Zapata took about 20.4 percent of the votes while Gonzales finished with 14.6 percent, Zepeda had 5.3 percent, and Herrera only received 2.2 percent of votes cast. Overall Mexicans took close to 43 percent of the votes.

Needless to say, Mexican Northsiders were energized by the chance of having a Mexican represent them on the city council. In a recent interview, John Hernández, who served as Zapata's campaign treasurer and was himself involved in a number of civic organizations, said Zapata's 1977 run for office was "the most exciting campaign I can remember." In the April issue of *El Reporter*, Carlos Puente urged Northsiders to go back to the polls, now encouraging them to vote for Zapata over Banowsky. Puente praised both Banowsky and Zapata for their sincerity and hard work but wrote, "by any given measure Zapata has shown himself to be more attuned, informed, and in-times with the needs and issues which affect the daily lives of all the citizens in District 2."[219] Puente poignantly added, "The time for unity is at-hand." When

[219] Carlos Puente, "Editorial," *El Reporter*, April, 1977, Vol. 1, No. 7.

it was time to go back to the poles, Mexicans in Fort Worth confirmed that apathy was no longer an issue for Northsiders. Louis Zapata easily beat Banowsky by taking approximately 60 percent of over 2,800 votes cast in the runoff election.

While Mexicans, particularly those in North Side, were excited about seeing representation, Fort Worth's African Americans were also thrilled to have more power in Fort Worth. Under the new single-member district plan, the aforementioned seventeen precincts in which African Americans were in the majority allowed them to have a strong majority population in two of the eight districts. The immediate result was the election of Fort Worth's third and fourth African American council members.

Single-Member Districts and Fort Worth's African-American Community

Not only was the third African American man elected to city council in 1977, but the first African American woman was also chosen to serve by Fort Worth voters. James (Jim) Bagsby was the third African American male to win a seat in the Fort Worth City Council when voters in District 8 supported his candidacy at the ballot box. Bagsby was born in McNeil, Arkansas and raised in Texarkana, Texas where he graduated from high school in 1950. After serving in the United States Navy from 1950 to 1954, Bagsby attended Texas Southern University where he received a degree from their pharmacy school in 1959. Soon after graduating, Bagsby and his wife, Dionne, moved to Pine Bluff, Arkansas where Bagsby became deeply involved in the burgeoning civil rights movement during the early 1960s. In 1967, Bagsby, along with his family, moved to Fort Worth where he soon became involved in local politics. Bagsby helped organize the Highland Hills Neighborhood Association and served on Fort Worth's Human Relations

Commission from 1973 to 1977. Needless to say, Bagsby had a history of civic involvement prior to being elected in 1977.[220]

In addition to adding Bagsby to the city council, Fort Worth's District 5 voters elected Walter Beatrice Campbell Barbour to be the first African American city council woman in Fort Worth history. Barbour was a Fort Worth native who graduated from the segregated I.M. Terrell High School in 1937 before earning her bachelor's degree from Prairie View A&M and a master's degree from Atlanta University in Georgia. Barbour made a career out of educating others as she served as an educator at Como Elementary School and a guidance counselor at Eastern Hills High School. Prior to running for city council, Barbour was described as an "educated, passionate and determined woman" who was known for holding meetings in her living room to discuss strategies to address desegregated housing, medical care, and economic problems among other issued that adversely affected Fort Worth's African American community.[221]

While Barbour and Bagsby were both on the city council, Fort Worth's African American community had undeniable representation. Barbour championed the need for parks, playgrounds, a medical clinic, and economic development in District 5 while Bagsby loudly and aggressively attacked alleged racism and bias in Fort Worth.[222] During their first year in office,

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[220] Stefani Grammage, "'Jim' Bagsby, Ex-Councilman, Dieas at Age 60 of Heart Attack," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, October 23, 1992; Sheila Taylor-Wells, "Dionne Bagsby – Tarrant County Commissioner," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, November 11, 1993.
[221] Unknown author, "Fort Worth's Stop Six: Greatness Faded but not Forgotten," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, September 24, 2012; "Obituary: Walter B. Barbour, First Black Woman on City Council," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, February 3, 2015.
[222] Cecil Johnson, "Making Progress – Blacks and the City Council," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 16, 2000; Carl Freund, "Courthouse Officials Show Bias, Bagsby Says," *Dallas Morning News*, January 21, 1979.

Barbour advocated for the construction of the first fire station to serve Fort Worth's historically black Stop Six neighborhood as part of the largest bond package that Fort Worth voters had ever passed up to 1978.[223]

Less than a month after being elected, Barbour and Bagsby also helped make history by taking part in approving Maryellen Hicks as the first African American municipal judge (and the first female municipal judge) in Fort Worth history. Hicks, who was only twenty-eight years of age at the time, was also the first African American woman to graduate from the Texas Tech School of Law in 1974 before moving to Fort Worth and taking a position with a local law firm. Hicks drew the attention of the newly elected mayor, Hugh Parmer, by working in Parmer's campaign leading up to the 1977 election. Parmer's decision to appoint Hicks was contrary to the recommendations provided by the outgoing city council, yet Hicks was respected and considered to be a worthy candidate. The committee established to make a recommendation on the appointee also indicated that "they could see strong advantages in the appointment of a black."[224]

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[223] Unknown author, "Bond Election: A Obligation Met," *Dallas Morning News*, February 10, 1978; "Obituary: Walter B. Barbour, First Black Woman on City Council," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, February 3, 2015.

[224] Fort Worth Bureau of the News, "Black Woman Tabbed for Judgeship in FW," *Dallas Morning News*, April 24, 1977; Pat Svacina, "FW Council Approves 1st Black Woman Judge," *Dallas Morning News*, April 27, 1977; Perry Cockerell, "Senior Retired Judge Maryellen Hicks," Tarrant County Bar Bulletin, March, 2015, https://issuu.com/tarrantcountybarbulletin/docs/march2015_hi-resbulletin, (accessed February 11, 2017).

Although Northsiders were excited to have a Mexican representative for their district, what did constituents know about Zapata and how did Zapata become politically involved? How did his background compare to the background of other Mexicans who had been active in Fort Worth politics and Mexican civil rights issues in the 1960s and 1970s? How did his background compare to the recently elected African American civic leaders who had lived lives representative of people who showed devotion toward civic duties? Zapata, who was 42 years-old at the time, had done practically nothing politically prior to 1977. He worked as a logistics analyst and union negotiator for Bell Helicopter for several years prior to the election. When asked in a previous interview how he became politically involved, Zapata referenced an admiration for San Antonio congressman Henry B. González. González, of course, was well known to Texas' Mexican population since González was the first Mexican to be elected to the Texas Senate in 1956, the first Mexican to run for governor in 1958, and the first Mexican elected from Texas to the United States House of Representatives in 1961.[225]

When Zapata was asked about Raza Unida, he referred to Raza members as rabble-rousers, although he claims to have supported Raza candidate Ramsey Muñiz's bid for the governor's office earlier in the 1970s. Zapata was not involved with the Mexican-American Chamber of Commerce, nor was he connected to the locally influential American GI Forum. Instead, Zapata claimed the reason he ran for office in Fort Worth was because a woman named Adelina Uranga (also known as Addie or Ellie) who worked as a reporter for a Spanish

[225] For additional biographical information on Henry B. González, see "Henry B. González: "Voice of the People," The Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, http://www.cah.utexas.edu/feature/0611/index.php (accessed April 16, 2017).

language radio station told him he was articulate and that he was therefore "the only one that (she felt) we can really put up there." Zapata insisted to Uranga that he was not interested in getting involved in politics but he conceded that if Fort Worth ever went to single-member districts (which he never thought would happen) he would agree to run for city council. Once single-member districts passed, Uranga contacted Zapata's long-time neighbor and acquaintance John Hernández in her attempt to reach Louis Zapata who was working in Mexico at the time. Shortly after Zapata was given the news, he kept his word and went back to Fort Worth and began preparing for his campaign.[226]

In order to run a successful campaign, a candidate must be able to come up with financial support if he/she is not sufficiently wealthy. To begin the campaign, Fort Worth businessman Samuel García gave Zapata $500 to pay the required fees to put his name on the ballot and to help start his campaign. Hernández, who had lived in the Northside since the early 1930s, had strong community ties and he and his family "walked the neighborhoods" in their efforts to campaign for Zapata. Hernández indicated that although Zapata made plans to "walk the neighborhoods," he really did not put in very much leg work. Hernández indicated that Zapata had "a lot of charisma" and may have made some important contacts while working for Bell Helicopter and through Zapata's work with the Pan-American Golf Association of Fort Worth.

[226] Louis Zapata, interviewed by José Angel Gutiérrez, October 24, 1997, transcript, *Tejano Voices*, University of Texas at Arlington Center for Mexican American Studies Oral History Project, Arlington, Texas, http://library.uta.edu/tejanovoices/xml/CMAS_090.xml (Accessed May 2, 2013); Hernández interview; Gonzales interview.

Fortunately for Zapata, he had hard working campaigners on his side, and moreover, Zapata had the backing of Mayor Hugh Parmer's people. After winning in the runoff election, Zapata's spokesperson to the media was attorney Mike Utt, whose politically active wife, Rita, worked closely with Parmer when Parmer later ran for United States Senate. [227] In addition to the support of Mexican Northsiders and white political strategists, Zapata also received financial support from John McMillan, Coors beer distributor and one of Fort Worth's most powerful political players during the 1970s and 1980s.[228] McMillan was said to be "the man behind Texas House Speaker Gib Lewis and Judge (and future Fort Worth Mayor) Michael J. Moncrief."[229] As a result of a few hard-working community members, the supporting words of a local newspaperman, the political support of people associated with the political establishment, and the financial backing of one, if not a few, of Fort Worth's richest and most powerful Anglo citizens, Zapata was able to overcome his own deficiencies and capitalize on his ability to "sell himself" well enough to win convincingly.[230]

Shortly after taking office, Zapata reached out to Carlos Puente and his readers, thanking them for their support and inviting them to District 2's first community meeting at All Saints Church in the heart of Fort Worth's Northside.[231] About 125 residents attended Zapata's first community meeting where Zapata discussed Fort Worth's minority hiring and promotion

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[227] Rita Rodríguez Utt also ran for office in Tarrant County's Criminal District Court 2 in 1992 and lost to Lee Ann Dauphinot.
[228] Zapata interview; Gonzales interview.
[229] Jan Jarvis, "Who Really Runs Fort Worth?" *D Magazine*, August 1, 1985, http://www.dmagazine.com/Home/1985/08/01/Who_Really_Runs_Fort_Worth.aspx (Accessed April 15, 2012).
[230] Hernández interview.
[231] Louis Zapata, *El Recorder*, July, 1977, Vol 1, No 10.

practices, police services, street repairs, and Meacham airport development. Unfortunately, Zapata was criticized in this first meeting by attendees like Rod Rodríguez. Rodríguez wrote a letter to *El Reporter* stating, "It's commendable of Councilman Zapata to try to bridge the proverbial gap… (but) it appeared that the purpose of the meeting was that of a sounding board for generalities rather than specifics to community problems."[232] Zapata was again criticized for not taking care of the community in an article written in the November, 1977 issue of *El Reporter* to which someone claiming to be Zapata's administrative assistant took offense.[233] John Hernández indicated that Zapata was "overwhelmed by the job" of city councilman.[234] As a result of the community's discontent, Zapata would be challenged in the 1981 election by a formidable Chicano opponent.

When José Gonzales ran for city council in 1977, he put forth little effort and did not really care to win as much as he was more interested in encouraging Fort Worth Mexicans to become involved in politics. After all, Gonzales believed that Mexicans would not get involved in politics unless "you have a reason that they can identify with."[235] Gonzales claims he only ran for city council in 1977 because it was rumored that a local restaurant owner who was originally from San Antonio, Texas was going to run for office. According to Gonzales, this unnamed restaurateur grossly mistreated his employees, particularly his immigrant employees. When this rumor proved to be false Gonzales had little desire to defeat other Mexicans in the race for city

[232] Letters to the Editor, *El Reporter*, August, 1977, Vol. 1, No. 11.
[233] Letters to the Editor, *El Reporter*, January, 1978, Vol. 2, No 4.
[234] Hernández interview.
[235] Gonzales interview.

council in 1977. Four years later Gonzales changed his tune. Gonzales said, "Whenever he and I were alone he let me know what kind of an asshole he is."

Prior to and while running for city council, Gonzales was a social worker who spent decades running an organization called Fuerza de los Barrios which helped people suffering from poor mental health. Through this organization, Gonzales had already generated over $3 million in training programs and other neighborhood initiatives during the Fuerza's first decade in existence. In 1981, Gonzales also served as president of the North Side Community Neighborhood Revitalization Committee and in this position Gonzales claimed that Zapata had been inaccessible and inattentive toward community desires. Instead, Gonzales argued that Zapata has stressed community development without consideration of what Northsiders truly wanted.[236] Furthermore, Gonzales did not agree with Zapata's approach to politics arguing that Zapata stayed away from the Raza Unida Party earlier in the 1970s because he did not think he could obtain the right "resources" through Raza Unida. Gonzales claimed Zapata personally asked him not to run for city council in 1981. When Gonzales insisted that he would run, Zapata's retort was, "That just means I have to get another $10,000."[237] Unlike Zapata, Gonzales was ready to run for office on his own but he was not selected to represent Fort Worth's Mexicans by others who had greater resources.

Approximately two weeks after Gonzales announced his candidacy, Zapata confirmed he would seek a third term in office. Simultaneous to his announcement, Zapata defended his intention to accept donations to his campaign from a company that was seeking Fort Worth's

[236] Fort Worth Bureau of the News, "Gonzales to run for Place 2 Seat," *Dallas Morning News*, January 2, 1981.
[237] Gonzales interview.

cable television franchise despite the fact that the city attorney warned him against accepting those funds. Moreover, Zapata also announced that he planned on spending between $12,000 and $15,000 on his campaign and he had no qualms with accepting money from people who wanted to support his campaign since multiple vendors seeking the same contracts could contribute and it would be impossible for him to vote for multiple companies. Additionally, when asked what his priorities were in running for a third term in city council, Zapata declared that he thought the most important campaign issues involved increasing pay for Fort Worth's police officers and firefighters. Attending Zapata's announcement for re-election was Ken Barnes who served as secretary-treasurer for the Fort Worth Firefighters Association. Barnes confirmed that the Fort Worth Firefighters Association would endorse Zapata in his attempt to keep his seat on the city council.[238]

As the 1981 election-day approached, Louis Zapata expressed concern that Gonzales could possibly beat him despite the fact that Zapata had a considerable edge in financial support from white city leaders. Each of the seven city council members who ran for re-election in 1981, however, won their races. Out of the seven races, Zapata's was the closest but he still took close to 61 percent of votes cast in the April 4, 1981 election. Gonzales received 34 percent of the votes and the remaining 5 percent went to a man named Joe Cossu who was serving jail-time at the time of the election. Cossu was arrested in late February after handcuffing a stranger, taking the stranger's money, and forcing him to listen to a two-hour

[238] Fort Worth Bureau of the News, "Zapata Announced Race for 3rd term," *Dallas Morning News*, February 6, 1981.

political speech before releasing the victim to police physically unharmed.[239] Despite the convincing victory, a writer for the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* wrote, "Zapata overcame a strong competition effort by social service worker José Gonzales."[240]

During the race Gonzales criticized Zapata for not informing District 2 residents about the workings of the council and he said the reason Zapata beat him was because "he had $15,000 and a lot of mailings," resources of which Gonzales did not have access. What may be more telling about the election than who won and who lost was the number of people who came out to vote. While over 3800 people voted in the first single-member district election and over 2800 voted in the 1977 runoff, fewer than 1700 District 2 residents voted in the 1981 election. Were Mexicans in North Side so disenchanted that they would revert back to a state of apathy? Even though they had a Mexican in office to represent them, did they truly feel they were being represented? The passion that led up to the 1977 election seems to have suffered greatly judging upon voter turnout.

Following the 1981 election, Zapata had an easy run for the next several years. Zapata ran unopposed in the 1983 election and in 1985 he faced "token opponents" in Philip Henry and Harold Aab.[241] In the 1985 election, only about 1100 voters went to the polls in District 2. Zapata took nearly 79 percent of the votes while Henry took a little over 14 percent and Aab received just over 7 percent. In 1987, Zapata faced a little bigger challenge from Ron Cotnam, although Zapata still received 69 percent of the 1600-plus votes cast, but District 2, which had a

[239] Fort Worth Bureau of the News, "Inmate, 'Philosopher' Run for Council," *Dallas Morning News*, March 8, 1981.
[240] *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 5, 1981.
[241] *Fort Worth Star Telegram*, April 7, 1985.

growing population, still only managed a fraction of the total votes cast in 1977 when Northsiders were truly excited about the chance of being represented in Fort Worth's city government.

During the 1989 election campaign in which Zapata faced a fellow Mexican opponent for the first time since 1981, Zapata became much more vulnerable than he ever had been in the past. Zapata, along with three other members of the Fort Worth City Council including Mayor Bob Bolen, were under investigation for a potential violation of ethics codes just a few weeks before the 1989 election. Zapata began working as a consultant for Browning-Ferris Industries (BFI) in February 1, 1989. Zapata claims BFI paid him $2,000 plus travel expenses so that he would help the company make business contacts in other cities, but Zapata claimed that he had refrained from voting on measures that might involve BFI or any of its competitors at council meetings.[242] Zapata also faced ethics violations for failing to disclose a loan he accepted from Landmark Bank and failing to abstain from voting on a decision to purchase land from Landmark Bank shortly thereafter.[243] In addition to the extra income earned through BFI, Zapata received nearly $6000 in campaign contributions while his opponent, car salesman David Ortiz, Sr., had reported no contributions and had only spent $91 in campaign spending approximately a month before the election. Zapata's biggest donors were members of the rich and powerful Bass family who pitched in over $2000. Despite the controversy leading up to the election, all four council members were re-elected with Zapata taking about 57 percent of the measly 846

[242] Dan Malone, "FW Official; Vote Possibly Ethics Breach," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, March 23, 1989.
[243] Dan Malone, "4 on FW Council Broke Ethics Rules, Official Says," *Dallas Morning News*, April 19, 1989.

votes cast in District 2. Ortiz had a relatively strong showing despite the fact that he had reported little financial support and did not appear to be well-known. Two years later Ortiz would run for city council again but only garner less than two percent of the popular vote. One noteworthy outcome of the 1989 election was that city council pay was raised from $10 per week to $75 per week.

In addition to the ethics investigation, Zapata faced increasing criticism in the late 1980s and into the early 1990s. In 1986, Louis Zapata was appointed to the Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport board which provided fuel for Zapata's critics in the coming years. Some argued that Zapata's time spent on DFW Airport issues took away from time that should have been spent addressing concerns in District 2. Furthermore, time committed to taking care of matters outside of his district made it more difficult to attend community meetings, thus making some District 2 residents, Mexican and non-Mexican, the impression that Zapata did not care about them. Carlos Puente claims that the missed meetings that hurt Zapata the most were meeting in the predominantly white Oakhurst community.[244] Mike Utt, former campaign worker, said Zapata not only did not attend neighborhood meetings but he also hated campaigning, further distancing himself from the people he was supposed to represent.[245] John Hernández, who, along with his family, helped get Zapata's name out in the North Side when Zapata was first elected in 1977 said "he didn't see Louis often" after Louis was elected into office since Louis was busy having "a good time" while he was in office and "he got to see and

[244] Puente interview.
[245] Maria F. Durand, "The Rise and Fall of Louis Zapata," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, October 7, 1994.

do a lot of things."[246] Raymond Menchaca, who ran against Zapata in 1991, stated, "Louis simply has lost touch with the small guy. It was the Mexican people of the North Side who put him in there, not the business people downtown."[247] While Menchaca astutely pointed out that Mexicans helped put Zapata in office, evidence shows that the "business people downtown" were also instrumental in getting and keeping Zapata in office.

Even though Zapata faced a lot of opposition during the 1991 election, the 1991 calendar year looked promising as the calendar turned to January. After Mayor Bob Bolen announced he would not seek re-election, Zapata, Kay Granger, and Bill Garrison were considered the most likely mayoral candidates in the city council.[248] When asked if he would run for mayor, Zapata said, "I am 90 percent sure I will run, but I am not in it today. I am leaving that 10 percent for time to do research, meet with my advisors, my family, and see what support is out there."[249] A few weeks later Zapata still had not made up his mind, saying that he needed a $200,000 campaign chest to run against Kay Granger, however, this hesitation in declaring for the mayoral race may have cost Zapata considerably. Wealthy Coors distributor John McMillan, who had supported Zapata for several years by this time, "praised Granger and mildly criticized Zapata for not being more ready to seize the advantage when Bolen announced

[246] Hernández interview.
[247] James Walker, "Zapata Not in Touch, Foes Argue – Challengers in Saturday's Election Say the Councilman Has Neglected – District 2," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 29, 1991.
[248] Frank Perkins, "Candidates Line up to Try Bolen's Shoes," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, January 12, 1991.
[249] Ibid.

his decision not to run."[250] By mid-February, Zapata finally made his decision not to run for mayor and less than three months later he was ousted from office.

In addition to facing criticism pertaining to his relationship (or alleged lack thereof) with Northsiders and the negative news regarding questionable ethics violations, Zapata also had to answer questions related to his expenditures while serving on the city council leading up to the 1991 election. About a week before the May 4, 1991 election, Zapata made front-page news when the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* published several articles regarding Zapata's expenditures during a recent trip to Taiwan. Zapata was already in Taiwan for a business trip on behalf of the DFW Board when a man named Hou Tseng-Ting who served as Fort Worth's "honorary ambassador to Taiwan" passed away. Rather than sending Mayor Bob Bolen to Taiwan, the Fort Worth City Council authorized Zapata to substitute for Bolen, saving the City of Fort Worth the cost of a round-trip airline ticket. However, when Zapata returned he reported over $3,000 in expenses for the four-day trip. Included in the expense report was a dinner that cost $1,481 and a $1,350 flower arrangement for the funeral.[251] Although the trip took place in August of 1990, the story gained traction when District 2 candidate and foe Marshall Hobbs, Jr. declared there were crooks in the office of the city council who needed to be removed.[252] Although Hobbs never mentioned Zapata's name, Zapata took offense, and understandably so since Hobbs was trying to take Zapata's place on the council. In fact, a *Star-Telegram* reporter

[250] James Walker, "Zapata Will Seek Mayor's Job – if," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, January 30, 1991.
[251] Robert V. Camuto, "City Trip Expenses Criticized – Hopeful Says Council, Zapata Extravagant," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 28, 1991.
[252] James Walker, "Zapata Warns Opponent Who Alluded to 'Crooks in Office'," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 19, 1991.

contended that Hobbs was in fact trying to win District 2 by branding Zapata as a jet-setting, lavishly spending, crook.[253]

Not only was the *Star-Telegram* reminding voters of ethics concerns and alleged wasteful spending with Zapata through reporting, but it was also encouraging voters to remove sitting members of the city council through editorials. Bill Thompson, a staff writer for the *Star-Telegram*, wrote a column entitled "Send the Dust Flying out City Hall on Saturday" less than a week before the election. In his opinion-piece, Thompson argued, "The City Council has insulted the citizens of Fort Worth, picked their pockets by raising taxes and reducing services, and created an atmosphere of distrust and disillusionment that pervades every block of the city."[254] Thompson proceeded by directing his attention toward Zapata and four other council members writing, "These people have ignored your concerns and abused your trust at every opportunity – and now they are asking you to vote for them… Now get out the broom." Certainly the conditions were primed for a Zapata loss.

According to the 1990 Census, District 2 grew from 47,779 in 1980 to 63,136 in 1990 with an increase of 12,940 Hispanics.[255] Hispanics, most of whom were Mexican, comprised about 84 percent of the district's growth from 1980 to 1990 and by 1990 District 2 was approximately 52 percent Hispanic. In the 1991 Fort Worth city election, with Zapata's reputation taking a beating after a Fort Worth City Council record fourteen years in office,

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[253] James Walker, "Lack of Confidence is Main Issue – Candidate Swap Barbs, Blame for Voter's Mistrust of Officials," Fort Worth Star-=Telegram, April 30, 1991.
[254] Bill Thompson, "Send the Dust Flying out City Hall on Saturday," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 30, 1991.
[255] The term Hispanic is used here instead of Mexicans for the sake of accuracy and in keeping with the terminology utilized by the United States Census Bureau.

former Raza Unida County Chair Carlos Puente announced his intention to run for the District 2 city council seat. Puente had remained active in the North Side through the 1980s following his departure from the FWISD school board by founding the Northside Neighborhood Association for which he served as president until 1990. He also worked as a substitute teacher while his wife, María maintained full-time employment in order to support their family.

While Puente was considered the favorite to challenge Zapata after Zapata decided to run for re-election rather than seek out the position of mayor, a North Side U.S. postman named Raymond Menchaca also announced his intention to run for District 2. Menchaca argued that Zapata had lost touch with the people of his district and that the North Side had become an area that one would not want to visit after 7:00 PM. Menchaca, who was 35 years of age at the time said, "District 2 is in need of change. Change of direction, change of attitudes… I'm here to serve the people of District 2. Not the mayor. Not the council members. Not the department heads."[256]

In addition to Puente and Menchaca, the aforementioned Hobbs also ran a charismatic campaign in his effort to defeat Zapata and win District 2. Hobbs, who was a 26-year-old African American, sought out the position despite the fact that District 2 only held a 7 percent African American population.[257] Hobbs was an associate minister at Thompson Chapel United Methodist Church and claimed he would bring "fair and equitable representation to the people of (his) district" plus he wanted to encourage new businesses and revitalization to District 2.[258]

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[256] Robert V. Camuto, "North Fort Worth Postman Bidding to Unseat Zapata," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, February 21, 1991.
[257] Robert V. Camuto, "Mending Ties with Voters," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, May 6, 1991.
[258] David Castellon, "26-year-old Puts hat in Ring for Council Election," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, February 15, 1991.

In addition to serving as an associate minister, Hobbs also served as chairman for the Fort Worth Youth Commission, a thirteen-member group that was appointed by the Fort Worth City Council and the FWISD in an effort to crack down on gang violence and criminal activity.

On election day, Puente took close to 39 percent of nearly 2200 votes cast while Marshall Hobbs, Jr. earned a runoff with Puente taking about 28 percent with Zapata only receiving a little under 26 percent of the votes. Not since the 1970s had District 2 voters come out in such large numbers. Menchaca finished a distant fourth and the aforementioned Ortiz, who was listed as an unemployed car salesman in 1991, only received thirty-five votes. Since no one took over half the vote, Hobbs and Puente were forced into a runoff.

Consequently, Zapata expressed a great deal of disappointment and anger as the returns came in. When questioned by *Star-Telegram* reporter Victor Inzunza why Zapata thought he lost, Zapata said, "What hurt me personally was you guys (the *Star-Telegram*) printing that stuff over and over and over again and painting me out to be a crook."[259] Zapata told another *Star-Telegram* reporter that he believed a lot of people lied about him and that he "should have talked about the other candidates like they did about me."[260] When Puente was questioned about the fall of Zapata, he said, "People are ready for a change… Essentially they want to see the city be fair to the working people. People are ready to see a council that's concerned about their needs and not just the needs of the special interests."[261] Although

[259] Victor Inzunza, "Voters Primed to Oust Incumbents, Zapata Says," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, May 5, 1991.
[260] Bud Kennedy, "Voters Vent Anger and Cook Council," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, May 5, 1991.
[261] Robert V, Camuto, "Zapata Ousted from Council – Incumbents Garrison, McCray Face Runoffs," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, May 5, 1991.

Puente was happy to defeat Zapata, Puente hoped to garner Zapata's support in the subsequent District 2 runoff election "because it's a Hispanic district and we need Hispanic representation."[262] Puente clearly wanted to make sure Fort Worth did not have three African American council members with a lack of Mexican representation.

Three weeks later, Puente handily won the runoff by taking 65 percent of the total vote with a voter turnout close to 1700. Hobbs was surprised by the high numbers of Mexicans who voted as he was quoted as saying, "The Hispanic vote turned out heavier than I thought… I probably was the underdog all along."[263] Upon winning District 2, Puente reiterated his belief that he would be able to provide a voice for the people of the district rather than a small, elite segment.

While Zapata seemingly came out of nowhere to be Fort Worth's first Mexican councilman, he had a lasting legacy. His fourteen-year stint as councilman was the longest tenure in Fort Worth history up to that point. The Reverend Stephen Jasso, who took over as pastor of All Saints Catholic Church in 1994 and would remain there through the early twenty-first century, commented, "(Zapata) was very important to the north side and the community… He was a man who was a passionate leader, a passionate person." Although Zapata was criticized at times for not being responsive to community needs in the North Side, he gained a lot of respect in the North Side for serving as a catalyst in restoring and preserving the historic Rose Marine Theater in 2000. The Rose Marine Theater was re-established as a center where

[262] Robert V. Camuto, "Mending Ties with Voters," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, May 6, 1991.
[263] Robert V. Camuto, "Garrison Swept out of Office – The 6-year Council Veteran's Campaign Spending Wasn't Enough to Overcome a Challenge from Chuck Silcox," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, May 26, 1991.

Latino culture and arts could be showcased.[264] Zapata also remained active in the North Side community through the end of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century before his demise in 2014.

When single-member districts came to fruition in 1977, Fort Worth's Mexican population was energized by the opportunity of finally having a real chance at seeing Mexican representation on the Fort Worth City Council. As this research has shown, Mexican business leaders and Raza-influenced activists in Fort Worth were ready to run for elected positions in government, thus finally providing Mexican representation in an Anglo-dominated city. African Americans realized this power in the late 1960s but lost their represented position of power after the 1975 election. Despite the fact that Fort Worth's North Side Mexican community already had socially and politically active community leaders like Pete Zepeda and José Gonzales ready to represent them in the 1977 election, it was the political newcomer, Louis Zapata, who garnered financial support from influential Anglo leaders who won the opportunity to represent District 2. This is not to say that Zapata did not have the support of important Mexican community leaders, nor is there a contention that Zapata was unknown. On the contrary, Zapata grew up in North Side and lived almost his entire life in that community, but these facts would have made him a more attractive candidate for an Anglo-led community that wanted to avoid inviting a more assertive Mexican candidate with an aggressive agenda to the council.

[264] Anna M. Tinsley, "Louis Zapata, First Hispanic Elected to Fort Worth Council," Fort Worth Star-Telegram, April 5, 2014.

When Zapata became a vulnerable candidate who failed to take aggressive action when the office of mayor became a real opportunity in 1991, his position on the council was precarious. At this point, African Americans took advantage of the opportunity to try to claim a third seat on the city council while concurrently removing Mexicans from the council altogether. Marshall Hobbs, Jr., with help from the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, capitalized on Zapata's questionable ethics in his effort stake a claim to District 2. Meanwhile, Carlos Puente, who had a long history of civic activism, countered Hobbs's challenge and positioned himself to take Zapata's place on the council should Zapata's bad press hurt him to the point of defeat. Ultimately, after fourteen years on the city council, Zapata only took enough votes to take third place in the 1991 contest but Puente was able to preserve Mexican representation on the council. In his loss, Hobbs expressed astonishment that District 2's heavily Mexican community turned out to support the Mexican candidate in such large numbers when Puente took almost two-thirds of the vote in their runoff. With Puente's convincing victory over Hobbs, Fort Worth's North Side Mexican population reiterated their desire for Mexican representation, particularly when faced with an alternative option of being represented by a member of their competing minority group.

CHAPTER VII

READY TO RUN AGAIN?

Unlike Zapata, Puente had a long record of political and civic activity prior to assuming his position in the Fort Worth City Council. In addition to his Raza Unida activity and editing *El Reporter* during the 1970s, Puente was also the first Mexican elected to the Fort Worth Independent School District's Board of Education in 1978. Puente served on the school board from 1978 to 1984 before stepping aside to spend more time raising his teenage children. Puente also unsuccessfully ran for Tarrant County Commissioner in 1989 before entering the city council race in 1991.

The 1990 Census and Redistricting

During his single term, one of the major issues facing Fort Worth's Mexican community involved city council districting. Since it was the beginning of a new decade and a new census had been published, it was time for the city council to evaluate the district map. Simultaneously, many of Fort Worth's Mexican civic leaders argued that the Fort Worth City Council should expand. After all, the size of the Fort Worth City Council had remained the same since 1925 despite the fact that the city's population had more than tripled over the subsequent sixty-five years.

In 1987, Louis Zapata led a charge to increase the size of the council but to no avail. With the 1990 census in place, Mexican leaders increased their push to add more districts. Departing Mayor Bob Bolen expressed a belief that the city council did not need to grow, but Mexican businessman, Pablo Calderón in expressing his concern that the redistricting map may

not be friendly to Mexican interests stated, "If it doesn't seem a good Hispanic district can be drawn with eight, there would be a move to 10 or 12 districts." Calderón served as a negotiator on behalf of Fort Worth's Mexican population when the city council redistricted in 1982. According to the 1990 census, Fort Worth's Mexican population made up 20 percent of the city while African Americans comprised 22 percent. However, while African Americans had two solid districts (each with over 60 percent African American population) beginning in 1977, Mexicans only had one member on the council at any time, and up to 1991, only one Mexican had ever served on the city council.[265]

In early June of 1991, Fort Worth residents were invited to City Hall in order to address the possibility of expanding the size of the city council in addition to considering a couple of other municipal issues. Leading up to the June 6, 1991 hearing, black leaders urged the council to keep the 8-1 structure because the chances of creating a new, predominantly black district were slim.[266] Approximately 100 residents attended the meeting at City Hall out of which sixteen Fort Worth residents addressed the city council. The majority of those sixteen residents "urged that a second predominantly Hispanic district be created" but not all of those who sought a second district believed that an increase in districts was needed. Sam García, a longtime Fort Worth Mexican leader said, "At the beginning of the process, 10-1 looked favorable to us… but 8-1 would give us four minority council persons… If you go to 10-1, you

[265] Robert V. Camuto, "Ready to Draw the Lines – Council Predicts Easy Redistricting Process," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, February 11, 1991.
[266] Jacquielynn Floyd, "Hundreds Expected at FW Remap Meeting," *Dallas Morning News*, June 6, 1991.

would have seven and four, and that's not the makeup of this city."[267] When considering what should be done about the size of the council, García was reflecting upon the overall percentage of minority council members and was thus arguing that the nine-member council would be better for minorities in Fort Worth in hopes of two members being African American and two Mexican. García showed a desire for African Americans to maintain their influence on the council by keeping two out of nine members versus the likelihood that adding two council positions would water-down African American power.

In addition to concerns raised by some Mexican leaders like García, the *Star-Telegram* also reported that at least one concerned African American Fort Worth resident also spoke up against adding districts at the city council meeting. Emmett Allen argued, "I did not feel like we should be talking about how many districts if we still have some concerns about whether or not the U.S. 1990 Census data of population is correct." Fort Worth's African American community feared not only losing power by maintaining a lower percentage of council members, but also because of concerns that the recent census portrayed an inaccurate count of African Americans in Fort Worth.

Despite the fact that in February of 1991 Pablo Calderón mentioned the possibility of adding two to four districts to better address Fort Worth's Mexican population, he decided not to proceed with that idea a few months later. While serving on the City Charter Review Committee, Calderón believed that Mexicans would gain more power by winning two seats on the existing eight-district structure while expressing doubt that adding more districts would

[267] Jacquielynn Floyd, "Opinion Divided on FW Council Redistricting," *Dallas Morning News*, June 7, 1991.

benefit the Mexican community. In June of 1991, the committee voted 12-1 to maintain the existing eight-district structure with both Calderón and another Mexican committee member named Andy Rivera voting with the majority while Carlos Puente cast the lone dissenting vote. Puente argued, "It's nice to think that 10 years from now we might be able to win a second seat under 8-1, but we've already been underrepresented the last seven or eight years."[268]

When the City Charter Review Committee explored the possibility of adding two more districts, one of the existing districts that would have been most affected would have been District 9 which included downtown and near South Side. Had that plan been approved, District 9 would have been 48 percent Mexican in 1991 and, based upon the rapidly rising Mexican population, would have likely surpassed 50 percent within a relatively short period of time. Early on in the redistricting process, it was clear that the drive to increase the size of the city council would be difficult.

The Rise of Hispanic 2000

Around the time of this city charter review vote, a new organization called Hispanic 2000 arose, setting forth aggressive goals in its hope of empowering Fort Worth's Mexican community. In its early days, Hispanic 2000 set forth a number of objectives including the following:

I. Invite a core group of persons from various segments of the Hispanic community to participate in the formation of the Hispanic 2000 committee.
II. Screen and recruit potential candidates for political positions
    a. Form a sub-committee of 3-5 members from Hispanic 2000 to screen and recruit potential candidates

[268] James Walker, "Committee Rejects Council Expansion," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, June 12, 1991.

III. Promote and support the candidate with time, money, and an official endorsement which was to be reciprocated by the candidate
IV. Educate the Hispanic community about Hispanic issues
V. Educate the Hispanic community about the political process
VI. Provide leadership training
VII. Sponsor voter registration program
VIII. Increase voter turnout[269]

Hispanic 2000 also expressed a goal of electing two Mexicans to the city council and two to the school board. Serving as the co-chairmen of Hispanic 2000 at its outset were John Hernández and an attorney named Francisco Hernández (no relation). Rita Rodríguez Utt served as the organization's secretary after her husband, Mike Utt, declined to take the position.

In September of 1991, Hispanic 2000 established various sub-committees in their hopes of increasing Mexican power in Fort Worth. Alex Jiménez was appointed to lead the Legislative Sub-Committee, Joe Guerrero oversaw Fundraising, Buddy Puente was over Public Relations, Juan Blanco led the Judicial Sub-Committee, and Renny Rosas was put in charge of the Redistricting Sub-Committee. Rosas, through a cooperative effort with the United Hispanic Council, submitted a redistricting plan to the city council that would have kept the Mexican majority in District 2 and increase District 9's Mexican population to 44 percent (See Map 5). Rosas confessed that 44 percent would certainly not guarantee immediate Mexican representation but he contended, "What we're hoping this will do will build a basis for that (second Hispanic seat)."[270] Although the UHC and Hispanic 2000 failed to submit a plan that would almost guarantee two seats on the council, other plans only gave the Mexican

[269] Hispanic 2000, Series II: Organizations, Box 1, File 1, Samuel García Papers, Fort Worth Public Library, Local History Collection.
[270] Stefani Grammage, "Hispanic Groups Draw Map to Add Representative," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, January 7, 1992.

community around a 36 percent portion of District 9 while keeping District 2 safely in the hands of North Side's Mexican voters.

After conducting several meetings with Fort Worth residents between mid-February and early March, the city council thanked the public for their contributions and feedback while they continued to evaluate the proposals. Carlos Puente expressed his dissatisfaction with the process since the city council was depending solely on residents to provide maps. Puente believed that the city should become more involved in drawing up districts saying, "I think probably there's three or four council members that are going to have… the most drastic changes to deal with that would have difficulty agreeing as it stands now."[271] One of Puente's chief concerns was that, based upon the most popular redistricting maps presented, he would lose the Summerfields neighborhood which was about seven or eight miles northeast of historic North Side and gain a vast tract of pasture land that led up to Alliance Airport which was about fifteen miles north of North Side. Over the next several months, the Fort Worth City Council took the proposed maps and hashed out new boundaries.

In July of 1992, the city council rolled out a tentative map that made District 9 a 40-percent Mexican district. Prior to this redistricting effort, District 9 held a 33-percent Mexican population. Renny Rosas, still serving as chairman for Hispanic 2000's redistricting committee reportedly expressed contentment with the new map, arguing that city council members were able to "work together for the benefit of our community."[272] On the other hand, a week later

[271] Stefani Grammage, "Hearings on Remap finished - The City Council Acknowledges Residents' Efforts at Redistricting but Recognizes that the Job May Be One for Staff Members," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, March 6, 1992.
[272] Stefani Grammage, "Tentative Map Plan Embraced – Hispanic Influence Grows in District 9," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, July 8, 1992.

Juan Blanco, by this time serving as President of Hispanic 2000, countered Rosas saying that Hispanic 2000 was not happy with the redistricting map since Hispanic 2000 previously presented a map that would have given District 9 at least a 45-percent Mexican population. Jesse Aguilera, a member of Hispanic 2000's redistricting committee reiterated his belief that Hispanic 2000 would have preferred a 10-1 plan while also being critical of Carlos Puente for not more aggressively pushing for a higher percentage of Mexicans in District 9 (See Map 4). Meanwhile, both former councilman Zapata and Puente expressed support for the redistricting compromise, despite the fact that Puente and Zapata each endorsed the expansion to ten single-member districts.

When questioned about the 40-percent District 9, Puente made note of the fact that when Louis Zapata became the first Mexican elected to city council, District 2 only held about a 30-percent Mexican population. Puente added, "That can be duplicated today… Anything above 30 percent is a plus for me. The key is to register people to vote."[273] Despite his stated approval of the tentative map, Puente said he would try to work with the rest of the city council in order to increase the percentage of Mexicans in District 9 to 42 percent, but he expressed doubt that he could persuade the rest of the council to make last-minute changes.[274] Puente made the decision to push forward with requesting the adjustments after talking to several Mexican community leaders who were simply not happy with the proposed map. David Vásquez, who also served on Hispanic 2000's redistricting committee, took the concern a step further.

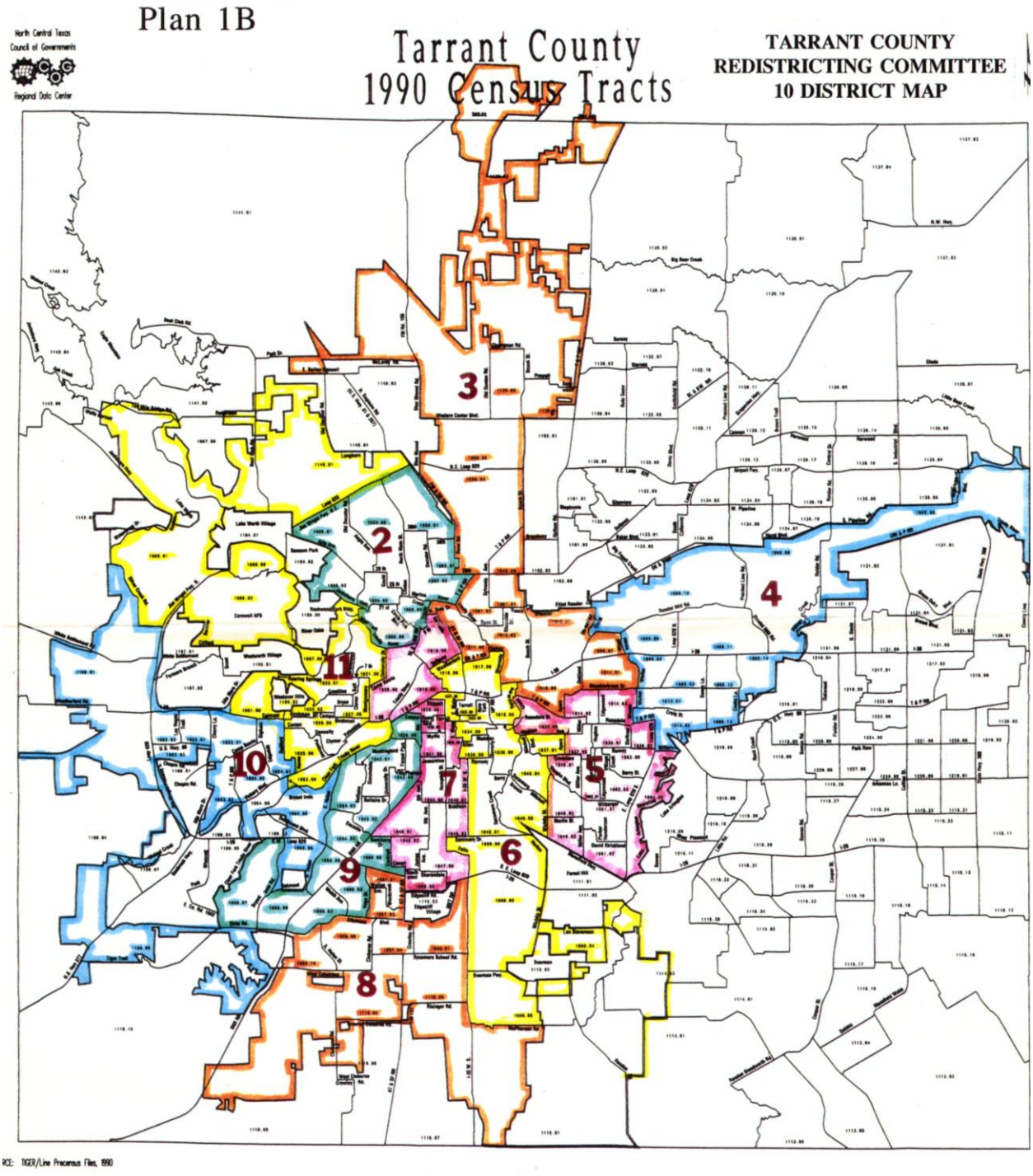
[273] Enrique Rangel, "Remap Could Boost Hispanic Clout in FW – Council Is Expected to Vote on Plan that Would Alter South Side District," *Dallas Morning News*, July 14, 1992.
[274] Stefani Grammage, "Redrawn City Map on the Table – The Fort Worth Council is Expected to Vote on a Plan Increasing Hispanic Voting Strength," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, July 20, 1992.

Vásquez stated, “If you drop below 40 percent, the odds are going to be really high of a lawsuit.”[275]

On July 21, 1992, Fort Worth City Council members approved a redistricting map that held a 40-percent Mexican population in District 9 (see Map 7). Puente cast the lone vote against the proposal, not necessarily because he disagreed with the map, but more so

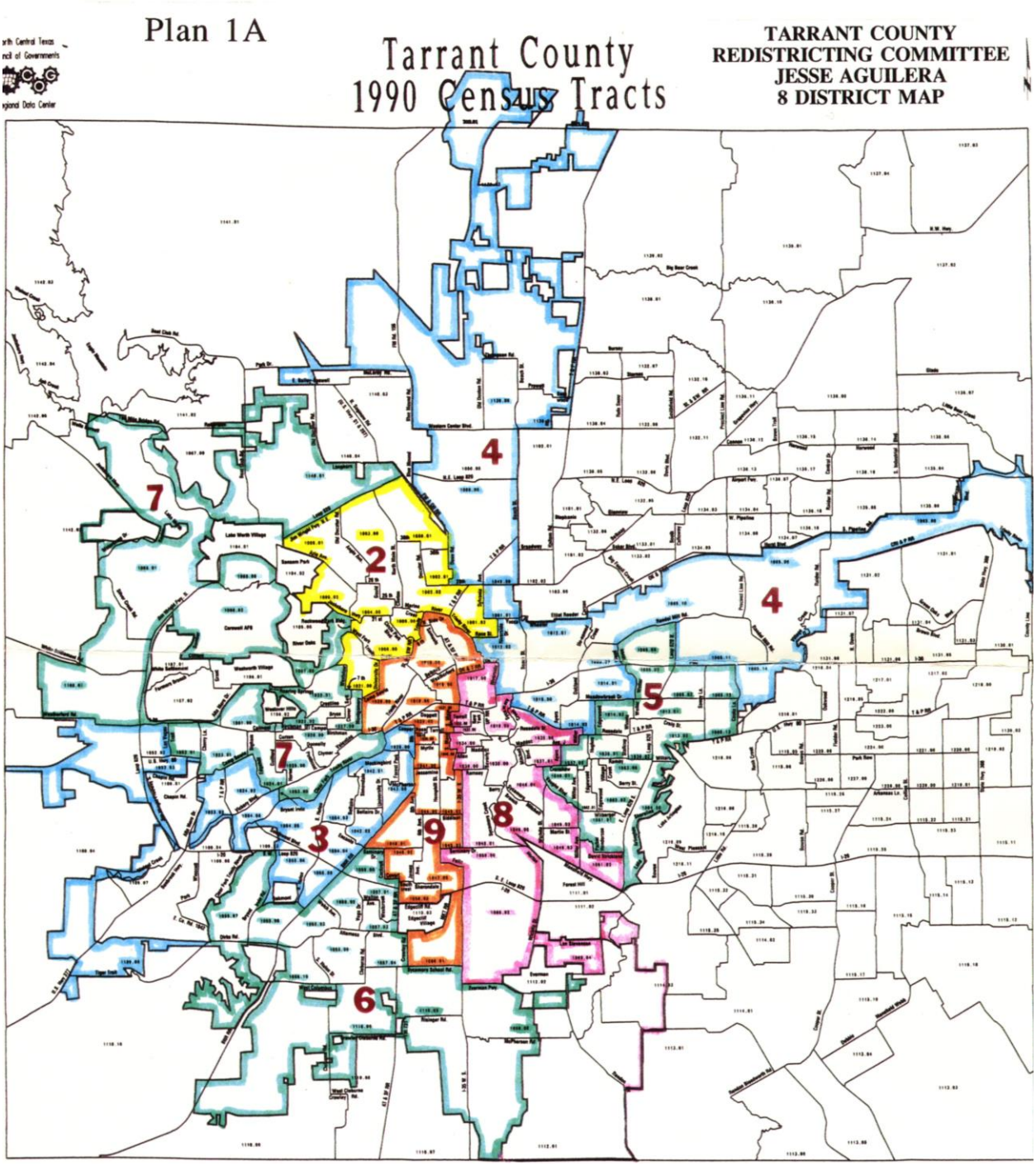
[275] Ibid.

Map 4: Proposed 10-District Map



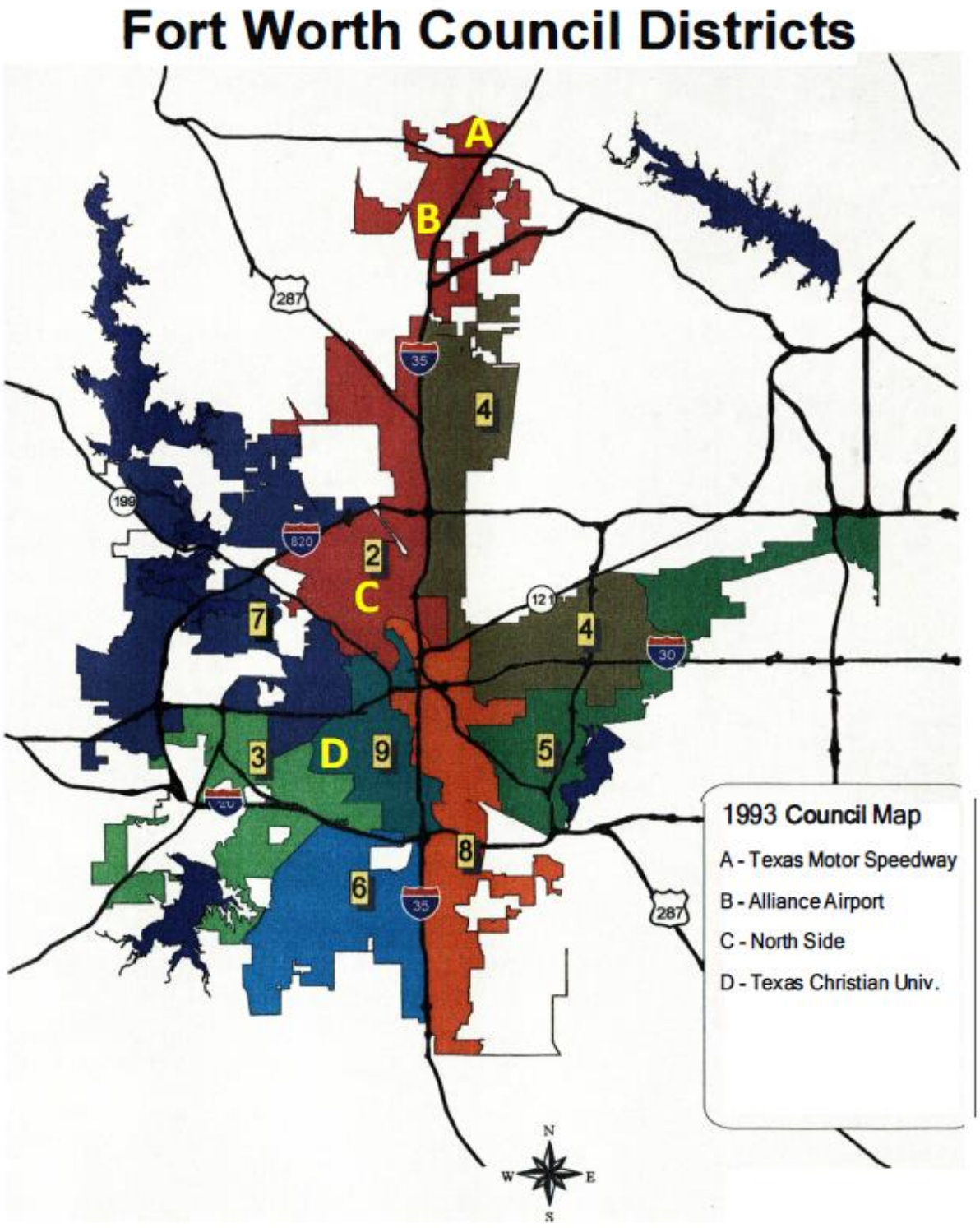
Proposed 10-District map obtained Courtesy of the Genealogy, History, and Archives Unit, Fort Worth Library. Sam García Papers, Series III, Organizations: Hispanic 2000, Box 1, File 3.

Map 5: 8-District Map as Proposed by Jesse Aguilera of Hispanic 2000



Proposed 8-District map obtained Courtesy of the Genealogy, History, and Archives Unit, Fort Worth Library. Sam García Papers, Series III, Subject Files: City of Fort Worth, Box 6, File 5.

Map 6: Final Approved Fort Worth City Council District Map



Final version of 1993 8-District map obtained Courtesy of the Genealogy, History, and Archives Unit, Fort Worth Library. Sam García Papers, Series III, Subject Files: City of Fort Worth, Box 6, File 6.

because he thought the council could have taken another week to consider options that might increase District 9 from 40 percent to the 42 to 45 percent that Hispanic 2000 leaders sought. As a result of their displeasure with Fort Worth's redistricting plan, Blanco and Rosas announced they would file a protest with the Justice Department when the city filed its redistricting map. Although Hispanic 2000 was allowed active input in the redistricting process, Blanco argued, "This is not a question of us having input. It (the council) had an opportunity to do the right thing and they balked." Councilman Bill Meadows countered, "I felt (guaranteeing adequate representation on the council) was our obligation and our challenge, and I think we delivered… It is fair and it is equitable."[276] Rosas added that had the city used block-by-block census data rather than larger census tract data, a predominantly Mexican district could have been drawn up for District 9.[277]

Another concern with the map variations concerning District 9 involved the politically active TCU area. In both of the 8-district maps presented by Hispanic 2000 as well as the 10-district map, District 9 does not include TCU. As was seen in the days prior to the rise of single-member districts in the 1960s and 1970s, the TCU vicinity had a history of being well-represented in the city council. The area immediately surrounding TCU and the area to its north leading up to Intertstate-30, which runs from west-to-east and is represented by a black line on Map 6 just above the "D," is predominantly Euro-American, wealthy, well-educated, and involved in city politics. By including the TCU area in District 9, the City of Fort Worth

[276] Max Baker and Stefani Gammage-Kopenec, "Hispanics to File a Protest over City Remap Plan," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, December 11, 1992.
[277] Jacquielynn Floyd, "Hispanics Protest FW Plan – Group Wants Changes in 2 City Council Districts," *Dallas Morning* News, December 12, 1992.

incorporated not just additional Anglos, but Anglos that held a lot of political power. Despite Puente's hopes that the 40-percent mark could potentially help Mexicans gain representation in District 9 during the 1990s, the fact that so much Euro-American money and power was incorporated into District 9 would make it difficult for Mexicans to establish themselves in South Fort Worth.

Puente, although expressing a desire to enhance Mexican clout, argued, "I think it would have been an extreme case of gerrymandering to achieve (Hispanic 2000's goals)."[278] Pauline Gasca Valenciano, a South Side neighborhood leader and long-time member of the League of United Latin American Citizens, added, "I certainly differ from Hispanic 2000… The idea of separating us from people we've been working with for a number of years is a bad mistake."[279] Valenciano lived in the predominantly Mexican Worth Heights neighborhood and was concerned that leaders from Hispanic 2000 cared little about neighborhood affiliations. Valenciano also indicated that she and others in her community did not like outsiders, like those from Hispanic 2000, telling them what was good for them while criticizing Hispanic 2000's aggressive approach to redistricting.[280] She believed that the new district map was friendly toward neighborhoods that had histories of working well together.

In addition to concerns pertaining to District 9, Hispanic 2000's plan would have made District 2 a 63-percent Mexican district but the approved plan only held a 59-percent Mexican

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[278] Ibid.

[279] Ibid.; Pauline Gasca-Valenciano, interviewed by Sandra Enríquez, David Robles, and Max Krochmal, Fort Worth, June 10, 2015. "Member of LULAC and GI Forum," *Civil Rights in Black & Brown Oral History Project*, Texas Christian University, https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/member-of-lulac-and-gi-forum (accessed May 2, 2017).

[280] Enrique Rangel, "Remap Could Boost Hispanic Clout in FW – Council Is Expected to Vote on Plan that Would Alter South Side District," *Dallas Morning News*, July 14, 1992.

population. Again referring back to the various maps, Hispanic 2000 wanted to keep District 2 confined to a small geographic area, primarily west of Interstate 35 (represented by the black line running north-to-south in the middle of the city) and inside Interstate 820 (represented by the black loop that surrounds the central city). Instead, District 2 was spread far to the north and northeast, establishing a great distance from historic North Side to District 2's newest sections (see Map 6). This expanded portion both increased District 2's Anglo population and established new challenges for District 2's council representation since newly developed areas close to Alliance Airport (as well as the territory close to what would eventually be the site for Texas Motor Speedway after its construction in 1996) would have much different needs than the district's aged portions.

Puente on the Hot Seat?

As Puente's time on the council progressed, his popularity among certain Mexican community leaders began to wane. In part because of Puente's lack of support for Hispanic 2000's forceful handling of the redistricting issue when compared to Puente's more conservative and amenable demeanor, leading members of Hispanic 2000 began targeting Puente's seat on the council. Renny Rosas said, "He has alienated so many people in District 2 and the city of Fort Worth." Rosas added, "I don't think it will be difficult for someone to make a tri-ethnic coalition to elect someone. He is very, very, vulnerable."[281] As opposed to seeking a Mexican bloc to defeat Puente, Rosas expressed a desire to encourage African Americans,

[281] Max Baker, "Forecasters See few Brawls, as City Races Take Shape," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, December 27, 1992.

Anglos, and Mexicans to remove the Mexican, Puente, from office. Rosas expressed this displeasure with Puente because Puente did not want to carve the predominantly white Oakurst neighborhoods out of District 2 when Hispanic 2000 submitted their redistricting plan. Referring back to Map 6, the Oakhurst communities are represented by the small portion of District 2 that extends the district east of Interstate 35, due east of North Side.

By late December of 1992, "flamboyant" attorney Jim Lane and former aviation board chairwoman Ann Cozart, both of whom were Anglo, had already expressed an interest in running for District 2's city council position. In response to Rosas' obvious desire to endorse a new candidate to assume for District 2, Puente retorted, "It is ironic (Hispanic 2000 activists) would say that, but both people mentioned (as opponents) are not Hispanic." Puente, of course, pointed out the fact that members of Hispanic 2000 were criticizing the Hispanic and suggesting support for non-Hispanics. John Hernández, who formerly served as co-chair of Hispanic 2000 and by this time was president of the Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, was the only other minority candidate being mentioned for District 2 but he was reluctant to commit to running for the position.[282]

Despite the fact that Rosas expressed a belief that Puente was "very, very, vulnerable," Rosas again articulated discontent with the redistricting plan in February of 1993. Part of the reason for Rosas's dissatisfaction was because he thought the plan protected current city council members, including Puente, from being voted out of office. The Oakhurst community supported Puente in the 1991 election and Puente did not want to lose that portion of District 2 when the redistricting process took place. Because Oakhurst was still in District 2 under the

[282] Ibid.

new redistricting plan, Rosas believed Puente would be difficult to beat. John Hernández, though, said that Blanco, Rosas, and Hispanic 2000 as a whole did not speak for all of Fort Worth's Mexican community. Hernández believed that the proposed city plan was in fact fair. Hernández and his cohorts also argued that it was "somewhat hypocritical for Rosas to talk about doing what is needed to make sure there is a Hispanic voice on the council while he (was) supporting Jim Lane, an Anglo attorney, as a replacement for Puente."[283]

As of early February, 1993, Puente had not yet announced whether or not he would even run for a second term on the council. Ultimately Puente, who at the time was only working a few days per month as a substitute teacher, announced in mid-February that he would not seek re-election primarily for financial reasons. Puente's wife, María, lost her job at General Dynamics thus creating a financial strain on their family. Puente stated that he planned to earn a teaching certificate with the intention of instructing government classes full time the following school year. Puente said, "My experience in the classroom has convinced me that a great need for Hispanic teachers exists in our city and state."[284] In addition to the financial strain experienced by the Puente family when María Puente lost her job, the Puentes were also trying to support four children in college during the early to mid-1990s. At that time, Fort Worth City Council members were only paid $75 per week. The $75 per week stipend did not put much of a dent in the bills. After leaving office, Puente earned a mid-management

[283] Max Baker, "Council to File Plan for remap – Critics Say City Too Slow in Submitting Proposal," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, February 4, 1993.
[284] Roland S. Martin, "Chappell, Puente Rule Out Re-Election," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, February 18, 1993.

certification and became a vice-principal at Arlington High School rather than teach government.[285]

A Split in North Side

After announcing his departure from office at Primera Baptist Church, Puente formally endorsed longtime friend and former Raza Unida Party member, Jesse Aguilera. Puente declared that Aguilera had the qualifications and experience to do the job well. Puente also said, "I believe in the wisdom and fairness of the people of District 2. I trust they will not want to see 60 percent of District 2 residents not truly represented by not having an Hispanic serving on the council."[286] The forthcoming 1993 election would be District 2's first election without an incumbent since 1977 and the fourth District 2 race involving a former Raza Unida Party member.[287]

Although Aguilera previously criticized Puente for not being aggressive enough during the redistricting negotiations, he claimed he had no interest in challenging Puente for the city council seat had Puente decided to run for a second term.[288] Aguilera's concern that District 2 would lose Mexican representation on the council played a key factor in his decision to run for city council, but furthermore he thought North Side neighborhoods needed support from the city to promote revitalization, pointing out specifically a stretch of Main Street that was about a

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[285] Puente interview.
[286] Roland S. Martin, "Chappell, Puente Rule Out Re-Election," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, February 18, 1993.
[287] Stefani Gammage, "Hispanic Groups Draw Map to Add Representative," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, January 7, 1992. Jeri Clausing, "Fort Worth Council Line Get Federal Approval," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, June 23, 1993.
[288] Roland S. Martin, "District 2 Candidates to Stress Development, Job Creation," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, February 18, 1993.

mile south of the historic Fort Worth Stockyards. Many Fort Worth residents wanted to see the Stockyards thrive, regardless of whether or not the rest of District 2 thrived, so Aguilera wanted to bring more economic attention to the less popular parts District 2 where those who resided in the community lived, worked, and owned businesses. Aguilera was a native Fort Worth resident, having graduated with an associate's degree from Tarrant County College in 1974 before earning a bachelor's degree from Texas Tech University in 1976. Aguilera worked at the Dallas County Mental Health and Mental Retardation Center and was a social worker by trade.

When Aguilera grew up in Fort Worth, he experienced racial exclusion firsthand. In 1958 when Aguilera was nine years old, his family moved from the east side of Main Street to Gould Street on the west side of Main Street. His family was the first Mexican family to reside in the neighborhood and after moving into the Gould Street home, white neighbors tried to buy them out and encouraged the realtor who handled the home's sale to raise the price in hopes of keeping out the Aguilera family. After joining the local Boy Scouts troop, all of the Anglo kids left so young Aguilera encouraged his Mexican friends to sign up and form a new group. Anglo teachers often did not support Aguilera in his efforts towards social and educational equality but he persevered regardless. When asked about how race affected the 1993 city council race, Aguilera said, "Race has been an issue for a long time where people have been deprived of an opportunity to represent their community... What is important is that we have cultural diversity that matches their community."[289] For Aguilera, the desire to represent Fort Worth's Mexican community was an effort toward empowering Fort Worth's Mexican community.

[289] Max Baker, "Election Becomes a Cause – Recalled Racism Fuels Candidacy," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 4, 1993.

Lined up to oppose Aguilera was Louis Zapata's old friend, Jim Lane. Cozart decided against running for city council pitting one Anglo versus one Mexican. Louis Zapata, whom Jim Lane affectionately referred to as "the big enchilada," chose to support Lane instead of supporting a Mexican candidate. In fact, Lane subleased his campaign headquarters space on Main Street from Zapata.[290] If Lane beat Aguilera it was unlikely that Fort Worth would have any Mexican council members despite the fact that Fort Worth's Mexican population had almost doubled from 1977 to 1993.[291] On Fort Worth's South Side, Mike "Paz" Hernández, a fifty-two-year-old bail bondsman, sought the District 9 seat but he failed to garner widespread support. As evidence, the Mexican American Democrats of Tarrant County supported Ken Barr, an Anglo, over Hernández leading up to the election.[292] Barr had no problem dispatching Hernández with Hernández only winning 791 votes out of close to 4700 cast.

While Puente, among other Mexican community leaders were pushing for redistricting, or even expanding the city council by two members to make it more likely that Fort Worth would have Mexican representation, Zapata and Rosas were essentially pushing to have no Mexicans on the council by endorsing Lane. Despite Rosas' involvement with Hispanic 2000, an organization pushing for greater Hispanic representation, Rosas served Jim Lane as his campaign manager. This apparent contradiction represented a bitter split within Fort Worth's Mexican population, particularly those in North Side.

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[290] Ibid.
[291] Puente interview; Bob Mahlburg, "Louis Zapata Honored at Fund-Raising Gala – Ex-Fort Worth Councilman Presented with Giant Enchilada at Party," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, December 14, 1994.
[292] Max Baker, "Vandergriff Almost Hits Media in Opener," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 15, 1993.

A few weeks before the election, Aguilera and Lane met at a forum in which the candidates were to discuss issues relevant to the election. Serving as moderator for the discussion was none other than Renny Rosas. The forum took place at La Trinidad Methodist Church and as a result of Aguilera's discontent with Rosas (Lane's campaign manager) serving as a moderator between the two candidates, Aguilera and about fifteen others abruptly left in protest. Aguilera said, "This race has taken on implications larger than the race itself… The implications for unity and political progress of the Hispanic community are too great for any candidate to lend himself to an effort such as this."[293] In response to Aguilera opting out of sharing in the forum, Lane said he was sorry that Aguilera decided against participating, adding, "I think he is a better man than that."[294] Lane went on to say that he did not think Aguilera was as qualified to represent North Side as he was partly because Aguilera worked in Dallas, not in Fort Worth.

Shortly after this emotionally charged forum, the United States Justice Department raised questions about the upcoming election's validity. Although the City of Fort Worth approved the new redistricting plan in July of 1992, Fort Worth's attorneys deliberately waited to send the plans to the Justice Department until February 5, 1993, less than three months before the May 1, 1993 election date. Federal law required that redistricting plans be submitted at least sixty days prior to the municipal election so attorneys followed the letter of the law but clearly they could have submitted the plans much earlier. On April 6, the Justice Department sent a letter to Fort Worth indicating that the initial file did not contain enough

[293] Jeri Clausing, "District 2 Hopeful Aguilera, Backers Walk out of Forum," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 9, 1993.
[294] Ibid.

information to determine if the plan diluted minority voting power. Deputy City Attorney Bill Wood argued that the approximate ninety days in advance of the election should have been plenty of time for the Justice Department to review and approve the submission that measured about two feet in breadth. The Justice Department wanted detailed explanations accompanied by data as well as all audio and video tapes of workshops, discussion sessions, meetings and hearings - formal or informal – at which redistricting was discussed by the council.[295] Wood questioned why the federal government waited until early April to respond to the plan quipping, "What did they do with the other 59 days?"[296]

In response, Juan Blanco of Hispanic 2000, an attorney by trade, argued, "There is no way that (Fort Worth) will be able to comply with this request for the volume of information the Justice Department needs." Blanco added, "If (Fort Worth officials) want to maintain their hard-headed posture concerning this, they run the risk of having their election invalidated by the Justice Department."[297] Don Gladden, a leading Fort Worth civil rights attorney agreed with Blanco, and city councilman Chuck Silcox added, "I think the whole proceeding has not been handled the way it should have been… I don't think it shows bad faith; it shows bad judgment."[298] Blanco along with other Hispanic 2000 members accused Fort Worth of spreading minorities into several districts and purposely combining Anglo communities that had voter turnouts with minority districts in an effort to minimize minority voting power.

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[295] Max Baker, "U.S. Questions Fort Worth Redistricting – The Justice Department Has Requested More Information on the Plan, and One Group Says This Could Endanger the May 1 Election. City Officials Disagree," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 13, 1993.
[296] Ibid.
[297] Ibid.
[298] Ibid.

Despite the threat of possible invalidation by the Justice Department, the city council made the decision to proceed with elections on the originally scheduled May 1st date. Blanco thought Fort Worth was wrong to proceed with the elections while the Justice department was reviewing the legality of the redistricting plan. Blanco argued, "The logical thing to do would be to stop the election."[299] Speaking on behalf of Hispanic 2000, Blanco explained that an option the group was considering was filing an injunction in an effort to stop the election from taking place. On the evening of April 20, 1993, Hispanic 2000 convened at the Worth Heights Multi-Purpose Center where the fight against Fort Worth's redistricting plan was one of the primary topics of discussion. One of the guests of this particular meeting was Judith Sanders-Castro, an attorney for the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF). Castro discussed possible options but while members were still seeking a change in format to a 10-1 city council plan, Castro advised them that there was less than a 50 percent chance that Hispanic 2000 would win that venture.[300] Ultimately, Hispanic 2000 allowed the Justice Department to review the plan without filing an injunction.

As election day drew near, Fort Worth's Mexican community continued to splinter, particularly in light of the redistricting concerns along with District 2's spirited contest. Both founding co-chairmen, John Hernández and Francisco Hernández, left Hispanic 2000 because they felt other members were "being unfair to the (city) council and casting a racial cloud over every issue."[301] John Hernández, along with Renny Rosas and Louis Zapata, all of which were

[299] Max Baker, "Group May Take Remap Challenge to Federal Court to Stop Election," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 20, 1993.
[300] Meeting minutes obtained from Hispanic 2000, Series II: Organizations, Box 1, File 1, Samuel García Papers, Fort Worth Public Library, Local History Collection.
[301] Max Baker, "Hispanics Set Sights on Offices," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 20, 1993.

highly respected and well-known community leaders, each supported Jim Lane in the 1993 election. John Hernández believed that Hispanic 2000 was taking too much credit for changes and that the group was not as powerful as they imagined themselves. In response to those who argued Fort Worth needed Mexican representation on the city council, Jim Lane, whose main areas of interest were improving the Stockyards and Meacham Airport, claimed that those who would not vote for him because he was white were racist.[302] Yet Blanco contended, "Blacks ask that blacks be supported by the black community. So when it comes to Hispanics, why is that we cannot ask that we be supported by our community? Why is that racist in nature?"[303] Some members of the Mexican community who sided with Hispanic 2000 went as far as to call John Hernández a sell-out for abandoning Hispanic 2000 and simultaneously supporting the Anglo candidate over the Mexican. Hernández responded, "I don't have to put up with that… (Hispanic 2000) was the kind of group you began to have second thoughts about. The idea was good, but is it really going to work?" Rosas countered by saying that Hispanic 2000, despite their rowdy and disruptive reputation, was "in this for the long haul."[304] Considering the fact that Hispanic 2000 members had vociferously expressed contradictory opinions regarding Mexican representation, often in unfriendly terms, it was unlikely that Hispanic 2000 would truly be around for the "long haul."

With the community almost tangibly tearing apart during the 1993 election season, money poured into campaigns. Because Jim Lane had a law office in North Side and he had made a name for himself by working toward improving the historic Fort Worth Stockyard as

[302] Ibid.
[303] Ibid.
[304] Ibid.

well as Meacham Airport in Fort Worth's North Side, he was clearly the better known candidate in 1993. The fact that highly esteemed Mexican community leaders also helped, but the fact that Lane was getting considerably more financial support truly helped his odds at winning the election. In fact, in his attempt to win a seat that only paid $75 per week, Lane spent almost $40,000 while Aguilera spent around $6000.[305] In anticipation of the 1993 election, *Star-Telegram* writer Cecil Johnson wrote that the District 2 race could either be a runaway victory for the more recognizable, better funded Lane or a close upset for Aguilera who garnered enthusiastic support from many Hispanic 2000 members but lacked the resources that might have been provided by leading Fort Worth businessmen.[306] Both candidates agreed on a number of issues that were important to District 2 residents and business owners, and as one *Dallas Morning News* reporter put it, "the difference between the two could literally be as plain as brown and white."[307]

When election day arrived, Jim Lane's support proved to be much stronger than Aguilera's, taking almost 67 percent of the 3,254 votes cast. Hispanic 2000's split was evident when the next meeting occurred on May 18, 1993. During this meeting, Hispanic 2000 Member, Joe Guerrero made a motion to expel Renny Rosas from the organization with Lee Saldívar seconding the motion. Guerrero owned Sundance Hair Stylists, a barbershop in downtown Fort Worth and served as president of LULAC council number 601, chaired the 1993 Texas LULAC

[305] Jeri Clausing "Campaign Spending Detailed - Council Candidate Steve Palko Spent $120,780 in His Losing Bid, Most of Which Came out of His Own Pocket," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, July 17, 1993.
[306] Cecil Johnson, Which Seats on Council Dais Will Sport New Nameplates?" *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 23, 1993.
[307] Jacquielynn Floyd, "FW Hopefuls Downplay Racial Issue in District 2," *Dallas Morning News*, April 28, 1993.

Convention, and later served as chairman for the United Hispanic Council after previously serving as vice president. Guerrero believed Rosas should be expelled "for going against the by-laws of the organization, i.e. publicly and actively supporting a non-Hispanic for an elected office which a Hispanic was also running for and which Hispanic 2000 had voted to support."[308] Meeting minutes indicate that a "heated discussion" ensued following the motion to dismiss Rosas. Ultimately, Saldívar withdrew and the motion died.

As a result of the 1993 election, Fort Worth again had no Mexican city council members for the first time since 1977. The 1993 race showed a Mexican community that had very different points of view regarding representation. John Hernández expressed a desire to have Mexican representation, but lacked faith in the Mexican candidate who chose to run. Furthermore, Hernández had a long history with Louis Zapata and of course Zapata was close friends with Lane. Meanwhile, community leaders like Blanco, Guerrero, and Puente expressed vocal support for Aguilera, not only because they expressed belief in his abilities, but also because they did not want to lose Mexican representation on the council. To this contingent, losing Mexican representation was a big step back in their progression to gaining power and equality in Fort Worth. Finally, Rosas, like Hernández, did not think Aguilera was a strong candidate but he not only voiced support for Lane, he also went so far as to serve as Lane's campaign manager, actively fighting against Mexican representation.

Years later in an interview, Rosas was asked about specific campaigns and/or issues that made a real change in Fort Worth's Latino community. In response, Rosas first named the

[308] Hispanic 2000, Series II: Organizations, Box 1, File 1, Samuel García Papers, Fort Worth Public Library, Local History Collection.

election of Louis Zapata, spending about one minute discussing the rise of "brown faces" on the city council. Rosas then transitioned to a second "game changer" when Jim Lane ran for city council in 1993. Rosas described Lane as being a "blond-haired, blue-eyed, redneck cowboy" and added that prior to the 1993 election, Lane had lived in North Side for twenty years and that Lane opened his law office in the North Side because the North Side was filled with "drunks and Mexicans." Rosas praised Lane, a *gabacho*, for being an active part of the North Side community, giving credit to Lane for his civic and social involvement. Rosas criticized the Chicano movement of the 1970s, arguing that Chicano activists had a habit of supporting Chicano *pendejos* who sought political office regardless of the candidate's character and ability. Rosas countered, "Rather than vote for a pendejo, let's vote for someone who's gonna (sic) do us good."[309] He went on to say, "I don't care whether it's a one-headed monster, a two-headed monster, or the cookie monster, if it's the best thing for our community that's who we should vote and that's who we should support so that our community can make gains." Rosas believed it was good to have a "brown face" in a position of power, but he believed Lane was a better candidate when it came to bringing improvements and progress to the Mexican community.

Approximately seven weeks after the election, the Justice Department cleared the City of Fort Worth of any allegations of redistricting improprieties. In response, Albert Pérez, a Hispanic 2000 member who also served as an attorney for the United Hispanic Council, said, "I would probably anticipate that a lawsuit would be filed, because that would appear to be the

[309] Renny Rosas, Interviewed by Caleigh Prewitt, Fort Worth, "Electing 'Our Pendejos'," *Civil Rights in Black & Brown Oral History Project*, Texas Christian University, https://crbb.tcu.edu/clips/electing-our-pendejos (Accessed March 19, 2017).

only recourse for minorities."[310] Puente also expressed dissatisfaction with the decision, but indicated that he was not surprised. In the end, Hispanic 2000 not only declined to proceed with fighting through the courts, but the organization also fell apart soon thereafter. In a 2004 interview, Rita Rodríguez Utt said of the organization's rapid demise, "We self-destructed…. We weren't together long enough to understand that we could disagree and support different candidates but that we could come back together." Utt added, "There was animosity among members that was so strong that there was no way to heal it. I don't know that we're mature enough now. There are old grudges that people have kept forever."[311] These grudges greatly affected the ability of Fort Worth Mexicans to unite behind a candidate in 1993 and 1993's lack of cohesion and commonality extended through the beginning of the twenty-first century.

Despite the fact that Rosas aggressively supported Lane in 1993, he expressed discontent with Fort Worth's Anglo-led government. In August of 1993, just over 3 months after the election, Rosas said, "We are behind the curve because the good ole (sic) boy system is alive and well in Fort Worth."[312] When asked why he backed Lane in the 1993 election, Rosas defended his decision to support Lane by arguing that Aguilera was not an electable candidate.

Clearly, Fort Worth's Mexican community lacked solidarity in 1993. When questioned by a *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* reporter about this apparent division, retired bus driver, Teófilo Hernández said, "Our problem has always been that we're jealous of the guy that's running for

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[310] Jeri Clausing, "Fort Worth Council Lines Get Federal Approval – The Justice Department Ruling Means May's City Election Results Are Valid Despite Protests," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, June 23, 1993.
[311] David Sedeno, "Cooperation Seen as Key for Latinos," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, July 6, 2004.
[312] Jacquielynn Floyd, "Hispanics Decry Loss of Influence – Population Growth Fails to Boost Clout," *Dallas Morning News*, August 22, 1993.

office… I see the African Americans, and even if they don't like their candidates, they'll get behind them."[313] Rosas agreed, saying, "In the African American community, they took care of their own… I think we should be trying to imitate their success."[314] Rosas's commentary is puzzling considering the fact that only three or four months earlier he had the chance to "take care of his own" but opted to aggressively support the Anglo candidate. Furthermore, this comment contradicts his assertion that Chicanos should stop supporting Chicano "*pendejos*" when there might be a more effective "*gabacho*" leader who could potentially be the better candidate. After the 1993 election, Rosas continued to serve Jim Lane as an assistant to the councilman.

As Jim Lane's first term as city councilman was drawing to an end, the question occurred of whether or not Fort Worth's Mexican community would respond by attempting to take back District 2. Lane made it clear that he was planning on running for re-election in 1995 and Rosas and Zapata were still behind him. After losing the 1993 election, Aguilera was elected as chairman of the Northside Neighborhood Association. While serving in this new capacity, Aguilera continued to express dissatisfaction with the City of Fort Worth, arguing, "I don't see many services going to the north side, especially in terms of crime prevention."[315] Betty Ward, a member of the Northside Neighborhood Association also expressed that sentiment, complaining that Northsiders were often told to wait for improvements and the improvements never seemed to come. Alice Marie Lewis, another Northsider added, "The city often puts us

[313] Ibid.
[314] Ibid.
[315] Elizabeth Campbell, "Residents Say Area Deserves Slice of Grant," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram,* July 24, 1994.

last when it comes to making improvements." In response to these complaints, Rosas, speaking on behalf of Lane, indicated that the North Side streets would soon benefit from a recent bond election.

A Lack of Mexican Candidates in District 2 and Lack of Money in District 9

In January of 1995, Aguilera confirmed that he was considering running for city council again but indicated that he had not yet made up his mind.[316] A month later, he decided he would not run again. Moreover, no other Northsider decided to challenge Lane either so Lane ran unopposed in 1995. Meanwhile, District 9, which was about 40 percent Mexican when the new districts were drawn up a few years earlier, continued to experience a steady growth in the Mexican population. Kenneth Barr, who easily beat Mike "Paz" Hernández in 1993, filed for re-election. Meanwhile, Hernández announced that he would run for District 9's city council position again, regardless of the fact that he was trounced two years earlier. Hernández filed for candidacy because, in his words, "We need someone in there that is going to be sensitive to all of District 9, not just a puppet for (former councilman) David Chappell."[317] Prior to winning District 9, Barr formerly worked as Chappell's campaign treasurer and he elected to run for District 9 once Chappell decided against running for reelection in 1993. A third Anglo candidate

[316] Jack Z. Smith, "Council Likely to Run Again – Mayor Says She'll Probably Seek Return," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, January 14, 1995.
[317] Roland S. Martin, "Four Candidates File for Council Positions – New Entries Include Pair of Incumbents," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, March 22, 1995.

also arose in District 9 named Kevin Carey who argued that Barr had lost touch with the "average citizen of Fort Worth."[318]

Despite his harsh words, Hernández's campaign received little coverage during the election cycle. The *Star-Telegram* mentioned Carey numerous times during election coverage but failed to mention Hernández. This could be, at least in part, because Hernández failed to attend forums and nor did he report campaign spending. Hernández failed to take advantage of opportunities to receive press when opportunities presented themselves. Even if Hernández had received much press, it is unlikely the *Star-Telegram* would have helped his case. On April 16, 1995, the *Star-Telegram* reported their endorsements for each district. When discussing the District 9 race, the *Star-Telegram* reported, "Councilman Kenneth Barr has been such an outstanding representative from District 9 that it is little wonder that he is often mentioned as one of the strongest prospects for mayor, when the current occupant of Place 1 on the council decides to relinquish the post."[319] Fort Worth's mayor in 1995 was the popular and well-backed Kay Granger.

In addition to strong support from local media, Barr also received strong financial backing from wealthy, powerful Fort Worth residents, businesses and organizations. Former District 9 councilman David Chappell pitched in a $500 campaign contribution plus Barr received donations from former mayor Bob Bolen and another former city councilman, Jim Bradshaw. In total, Barr raised over $15,000 in one month while Carey raised a little over $2000

[318] Roland S. Martin, "5 Candidate Run for City Council," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, February 21, 1995.
[319] Star-Telegram, "Fort Worth City Council Endorsements," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 16, 1995.

with almost half of that coming from his own pocketbook and Hernández did not raise enough to report. In fact, prior to the election, Hernández pledged not to raise or spend more than $500 for his campaign.[320] Ultimately, Barr won District 9 handily, taking over 81 percent of the vote while Hernández only mustered about 6 percent of the 1827 votes cast.

After winning a second term on the council, Barr's ultimate goal was made clear just a few months later. In December of 1995, Mayor Kay Granger announced that she was going to run for a seat in the United States House of Representatives. As a result, she stepped down as Mayor of Fort Worth, opening up the seat in a forthcoming special election. Barr, one of Jim Lane's fraternity brothers when they attended TCU together, immediately emerged as candidate to replace Granger, while other council members, like Lane, were also thought to be possible replacements. Long-time Mexican community spokesperson and former chairman of the Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce John Hernández again said he would consider running for District 2 if Lane decided to run for mayor.

Lane had a great deal of financial support from labor organizations, police, and fire groups. As such, he indicated that he was investigating the possibility of running for mayor while awaiting the results of a telephone survey designed to measure voter attitudes toward potential candidates.[321] Lane opted not to run for mayor in 1996, but since Barr threw his hat in the ring, District 9, which by the mid-to-late 1990s was easily over 40 percent Mexican, had an opening without an incumbent, thus providing a new opportunity for a brown face on the city

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[320] Roland S. Martin, "Seven Council Candidates Raise $41,000 – Current and Former Members Put Their Experience to Work Easily outgaining Challengers in Fundraising," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 29, 1995.
[321] Kristin N. Sullivan, "Positioning for Mayor's Seat Begins," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, December 20, 1995.

council. In early January of 1996, Arnold Velez, who was only twenty-nine years old at the time, indicated that he was strongly considering running for District 9. Velez was the former publisher of *La Estrella*, a section of the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* that catered to Latino readers. Velez was also active with the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and served on several boards and commissions.[322] Ultimately, Velez chose not to run for city council, but instead, former Hispanic 2000 member Lee Saldívar, who also previously attempted to gain a seat on the FWISD school board, filed for election.

Certainly, Saldívar had a great deal of community involvement prior to the 1996 special election. Saldívar was raised in South Texas, and after serving in the Navy during the Vietnam War, he moved to Fort Worth in the 1970s. Saldívar served on community patrols, was actively involved on city council committees, and for years had pressed for improvements to his Rosemont neighborhood. Addionally, Saldívar had also served as Democratic precinct chairman and as an advisor to the Tarrant County Citizens Crime Commission. In order to make a living, Saldívar owned a small business that sold formal wear within District 9, thus connecting Saldívar with Fort Worth's business community.

In addition to Saldívar, the 1996 special election saw three other candidates vying for District 9. Judy Phillipson, a sales representative for a janitorial and maintenance supply company who was actively involved in citizen patrols and Meals on Wheels, was the second candidate. When interviewed for the election, Phillipson contended that the only person running for District 9 that had given as much service to Fort Worth was Saldívar. The final two

[322] Jack Z. Smith, "5 Pondering Entering race for Council," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, January 3, 1996; Alex Branch, "Fort Worth Briefs," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, July 4, 2006.

candidates were Cathy Hirt, president of the Ryan Place Improvement Association, a neighborhood just to the east of TCU, and Wendy Davis, a political newcomer who earned her bachelor's degree from TCU and subsequently a Harvard law degree. Davis resided in Mistletoe Heights, the same affluent community in which Kenneth Barr resided.

As the May 4, 1996 election drew near, the candidates expressed very different points of view. Saldívar stressed his years of service on the Community Development Council, arguing that the work he had done for his Rosemont neighborhood could be expanded if he were elected to the city council. Meanwhile, Phillipson contended that she should be elected because she was the only fiscal conservative out of the four candidates. On the other hand, Hirt argued that the doctorate she earned in public policy while living in Tennessee made her the best candidate, and Davis maintained that her understanding of Texas law strengthened her ability to make the right decisions for Fort Worth.[323]

With four relatively strong candidates, the election resulted in the need for a runoff. Saldívar garnered 16 percent of the vote while raising close to $7,000 during the campaign but his $7000 was no match for the $30,000 Wendy Davis spent on her campaign (of which about $24,000 was raised), but it was considerably more than the $2,400 raised by Phillipson. While Hirt did not receive as much money for her campaign as Davis, she was still able to raise over $13,000.[324] As the money would indicate, Hirt and Davis gained the highest percentages of votes with Hirt taking 39 percent and Davis winning 38 percent. Saldívar blamed his inability to

[323] Kristin N. Sullivan, "Fort Worth Mayoral, Council Candidates Face Off in Forum," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 19, 1996.
[324] Kristin N. Sullivan, "Barr Leads in Spending, Fund-Raising in Fort Worth City Election," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 30, 1996.

raise as much money as Hirt or Davis on his third-place finish, saying, "It has a lot to do with sending letter after letter after letter."[325] By the time election day arrived, Hirt and Davis had highly recognizable names to District 9's electorate.

Following the May 4 election, Saldívar and Phillipson each threw their support to different candidates. Saldívar, along with twenty of his biggest supporters, began working on Hirt's campaign. While Davis tended to receive large contributions from big businesses and wealthy donors, Hirt's campaign was more of a grassroots campaign that appealed to Saldívar. Phillipson on the other hand, decided to support Davis because Davis expressed more fiscal conservatism than her counterpart. Hirt expressed appreciation for Saldívar's support, saying, "Lee is an extremely credible community person… Lee has said that he will work with me and work for my campaign. That's important to me."[326]

After it was determined a runoff election would be needed, Davis continued to spend at a tremendous rate. In fact, Davis ultimately spent well over $43,000 before the May 25 runoff election, while Hirt reportedly spent about $17,000. Part of this spending included sending a last-minute mailing that the *Star-Telegram* called "dirty" and "tasteless." Right before the runoff election, the Davis campaign sent a mail-out to District 9 constituents that implied Hirt was intellectually inferior while also inferring that the "power and money" crowd in Fort Worth were supporting Hirt and did not want Davis to gain a seat on the council because she was too independent. When using quotes to build up Davis, mail-outs credited praise from Jerry Russell,

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[325] Kristin N. Sullivan, "Hirt, Davis headed for District 9 Council Runoff," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, May 5, 1996.
[326] Kristin N. Sullivan, "District 9 Losing Candidates Split Support for 2 in Runoff Race: The Endorsements for the Fort Worth City Council Seat Come Just Days Before Early Voting Begins," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, May 11, 1996.

founder of Fort Worth's Stage West Theatre to enhance Davis's own credibility. The *Star-Telegram* pointed out that Hirt had spent far less money than Davis and added that Jerry Russell was in fact Wendy Davis's father. The *Star-Telegram* editorial read, "It is sad that victory means so much to some people that they will follow the time-honored rule: To win, you must fight dirty with innuendo."[327] Despite the wide disparity in money spent, Hirt came out of the runoff election victorious thanks in large part to Saldívar's support. The results were almost impossibly close as Hirt's margin of victory was only ninety votes with almost 3800 votes cast (1832 to 1742).[328] In Saldívar's Rosemont precincts, Hirt took approximately 62 percent of the vote.[329] Debby Stein, a Hirt campaign volunteer credited Saldívar, saying, "(Saldívar's) volunteers were very supportive, and they could touch neighborhoods we just couldn't."[330] Although Saldívar failed to win a seat on the council in 1996, his influence on deciding which candidate who would represent Southsiders was evident.

When the 1997 election cycle started, there was a noticeable absence of Mexican candidates. By this time, one of the best-known Mexicans in the North Side, and one of the most likely candidates was John Hernández. Hernández again said that he had considered running for District 2 but he did not get enough encouragement from the community. He said, "I feel if people wanted me to represent them, maybe a committee should inform me and I

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[327] Star-Telegram, "One Last Thing," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, May 25, 1996.
[328] Kirstin N. Sullivan, "Close Vote Puts Hirt on City Council – Ryan Place Leader Attributes Her Slim Victory to Campaign Volunteers' Contact with Neighbors," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, May 26, 1996.
[329] Kristin N. Sullivan, "Neighbors Vaulted Hirt to Win in District 9 Race – Lopsided Support by Voters in the Ryan Place Neighborhood Made the Difference in a 90-Vote Runoff Victory over Opponent Wendy Davis," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, May 27, 1996.
[330] Ibid.

should've been approached… After all, this would entail a sacrifice on my part to represent the district."[331] Hernández agreed that Fort Worth could benefit from having a Mexican on the council and added, "It's really a let down in this city of 22 percent Hispanics to not have any kind of representation on the city council." Louis Zapata, still a highly relevant, influential Mexican in Fort Worth's North Side six years after being ousted from office pointed out his belief that many Mexicans do not run for city council because of financial issues. This certainly makes sense since one of the primary reasons Carlos Puente chose not to run for a second term was because of the financial strain that affected his family when his wife lost her job. Zapata declared that when he was in the city council, "I enjoyed what I was doing but it killed me financially."[332] The $75 per week stipend was not great compensation for someone who might have to dedicate several hours per week, perhaps losing income from their own profession because of their sacrifice of time for the civic duties. The $75 per week stipend, however, would not increase until 2006. At that point, Fort Worth voters approved a pay increase to $25,000 per year for city council members with a $29,000 annual salary for the mayor.

Instead of seeing a Mexican candidate arise, Jim Lane faced an African American retired school teacher named Emily Wilson. Wilson, who was seventy-four years old at the time, entered the District 2 race at the last minute because she felt like Lane and the City of Fort Worth had not done enough to clean up the city. She wanted to crack down on illegal dumping sites and improve housing conditions in North Side.[333] Meanwhile, Lane's priorities during his

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[331] Rosannas Ruíz, "No Hispanic Candidates Have Filed for Council Races," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, March 19, 1997.
[332] Ibid.
[333] Max B. Baker, "Council Candidate Cites Housing, Cleanup Issues," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, March 20, 1997.

1997 campaign were to link North Side residents with jobs at Alliance Airport. The Alliance Airport area was part of District 2 but in 1997 that vicinity was sparsely populated and the distance between North Side and Alliance Airport was about sixteen or seventeen miles. Lane also wanted to help resurrect LaGrave Field, a defunct baseball field that formerly served as home to the Fort Worth Cats minor league baseball team from the 1920s through the 1960s. LaGrave Field would be rebuilt in 2001 but was abandoned again in 2014.

As one might imagine, a seventy-four year old retired school teacher (who was married to a retired FWISD custodian) may not have easy access to funds from big business and big labor. Predictably, Lane easily outspent and outraised Wilson. By April 6, 1997, Lane had already raised over $12,000 while Wilson had only raised $25. Wilson attempted to garner support by appealing to the community by arguing that North Side homes should be maintained as a historical neighborhood and argued that by cleaning up North Side, the area could be made an attractive place for people who were looking for a new home in Fort Worth.[334] Wilson also encouraged people to vote for her because she was retired so she would be able to devote much more time to council work than someone who had to work for a living.[335]

As the 1997 campaign progressed, Mexican business leaders again expressed support for Jim Lane. Longtime Mexican community leader, Gus García, said, "Things are going good up here. The city's done a lot for us since Jim's been in… You can get a hold of him. He mobilizes

[334] Kristin N. Sullivan, "Mayor Leads in Fund-Raising for Fort Worth Elections," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 7, 1997.
[335] Kristin N. Sullivan, "Incumbent Lane has District 2 Challenger," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 19, 1997.

people to do things and other people can't do that."[336] When asked why no Mexicans had challenged Lane for two consecutive election cycle, Joe Ávila, owner of Avila's Pharmacy in North Side, said that Lane had done an effective job of keeping Mexican community leaders involved.[337]

Leading up to the election, it was evident that Lane did not underestimate the retired school teacher's candidacy, at least not from a financial standpoint. A week before the May 3rd election, Lane reported raising almost $26,000 compared to Wilson's measly $203.[338] With support from Mexican business leaders among others, Lane easily defeated Wilson, taking over 70 percent of the vote. No Mexicans ran for office at all in 1997 as Cathy Hirt ran unopposed in District 9.

An Unanswered Call for Mexican Leaders in Fort Worth

When the 1999 campaign season arrived, some of Fort Worth's Mexican leaders convened for a series of meetings referred to as the Fort Worth Hispanic Summit. The first meeting was held at the Northside Community Center on February 15, 1999 with a second meeting at Worth Heights Elementary three days later. In planning for the Summit's first meeting, Willie Martínez, a member of the Near Northside Partnership Council, indicated that one of the primary concerns he wanted to address was the lack of Mexican representation on the city council. Martínez said, "We're not talking about these issues and we're not only voicing

[336] Ibid.
[337] Ibid.
[338] Kristin N. Sullivan, "Johnson Campaign Raises Most in District 8," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, May 1, 1997.

our opinions… We're trying to put action behind our words."[339] Although Martínez's words sounded encouraging for those who were intent on seeing Mexicans back on the city council, they were eerily similar to statements made by Hispanic 2000 members six year earlier. Of course, over the course of those six years, no Mexicans had taken a place on the city council and only three Mexicans had run for city council over the course of four elections, counting the 1996 special election.

About fifty people attended the first meeting at Northside Community Center. Jesse Aguilera was one of those present and he again brought up the issue of redistricting. Aguilera said, "The way empowerment zones were set up, Hispanics were discriminated against… If we had a Hispanic in there, maybe we would've been listened to."[340] Janice Michel, an Anglo community leader from the Oakhurst neighborhood, said, "There is no one who fights for the north side as I do… I don't have to be Hispanic to represent the north side." Aguilera, of course, became very familiar with that mentality in 1993 when he ran against Jim Lane for District 2's city council seat.

Attending the second meeting were at least two familiar names in the Mexican community. Pauline Valenciano, a long-time Worth Heights resident who was critical of Hispanic 2000's aggressive redistricting effort a few years earlier, attended the Worth Heights meeting. She said, "We need to have somebody represent us, and we need someone to work with us." Other attendees complained about the attention Fort Worth gave Berry Street (which

[339] Rosanna Ruíz, "Hispanics Plan Issue Forums – First of Eight Fort Worth Hispanic Summit Community Meetings Scheduled Tomorrow," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, February 14, 1999.
[340] Rosanna Ruíz, "Hispanic Summit Kicks Off – Youth Issues Among Concerns," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, February 16, 1999.

borders TCU) while Fort Worth allegedly ignored Hemphill Street. Hemphill runs north-to-south in between the Worth Heights and Rosemont neighborhoods, both of which were predominantly Mexican. Rosemont resident and former city council candidate Lee Saldívar said, "I don't care what you do with Berry Street, but if you leave Hemphill the way it is, you will not help Berry." Saldívar then added that he was considering running for city council once again just as he did three years earlier.[341]

When city council hopefuls started filing for their candidacies, Saldívar's name was rumored, as was Arnold Velez's, each of whom resided in District 9.[342] Cathy Hirt won District 9 in the 1996 special election and then ran unopposed in 1997, unchallenged by any of Fort Worth's South Side Mexicans. When it came time to file for re-election, Hirt announced that she would not seek re-election because she wanted to dedicate more time to her family. As a result, the District 9 seat was up for grabs. Despite the fact that this could have created an attractive opening for an active Mexican community leader, no Mexican filed for the position. Instead, Wendy Davis decided to run for office again facing two other Anglo challengers in David Minor, a landscaping company executive, and Dan Roberts, a public affairs consultant who had worked on several previous council races. No Mexicans picked up the proverbial baton to stake a claim to municipal power and representation in a district where, by 1999, Mexicans easily outnumbered Anglos. According to the 1990 census, District 9's population was only about 40 percent Mexican, but according to the 2000 census, Mexicans had grown close to 53

[341] Rosanna Ruíz, "Hispanic Representation at City Hall Sought," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, February 9, 1999.
[342] Kristin N. Sullivan, Hirt Plans to Give Up Her Seat on Council – 5 Men Lining Up for District 9 Post," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, February 6, 1999.

percent. (See Table 5). Yet, in 1999 no Mexicans elected to run for city council in District 9 despite the expressed discontent with the lack or representation on the city council.

Table 5: District Population by Race in 2000

District	Total Population	Mexican	Mexican %	White	White %	Black	Black %	Other %
District 2	67,335	49,052	72.9%	13,352	19.8%	3,939	5.9%	1.5%
District 3	66,194	11,593	17.5%	47,386	71.6%	4,595	6.9%	4.0%
District 4	86,583	12,451	14.4%	50,366	58.2%	17,483	20.2%	7.3%
District 5	61,760	12,629	20.5%	16,516	26.7%	29,741	48.2%	4.7%
District 6	67,026	10,837	16.2%	39,140	58.4%	13,184	19.7%	5.8%
District 7	71,582	12,069	16.9%	47,556	66.4%	8,461	11.8%	4.9%
District 8	53,697	16,168	30.1%	8,672	16.2%	27,385	51.0%	2.7%
District 9	66,214	34,724	52.4%	26,125	39.5%	2,610	3.9%	4.2%
TOTAL	**540,391**	**159,523**	**29.5%**	**249,113**	**46.1%**	**107,398**	**19.9%**	**4.5%**

Date for this table obtained using data collected from various issues of *the Fort Worth Star-Telegram*.

Perhaps finances played a role once again just as Saldívar explained in the 1996 election. Knowing that Wendy Davis was capable of raising over $40,000 for her campaign would have been intimidating for a low-to-middle income Mexican in the Worth Heights or Rosemont neighborhoods. Additionally, a wealthy Mexican who may have been dependent on the pocketbooks of low-to-middle-income Mexicans would potentially have to sacrifice a lot financially in order to keep up with the big spenders who lived on the western side of District 9 near TCU and the Fort Worth Zoo. Indeed**,** Davis would go on to win District 9 and in her efforts she raised almost $50,000, spending close to $40,000 of that money. Remarkably, one of her

competitors, David Minor, outspent Davis, shelling out almost $72,000 for a position that paid $75 per week. Out of the $72,000, about $55,000 was from his own pocketbook while he also raised about $19,000 in donations primarily from the business and banking establishment.[343]

On the North Side, Jim Lane continued to truck along. Both the financial support provided by Fort Worth business and labor leaders and the spoken support of key members of the Mexican community provided fuel for Lane's continued effort at representing District 2. Lane's opponent for the 1999 election was an Anglo man named Larry Stevens. Stevens argued that Lane was not available or responsive enough to his constituents in District 2, further declaring that he would be more active in the district. While Lane was pressing hard to get a minor league baseball team in Fort Worth, Stevens thought Lane was neglecting the people. Regardless, Pete Zepeda, long-time Mexican leader and co-founder of the Mexican American Chamber of Commerce, argued on behalf of the incumbent councilman. Zepeda said, "Jim's been very active, a very good councilman for the north side… He supports anything that is good for the north side."[344] Another District 2 supporter named Janice Michel added, "I've been here for 20 years, and for the first time you are excited about living on the north side… There is an air of expectancy, an air of grandeur. My gosh, we have the speedway, Alliance Airport and the river."[345]

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[343] Ginger D. Richardson and Kristin N. Sullivan, "Money Doesn't Win Votes, Report Shows – In Fort Worth's City Elections, Big Spenders Not Always Winners," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, July 16, 1999.
[344] Kristin N. Sullivan, "Lane, Stevens Vie to Represent Booming North Side," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 19, 1999.
[345] Ibid.

When Michel mentioned the speedway, she was specifically talking about Texas Motor Speedway (TMS), a large, revenue-driving facility that was designed primarily for auto racing but is capable of holding other major events such as concerts. Texas Motor Speedway opened in 1997 while Jim Lane served as District 2's councilman, but TMS was built about twenty miles north of the historic North Side community while Alliance Airport was about fifteen miles away. Additionally, a Northsider could easily go months or years without seeing either of these structures since they were both well outside of the central city. In fact, neither of these facilities was even located in Tarrant County but were instead geographically situated in neighboring Denton County. While TMS and Alliance could certainly bring additional income to Fort Worth, unless a Northsider gained employment at one of these distant venues, the benefits were not abundantly clear to North Side residents.

Despite Stevens' assertions that Lane was out of touch with his constituents, Lane easily won the 1999 election by taking 73 percent of the vote. In his effort to retain District 2, Lane raised almost $56,000 while spending almost $60,000. In contrast, Stevens raised about $6,500 and only spent $4,751. In other words, Lane spent more than twelve times as much money as Stevens during the 1999 election cycle.[346] During the 1999 – 2001 city council session, the United States Census Bureau conducted the 2000 census, which showed that at the end of the twentieth century, District 2 was approximately 73 percent Chicano while just under 20 percent of the district's population was Anglo yet both 1999 candidates were Anglo with no Mexican representation. Moreover, key Mexican North Side figures expressed satisfaction with this fact

[346] Ginger D. Richardson and Kristin N. Sullivan, "Money Doesn't Win Votes, Report Shows – In Fort Worth's City Elections, Big Spenders Not Always Winners," Fort Worth Star-Telegram, July 16, 1999.

while at the same time voicing displeasure in the Mexican community for not producing community leaders to represent District 2 or District 9.

Concluding the Twentieth Century

One of the primary difficulties in the fight for equality is that Mexicans in the U.S. have had difficulty deciding how they can use race to move themselves forward. Mexicans have often used the argument that they were white and as a result of their "legal" color they were deserving of the same rights and privileges as Euro-American whites. This argument of color and race plays directly into Stoler's aforementioned argument that race is utilized by modern empires to designate who is deserving of power and privilege and so claims of whiteness then equate to assertions of dominance over others within society. Does it matter if someone is white, brown, black, or any other "color"? Unfortunately race does matter when it comes to gaining power and privilege. Although race is an unscientific notion, racialization is indeed a factor, and for Mexicans in the United States, the perception of being "foreign" is even more of a concern. Mexicans individually have had success in utilizing their "whiteness" to gain power and establish themselves, but a blanket of whiteness cannot be cast over every single Mexican and thus arguments of whiteness can lead one to betray other Mexicans who are not or cannot be as successful in their claims of whiteness.

By electing Mexicans to office while purposely considering race in American politics, Mexicans are not being racist, but instead they are asserting claims to being American. If Mexicans are to remove their perception as "foreign" people, then more American leaders need to be of Mexican descent and more Mexican communities need to represent themselves

in their leadership. True representation should then not be designated by color or race, but instead representation should be based upon who best embodies what the community is and what the community seeks to be. Perhaps if more Mexicans who embraced their *mexicanidad* (Mexicanness) were able to position themselves in higher offices and become more visible to America, the foreignness of being Mexican would deteriorate just a bit and the empire would weaken its hold on the Mexican colony. Unfortunately, Mexicans in Fort Worth were apathetic when the 1970s began and the fact that Carlos Puente's aforementioned prediction that single-member districts "will begin to break up the existing power structure and relationships that have existed under the at-large system" [347] proved to be false and only gave more reason to be apathetic again just a few years after things appeared to be looking up.

With the defeat of Jesse Aguilera in 1993, Mexicans in Fort Worth would have to wait another twelve years to see another Mexican council person take office and no other Mexican would run for city council in District 2 until the twenty-first century, despite the fact that approximately 73 percent of District 2 was Hispanic while District 9 was over 50 percent Hispanic by the end of the twentieth century. Lane ran unopposed in 1995 and in 1997 he cruised to victory over a relatively unknown retired teacher named Emily Wilson. By 1999 Lane had earned the title of Mayor Pro Tem and easily beat Larry Stevens by a margin of 73 percent to 27 percent.

So what happened to Mexican candidates in the 1990s? John Hernández, who by the early 1990s was one of the best known Mexicans in North Side after serving as co-chairman of Hispanic 2000 and president of the Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce during the early

[347] Carlos Puente, *El Reporter*, February, 1977, Vol 1, No. 5.

1990s considered running for city council, but he thought if people wanted him to run they should have approached him and asked him to run.[348] Hernández was not alone in his hesitation to run for city council. In a 1995 article written about Fort Worth political power, Katie Sherrod argued that Fort Worth had four tiers of power. The first tier included Fort Worth's "older" families that had deep pockets and years of influence. The second tier included the city's corporate, political, and professional elite, and the third tier included most of the business community along with African American and Latino professionals. Of course the bottom tier included the poor and working classes. The Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce fit into the third tier and in describing this tier Sherrod writes, "People in this tier… love their neighborhoods, but for the most part feel helpless to affect changes via City Hall."[349] Putting forth the effort to gain a seat in the City Council was an uphill battle if you were not selected by the established power to take a seat. It was possible to run for council but it was nearly impossible to spend more money than what the establishment had available for those selected by the establishment.

Mexicans have proved to be undesired as representative leaders in Fort Worth, Texas. While African Americans had two representatives on the City Council each session through the 1980s and 1990s with seven different elected members, only two Mexicans were elected to City Council in that time-frame and both of them in the same district. For the last seven years of the century no Mexicans sat on the Fort Worth City Council and another Mexican would not be

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[348] Rosanna Ruíz, "No Hispanic Candidates Have Filed for City Council Races," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, March 19, 1997.
[349] Katie Sherrod, "Power Who Runs Fort Worth," *D Magazine*, November, 1, 1995, http://www.dmagazine.com/Home/1995/11/01/POWER_WHO_RUNS_FORT_WORTH.aspx (Accessed April 18, 2012).

elected until 2005. By 1990 Fort Worth was about 22 percent African American while Hispanics made up about 20 percent of the city's population, yet African Americans had two districts that were majority African American. District 5 was over 67 percent African American while District 8 was over 78 percent African American. By 2000 African Americans represented only 20 percent of Fort Worth and Latinos comprised 30 percent of the population but Hispanics had no representatives. In other words, as the Mexican population increased to nearly a third of the city's population, the representation disappeared while Fort Worth's African American population was proportionately represented beginning in the 1970s. Moreover, African Americans in Fort Worth had two councilmen elected *prior* to the arrival of single-member districts in Fort Worth. African Americans, although not part of the privileged Anglo class, were still recognized as representative members of Fort Worth. As John Hernández indicated, Mexicans were waiting for someone to let them know when to run but Fort Worth did not desire Mexican representation in this American city. As opposed to the 1970s when Mexicans were ready to run, Mexicans in the 1990s were ready for someone to ask them to run.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

At the end of the twentieth century, Fort Worth's Mexican community continued to fight for rights and representation against both the dominant Anglo population as well as the African American population. The Anglo leadership sought to keep hegemony over Fort Worth politics and education while African American representatives wanted not only to maintain rights and the fight for equality, but they took action to fend off a rapidly rising Mexican community that threatened African American progress by providing competition for gains in political and educational advancements. After all, between 1967 and 2000, Fort Worth had ten African American council members, two of whom were women, while only two Mexican men gained seats over the same time-span. The two Mexicans served for a combined sixteen years while the ten African Americans combined to serve approximately fifty-four years since for about twenty-three of those years two African Americans served concurrently. Had the city council expanded to add two more districts in the 1990s, it was unlikely that African Americans would have gained additional seats since the African American population percentage was trending downward from 1980 when African Americans comprised close to 23 percent through 2000 when only about 20 percent of Fort Worth was African American. In other words, if the city council expanded to an eleven-member council, their two representatives would have only made up 18 percent of the council instead of the 22 percent they held on a nine-member council. Meanwhile, Mexican representation on the city council stood at zero percent beginning in 1993.

The City Council in the Early Twenty-First Century

While Fort Worth's population experienced steady growth between 1980 and 2000 with much of that increase from the rapidly rising Mexican population, that population expansion was nothing compared to the explosion following the turn of the twenty-first century. Between 1960 and 2000, Fort Worth's population grew from about 356,000 to about 535,000, an increase of about 179,000 people. Between 2000 and 2010, Fort Worth's population increased by over 200,000, growing from 535,000 to about 741,00 meaning that Fort Worth's population grew more in the first ten years of the twenty-first century than it did over the last four decades of the twentieth century. Between 2000 and 2010, Fort Worth was the fastest growing city in the United States out of all cities that held at least 500,000 people. Taking this a step further, in 2015 Fort Worth's population was estimated to have continued its remarkable growth booming to about 833,000. This increase of approximately 92,000 between 2010 and 2015 represents a greater increase than any decade of the twentieth century in Fort Worth.[350]

As Fort Worth experienced tremendous growth as a whole between 2000 and 2010, much of that development went directly into District 2. As evidence, in 2000 District 2's population was around 67,000 but in 2010 that number exploded to over 152,000 and, containing about 20 percent of Fort Worth's total population, District 2 was the most highly populated district in Fort Worth.[351] Additionally, while Fort Worth grew dramatically between 2000 and 2015, a high percentage of that growth was Latino while the African American

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[350] "Population," City of Fort Worth, Texas, http://fortworthtexas.gov/about/population/ (Accessed March 19, 2017).

[351] Unknown Author, "Does the Fort Worth Council Table Need Two More Chairs?" *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, October 9, 2011.

population dropped below 19 percent of the total population.[352] In fact, the Latino population grew by about 70 to 75 percent during the first fifteen years of the twenty-first century, increasing from around 160,000 in 2000 to close to 280,000 in 2015. By 2015, over 34 percent of Fort Worth's total population was Latino with about 90 percent Latinos being of Mexican descent, but how did that growth affect the Fort Worth City Council?

When the twentieth century came to an end, Jim Lane served as councilman for District 2 and future Texas Democratic Party gubernatorial candidate Wendy Davis represented District 9 - a district that held a great deal of money, power, and influence from the TCU vicinity in addition to holding a large Mexican population. Up to the point that this research was conducted, District 9 has yet to see Mexican representation despite the fact that by 2010, District 9 was about 55 percent Mexican.[353] Meanwhile, Jim Lane easily won re-election in 2001 but faced stiff competition from a successful, accomplished Mexican immigrant who grew up in Fort Worth named Sal Espino. Espino earned a law degree from Southern Methodist University (SMU) after earning a bachelor's degree in Business Administration at TCU and ran a hard-fought campaign against Lane in 2003. In fact, Lane spent over $85,000 during the 2003 campaign cycle in order to defeat Espino, taking about 57 percent of the vote, but what was remarkable about the 2003 campaign was the fact that Espino raised $30,000 and spent about

[352] I am utilizing term Latino here for the sake of accuracy. According to the United States Census Bureau, Fort Worth's Mexicans comprised close to 31 percent of Fort Worth's population by 2015. See https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF (accessed April 16, 2017).

[353] Scott Nishimura, "Fort Worth Council to Vote on Redistricting Plan – City Still Faces Threat of Lawsuit over Hispanic Representation," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, July 23, 2012.

$41,000.[354] These numbers were much higher than numbers reported by any prior Mexican candidate. What is also remarkable is the fact that in 2003, council members were still only paid $75 per week. In addition to the financial edge, Lane, of course, still had Louis Zapata's support as well as the support of FWISD Trustee Rose Herrera.[355]

After serving twelve years on the city council, Jim Lane decided to step down in 2005, opening up the doors to a new council member. Espino took advantage of the opportunity and easily defeated Larry Stephens in the 2005 election by taking over 71 percent of the vote. Espino represented District 2 until 2017 when he decided to step down from city council after serving six terms and barely winning the sixth term in 2015. Espino thus represented Fort Worth's third Mexican city councilman with no Mexican women having yet served in this capacity.

Although District 2 historically held the highest percentage of Mexicans beginning with the rise of single-member districts in 1977, by 2010 this was no longer the case. As was mentioned earlier, District 2 witnessed tremendous growth during the early part of the twenty-first century. When the United States Census Bureau conducted the 2010 census, it was found that District 2, which still included the Alliance Airport/Texas Motor Speedway corridor, was only 44 percent Mexican, a considerable drop from where it was ten years earlier.[356] Nevertheless, Espino, thanks to his ability to raise money, win Mexican votes, and bridge the

[354] Anna M. Tinsley, "Moncrief Campaign Spent $365,000," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, July 17, 2003; Anna M. Tinsley, "Moncrief Wins in a Landside," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, May 4, 2003.
[355] Bud Kennedy, "Racial Lines Drawn in Bid for Council," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 24, 2003
[356] Scott Nishimura, "Fort Worth Council to Vote on Redistricting Plan – City Still Faces Threat of Lawsuit over Hispanic Representation," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, July 23, 2012.

gap with Anglo voters, repeatedly won a seat in a district that was becoming less and less Mexican as the century progressed.

The FWISD in the Early Twenty-First Century

While Fort Worth's population boomed with dramatic increases in both the Anglo and Mexican communities, only a small percentage of the Anglo population moved into the FWISD geographical region. The Alliance corridor that encompassed much of Fort Worth's growth fed into school districts outside of the FWISD. These school districts were primarily the Northwest Independent School District and the Keller Independent School District. Instead, while much of the Anglo population that moved into Fort Worth during the early twenty-first century moved to school districts apart from the FWISD, the FWISD saw formidable increases in its Mexican student population.

As of 2016, the FWISD held close to 87,000 students. Out of those 87,000 students, about 23 percent were African American, 63 percent were Latino, and only 11 percent were Anglo. Despite the significant upsurge of Mexican students, the percentage of Mexican teachers still failed to come close to matching the percentage of Mexican students. About 55 percent of FWISD teachers were Anglo, 22 percent were African American, and 21 percent were Mexican. Another way to translate this date is to consider the ratio of teachers-to-students for each race. The ratio of Anglo teachers to students was 3 to 1, the ratio of African American teachers to students was 16 to 1, and the ratio of Mexican teachers to students was 46 to 1. Certainly, these numbers reflect improvement from the early 1970s, but part of the reason the Mexican American Education Advisory Committee agreed to remain silent when the FWISD made efforts

toward ending *Flax v. Potts* was because the school district agreed to improve hiring practices of Mexican employees. Without a doubt, the FWISD has a ways to go in order to truly address Mexican representation in the classroom.[357]

Moreover, considering the fact that Mexican students comprised over 60 percent of the FWISD, one would expect the school board to reflect the augmented population. However, as of the 2015-2017 election cycle, only two Mexicans were on the board of trustees. There were also two African Americans and remarkably there were five Anglos, despite the fact that only 11 percent of FWISD students were Anglo. On the other hand, the President of the FWISD Board of Trustees was a man named Jacinto Ramos, a son of Mexican immigrants whose full-time job involved work with Tarrant County Juvenile Services.[358] Additionally, Matthew Ávila also served on the FWISD Board of Trustees but his ties to the Mexican community were dubious.

In fact, prior to the 2013 election, the Board of Trustees included Mexicans who were more closely associated with the traditional Mexican "movers and shakers" of Fort Worth's North Side and South Side.The previous board included the aforementioned Juan Rangel who briefly served as president, and Carlos Vásquez, who previously served as president of one of Fort Worth's LULAC chapters. Vásquez was also a member of both the Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and the Fort Worth Human Relations Commission. Without going into too much detail, both Rangel and Vásquez grew the proverbial targets on their backs going into the 2013 election as a result of their support of Dallas's Domingo García over Fort Worth's Marc

[357] Numbers obtained from "Public Schools Explorer," *The Texas Tribune*, https://schools.texastribune.org/districts/fort-worth-isd/ (Accessed March 19, 2017).
[358] "Jacinto 'Cinto' Ramos, Jr. Board President – District 1," Fort Worth Independent School District, http://www.fwisd.org/Page/354 (Accessed March 19, 2017).

Veasey (an African American) in a United States congressional race in addition to questionable judgement when voting on contracts that benefitted Rangel personally.[359] Prior to losing in the 2013 election, Rangel briefly served as school board president but was replaced in a surprise vote in which African American trustee, T.A. Sims, was selected by a vote of 5-4 to take Rangel's place.[360]

Placing Fort Worth's Mexicans in Context with Modern Empire – Population Management

So how does this study that examines the lack of political and educational power and representation fit into discussions and modern empire studies? First, in her analysis of Michel Foucault, Ann Laura Stoler explained in great deal how racial distinctions play a major role in construction of colonial societies. By using racial divisions, the state is able to manage populations, giving preferential treatment to favored classes of citizens. When explaining his ideas of governmentality, Foucault argued that the modern states utilizes biopower in order to maintain order and structuralize authority in an effort to improve political economy. In order to implement this power, the modern state uses statistics in order to intervene with the population, thus creating a regime that rules by "techniques of government." According to Foucault, this new political science that emerged in the eighteenth century enables the state to

[359] Unknown Author, "Ramos, Paz Best Selections in FW School Board Runoffs," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, June 1, 2013.
[360] Eva-Marie Ayala, "Surprise Move Ousts Rangel as Fort Worth School Board President," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, May 8, 2012.

impose greater methods of sovereignty by allowing the dominant ruling class the ability to characterize the state through empirical studies and population management.[361]

In order to keep Anglos in power within the United States, statistics, often those created by the United States Census Bureau, are utilized to manage populations and political economy. For example, the City of Fort Worth took advantage of census tracts to draw up city council district maps that were friendly toward the Euro-American power structure. Had the TCU corridor not been included in District 9, the odds of Fort Worth's Mexican community being better represented on the city council would have been much greater. Following the 2010 census, District 9 still included the TCU corridor within its western boundary and as a result, according to Fernando Florez, a United Hispanic Council leader, District 9's Mexicans had "given up" on electing a Mexican to represent them by 2012.[362] Census tracts allowed for a district map to be created that provided for a wealthy, politically active population to keep South Side Mexicans from gaining representation on the city council.

Although Foucault tended to keep his lectures focused on European state matters as opposed to international colonial societies, his ideas promulgated through modern imperial studies. Stoler built upon Foucault's theories and applied them to imperial scholarship, while re-interpreting Foucault's analysis of power structures within the modern state. When discussing racial stratification while considering Foucault's theories of political economy, Stoler argued, "Distinctions of color joined with those of religion and culture to distinguish rulers from

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[361] Michel Foucault, Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller. *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality: with Two Lectures by and an Interview with Michel Foucault*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991, 99-101.

[362] Scott Nishimura, "Fort Worth Council to Vote on Redistricting Plan – City Still Faces Threat of Lawsuit over Hispanic Representation," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, July 23, 2012.

the ruled, invoked in varied measures if the governing strategies of colonial states."[363] Stoler continued by explaining through these racial, religious, and cultural distinctions, modern empires have "(rationalized) the hierarchies of privilege and profit" and "for the exploitative structures of colonial rule."[364]

While Foucault refrained from discussing social aspects of racism at great length, Foucault did explain the effects of state racism. Foucault argued that through state-directed racism, those in power have been able to maintain power through managing society using racial stratification.[365] Stoler added to this by explaining that Foucault believed state racism was a "tactic in the internal fission of society into binary oppositions, a means of creating 'biologized' internal enemies, against whom society must defend itself."[366] Moreover, Stoler explained, "Racial discourse consolidates not because of Europe's imperial ventures in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, but because of internal conquest and invasions within the borders of Europe itself. Racism is not based on the confrontation of alien races, but on the bifurcation within Europe's social fabric."[367] Benedict Anderson also argued that empires utilize racial stratification in order to implement "domestic repression and domination" within national boundaries.[368] Despite the fact that Stoler and Anderson focus on European empires, their

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[363] Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things*, Durham: Duke University Press, 1995, 27.
[364] Ibid., 27.
[365] Michel Foucault. *The History of Sexuality*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1978. (translated by Robert Hurley)
[366] Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things*, Durham: Duke University Press, 1995, 59.
[367] Ibid., 60.
[368] Benedict R. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London: Verso, 1983, 136.

contentions and descriptions of state racism are reminiscent of Euro-American political stratifications. Stoler's description of "biologized" enemies also brings to mind the relationship not only between Euro-Americans and Mexicans, but also the often-times bitter, competitive relationship between Mexicans and African Americans as was discussed several times in this research. Furthermore, the Mexican struggle for citizenship in Fort Worth, as is the case elsewhere in the United States where Mexican populations have been and still are migrating en masse, is similar to the struggles for citizenship as outlined by Mae Ngai.

Just as Fort Worth's Mexicans had difficulty gaining political and educational power in the twentieth century, European colonists struggled for privilege and power in modern empires. As such, Stoler explained, "The colonial politics of exclusion was contingent on constructing categories. Colonial control was predicated on identifying who was 'white,' who was 'native,' and which children could become citizens rather than subjects."[369] These issues of "whiteness" played a major role in the Mexican struggle for equality and power during the twentieth century but clearly, despite the fact that the American legal system declared Mexicans to be white, their whiteness was truly not recognized. Instead, Mexican indigeneity along with the fact that Mexican immigrants had a history of coming to the United States in large numbers, primarily as laborers rather than as desired citizens, also place this study within the purview of modern empire.[370] Prior to 1965, Mexican immigration was uncapped although restrictions on documented immigration and difficulties in attaining citizenship prevented

[369] Ann Laura Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002, 43.
[370] Martha Menchaca, *Naturalizing Mexican Immigrants: A Texas History*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011.

masses of Mexican immigrants from becoming citizens.[371] Because of immigration and naturalization legislation geared at controlling Mexican immigration and immigrants over the course of the twentieth century, Mexicans, even those who have lived in the United States their entire lives, often struggle to gain rights and privileges afforded to Euro-American citizens.

In addition to issues of population management ideas espoused by Foucault and Stoler, Lorenzo Veracini's analysis of settler society also plays a pertinent role in examining the difficulties experienced by Fort Worth's Mexicans during the late twentieth century. Veracini introduced the terms "indigenous others" and "exogenous others" in one of his seminal works. Veracini wrote, "the settler colonial situation is generally understood as an inherently dynamic circumstance where indigenous and exogenous Others progressively disappear in a variety of ways: extermination, expulsion, incarceration containment, and assimilation for indigenous peoples (or a combination of all these elements)."[372] In further explaining exogenous Others, Veracini explained that empires employ integration and exclusion while practicing "selective inclusion (that) is premised both on categorization that allows particular people to be selected for inclusion within the structures of the settler body politic and on a particular consciousness that allows specific migrants to embrace a settler colonial ethos."[373] As an example, Veracini explained that in nineteenth-century America, Irish Catholic immigrants were considered exogenous Others who were unwanted by nativists but toward the end of the nineteenth century, Irish settlers were granted "whiteness" when nativists wanted to get rid of Asian labor.

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[371] Ibid.; Mae M. Ngai, Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the making of Modern America, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004.
[372] Lorenzo Veracini, *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, 16-17.
[373] Ibid., 26.

By removing the "Other," the Irish became an accepted part of the American body politic, while Asians were declared to be the unwanted "Other."

Alternatively, Varacini also explained that empires often express a desire to remove, or deport, unwanted Others. For example, many American nativists desired that emancipated African American slaves be deported in the nineteenth century with thousands of emancipated slaves relocating to Liberia and other African territories. If deportation was too difficult or costly, segregation was also a possibility. Veracini explained this circumstance both in the United States and in Australia where Queensland Kanak workers who were deported in the early 1900s. In addition to mass deportation programs that existed in the 1930s during the Great Depression and in the 1950s under Operation Wetback, calls for Mexican deportation have been common in the United States in recent decades. In fact, during the most recent election cycle, the two most popular Republican candidates for president, Donald Trump and Ted Cruz, each called for tighter security along the Mexican border as well as endorsing mass deportation for undocumented Mexicans while they were running for president.[374]

Another point Veracini made is that empires tend to pit one exogenous group against another in order to maintain hegemony. This practice appears to be fluid in Fort Worth as the Anglo elite at times supported (or at least outwardly expressed support for) Mexicans in an effort to limit African American power, such as in the Anglo desire to end subordination to *Flax v. Potts*, while at other times the Anglo leadership sought African American assistance in limiting Mexican power. For example, African American leaders were against city council

[374] Todd J. Gilman, "Carson Denounces Cruz Plan to Round Up 12 Million Immigrants," *Dallas Morning News*, February 26, 2016.

expansion in the early 1990s and they attempted to keep a Mexican from being appointed to the FWISD Board of Trustees in the mid-1990s.

Though Veracini argued that Others would "progressively disappear" over time, it is difficult to assess how the Fort Worth situation fits within this theory or if the theory is true. However, the loss of the "Other" could be proclaimed when the desires of the "Other" coincide with the desires of the Anglo Fort Worth elite. Fort Worth's elected leaders have historically been closely tied to the business interests, and despite claims made during the 1970s that the rise of single-member districts would reduce the influence of money, the fact that election winners tend to regularly spend tens of thousands of dollars every two years on Fort Worth city council positions proves this to be untrue. Although campaign spending for school board elections was not discussed in this research, primarily due to lack of sources, thousands of dollars have also been spent on school board elections in recent years. Just as an example, during the 2013 election, school board candidates Ashley Paz, Juan Rangel, Carlos Vásquez, and Camille Rodríguez each raised and/or spent at least $8,000 with the aforementioned Bass family pitching in $1500 to Paz alone.[375] One should keep in mind that FWISD school board trustees are not compensated so thousands of dollars are spent on campaigns in order to gain unpaid positions.

[375] Jessamy Brown, "Candidates for Fort Worth School Board Collect cash for Race," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, May 6, 2013.

Final Thoughts

Between 1960 and 2000, just as the Mexican population within the United States grew dramatically, Fort Worth's Mexican population also experienced extraordinary growth, increasing ten-fold over a span of four decades, increasing from around 16,000 to approximately 160,000. Additionally, the Mexican population only comprised less than 5 percent of Fort Worth's population in 1960 but by the end of the twentieth century, Mexicans made up 30 percent of the city. While African Americans did not have the same legal protections that Euro-Americans held in 1960, Mexicans, who were considered to be white under American law, should have theoretically held the same rights and privileges that Anglo held. Yet, this clearly was not the case in the realms of city politics and public education as has been explained with this research.

One of the key differences in this study involves Fort Worth's geographical region and history prior to 1960. As was evidenced by the miniscule Mexican population in the mid-twentieth century, unlike other parts of Texas and the borderlands regions, Mexicans did not have a long history in North Texas. Instead, the North Texas Mexican population was definitely a migratory one; part of a structure described so well by Gilbert G. González and Raúl A. Fernández that pushed Mexicans further into the United States in search of economic opportunities.[376] In this sense, Fort Worth may have more in common with Mexican populations in Denver, Colorado and Chicago, Illinois than it does with San Antonio, Los

[376] Gilbert G. González and Raúl A. Fernández, *A Century of Chicano History: Empire, Nations, and Migration*, New York: Routledge, 2003. For further reading on the migration of Mexicans to the Dallas-Fort Worth area from the late nineteenth century through the twentieth century, read Manuel García y Griego and Roberto R. Calderón, *Más Allá del Río Bravo: Breve Historia Mexicana del Norte de Texas*. 2013.

Angeles, or El Paso. The rise of this Mexican population introduced foreigners to traditional Fort Worth, where local history has more to do with cattle driving and railroads than missions and haciendas. After all, Fort Worth's slogan is "Where the West Begins," a tribute to Fort Worth's relationship with the Native Americans that Euro-Americans encountered in the mid-1800s and Fort Worth's nickname is Cowtown, in reference to the late nineteenth century cattle driving business.

Despite the rapid growth and legal proclamations of equality, Fort Worth's Mexicans did not enjoy equal power and representation in the classroom, on the school board, or within the city council. Even though Mexicans were considered to be white, they did not enjoy the support of the Euro-American white community, particularly the white business community vis-à-vis the Seventh Street Gang, Good Government League, the Downtown Group, or any other major Anglo-led political organization. Meanwhile, African Americans began taking strides toward socio-political improvements with the implementation of *Flax v. Potts* in the early 1960s and with the election of Edward Guinn in 1967.

Since the Euro-American-led school leadership and business community failed to support Mexicans, Mexican community leaders took it upon themselves to make headway in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Although some progress was made, it took the rise of single-member districts in city council elections for Fort Worth to gain its first Mexican council member. Furthermore, the progress accomplished in the 1970s and 1980s in the FWISD, thanks in large part to Rufino Mendoza, Sr. and the Mexican American Education Advisory Council (MAEAC), was limited, but evident. Unfortunately for the African American community, Mexicans efforts toward progress within the FWISD contradicted African American efforts

toward improved education and integration. As a result of this conflict, Mexicans and African Americans failed to work together or effectively help each other, so while there continued to be a scarcity of Mexican educators within the FWISD and a lack of Mexican representation on the school board, African Americans declined to actively aid their subaltern counterparts.

As the century drew to a close, Mexican political power seemed to be regressing rather than progressing despite the words of hope, action, and encouragement spewed by various community leaders. On the other hand, African American power was deeply entrenched on the city council with a consistent two members from their community elected every two years with few threats from Anglo leadership. On the contrary, the biggest threat to African American political power on the council came from aggressive Mexican activists who sought increased representation for the Mexican community. With two members on a nine-member council that has eight single-member districts, the African American community, which comprised about 20 percent of the city's population, was proportionately represented through the 1980s, 1990s and into the twenty-first century. But Mexican leaders like Carlos Puente, Jesse Aguilera, and Louis Zapata among others desired an expansion of the council. By adding two or more seats to the council, however, the African American community would have likely lost proportionate power since it would have been difficult to draw up new district lines that would have held majority African American populations.

Ultimately, in 2016 the City of Fort Worth agreed to expand the size of the city council, however the increase will not take place until 2023 following release of the 2020 census. Since the nine-member council was first established in 1924 with the 1925 election being the first to elect nine members, it will have taken almost exactly a hundred years for the council to expand

from its original size. By keeping the council the same size, it was also easier for Fort Worth to manage its population by keeping fewer variables in place. Fort Worth's population in 1925 was around 140,000 to 150,000 and by 2023 it is likely that Fort Worth's population will be close to a million meaning that the ten single-member districts that will arise in 2023 will each likely hold close to 100,00 people per district.

In conclusion, at the end of the twentieth century, Fort Worth's Mexican community had failed to claim a space in the city that was proportionate to their numbers. The wealthy and powerful Anglo-elite proved to be a difficult force to overcome and the fact that the African American community was unwilling to create an alliance (and vice-versa), hope often seemed to be lost as Mexican community and business leaders had all but given up on taking power in the city while the FWISD dragged their feet when it came to increasing the number of Mexican educators in the classroom. It probably will not be long before Mexicans outnumber Euro-Americans in Fort Worth but whether or not this will mean anything when it comes to representational power is yet to be seen. After all, Mexican students outnumbered Anglo students before the end of the twentieth century and by 2015 they outnumbered all other students combined but the school board still holds an Anglo majority and only about 20 percent of FWISD educators are Mexican. To claim power in Fort Worth is to proclaim citizenship and privilege in a new land.

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