

Acknowledgments

THE FOLLOWING history represents a personal as well as an intellectual journey. It proposes answers to questions that “grew up” with me, questions about the Texas world I came to know as a fourth-generation native. The most prominent feature of this world was the sharp division between Anglo and Mexican in schools, neighborhoods, and social life generally. What were the origins of such segregation? And why, during the past twenty years, was this segregated order apparently breaking down? No explanations were immediately forthcoming. These were the seeds of curiosity that led me, gradually and perhaps inevitably, to write an interpretive history of Mexicans and Anglos in Texas. Although this particular interpretation is focused on Texas, the history reconstructed here does not describe an isolated or unique experience. In an immediate sense, this work suggests the outlines of a regional history that speaks of Mexicans and Anglos and the “making” of the American Southwest. In a more general sense, the history points to the experience of ethnic conflict and accommodation throughout the world, and to the manner in which economic development has shaped ethnic relations.

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Anglos and Mexicans in
the Making of Texas, 1836–1986

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