

parallels between Peru and Venezuela, as contrasted with Colombia. For all three countries, the relationship between apolitical *técnicos* and the commitment of political elites is relevant. Even granting the narrowness of focus in this book, there is enlightenment on the mythology and reality of administrative reforms.

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They Called Them Greasers: Anglo Attitudes toward Mexicans in Texas, 1821–1900. By ARNOLDO DE LEÓN. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983. Map. Notes. Epilogue. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xiv, 153. Paper. \$8.95.

Students of Latin America need not go beyond the history of Texas to understand the biased views toward Latin Americans that many North Americans in the United States hold. Anglos, of course, first meaningfully encountered Latin Americans—in this case, Mexicans—in Texas during the early nineteenth century. A newly independent but weak Mexico gambled on protecting its territorial integrity by converting Anglo settlers in Texas into loyal Mexican citizens. The gamble failed. Ungrateful for their land grants and disdainful of Mexican rule, Anglos—the Texans—plotted secession and eventual annexation to the United States. Annexed in 1845 and integrated during the war against Mexico (1846–48), Texas became the first step in the spread of Yankee influence throughout Latin America by the following century. Ideological hegemony, stressing Anglo racial and cultural superiority, accompanied political and economic conquest in Texas.

Arnoldo De León's study makes an important contribution to United States–Latin American intellectual history by documenting the birth and growth of racial thought toward Mexicans in Texas during the nineteenth century. He revises earlier works by Texas historians such as Webb and Barker, who paid little attention to Mexican contributions and who, unfortunately, passed on traditional stereotypes of Mexicans. Researching the same documents used by traditional historians to create a story—the author would call it a myth—of brave and democratic Anglo pioneers, De León examines Anglo views and actions toward Mexicans and paints a less appealing picture of racist leaders and settlers.

Anglos, for example, discriminated against the Mexican mestizo appearance. They considered Mexicans to be “half-negro” and “half-Indian.” They called the Mexicans “greasers.” As one defined it: “A ‘greaser’ was a Mexican—originating in the filthy, greasy appearance of the natives” (p. 16). Anglos further viewed Mexicans as indolent, nonprogressive and, on the whole, culturally inferior. In addition, Mexicans allegedly possessed loose moral values. Mexican women, it was believed, were sexually promiscuous. Anglos regarded Mexicans to be un-American. They could not be trusted to be loyal citizens. To protect themselves against Mexican “subversion,” Anglos practiced what De León ironically refers to as “frontier democracy.” They employed violence toward Mexicans, including

murders, mutilations, and lynchings. In all, racist thought and practices became institutionalized and part of Texas culture. Hence, the continued discrimination and second-class status still faced by many Mexican Americans today in Texas has deep roots.

De León's scholarly and nonpolemical examination of race ideology in Texas history would have been better served, however, if more attention had been placed on the material base that fertilized that ideology. De León refers to the role of ideology in subordinating Mexicans as cheap labor, but does not explore this relationship in any detail. Consequently, one might incorrectly infer that racial discrimination originated primarily in the particular psychology of Anglos, rather than being part of a new socioeconomic system introduced by them into Texas. De León argues, for example, that racial views were not static and changed in different periods. He notes that the "immorality" of Mexicans became de-emphasized following the Civil War because of various social changes. Yet De León fails to discuss adequately what these changes meant in social and economic terms. An interpretation better balanced between socioeconomic influences and psychological ones would have been more revealing.

Moreover, De León's revisionist concentration on Anglo views and practices unfortunately leaves Mexicans inarticulate. Yet, while bearing the brunt of Anglo racial thought, Mexicans also contributed to the intellectual tradition of Texas by counterposing their own views on race, culture, and americanization expressed in folklore, letters, and newspapers. A contrast here would have been refreshing.

Despite certain limitations in scope and brevity, this is an important book that should be read not only by students of Chicano and southwestern history, but by Latin Americanists as well. For if the "greaser" originated in Texas, Anglo-Americans have carried his image in their relations with other Latin Americans. In the biased views of many Anglos, the "greaser" exists from the Río Grande to the Río de la Plata.

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Voter Participation in Central America, 1954–1981: An Exploration. By GEORGE A. BOWDLER and PATRICK COTTER. Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1982. Notes. Tables. Pp. xi, 262. Cloth. \$23.25. Paper. \$11.50.

The authors of *Voter Participation* propose "to interpret the complexities and various meanings of electoral participation in Central America to students and readers who may know little about the region" (p. iv). Unfortunately, from its dubious assumptions and irritating jargon—"the salient features of the Central American political scenario" (p. iv)—to a shoddy printing job, at least in the review copy, the book is a disappointment.