In Small Town in Mass Society (1968), Vidich and Bensman advanced the thesis that industrialism had progressed to the point where beliefs and ways of life in the United States are becoming homogeneous regardless of region or size of community. Therefore, since racial attitudes may be quite similar in Midwest, Boise, and elsewhere in America, it is my view that this community study may be able to inform the reader about the state of race relations in America. The small-town setting of this study allows the reader to listen, as it were, to how Anglos talk about a racial minority. Most Americans publicly censor and monitor their thoughts on racial minorities, but Anglos in Midwest expressed openly what many Anglo Americans think. Anglo administrators did not conceal their thoughts or hide behind the cloak of "client confidentiality," but instead they candidly shared their views and allowed me to examine and observe how the local social institutions functioned. This study, then, allows for a comprehensive examination of how institutionalized racism operates in American society.

The essence of my discipline was revealed as I observed Anglos invariably explain that they were not prejudiced; to them it was just a plain and simple fact that Mexican Americans were consistently abusing the welfare system and represented the criminal element in their community. Through their social interaction with one another and through the functioning of their social institutions, the Anglos had created and were sustaining a social system that implied that Mexican Americans are inferior to Anglos. This belief system had become a self-fulfilling prophecy that relegated and maintained Mexican Americans in a subordinate position in the community.

The Anglos of the study, for the most part, did not believe that their community had a race problem. They blamed the Mexican
Americans as being the source of the community's problems and they had an amazing facility for denying the social injustices inflicted upon Mexican Americans in their community. Reading this book will enable the reader to better understand why the race problem in America does not disappear.

In becoming acquainted with the town I have called "Middlewest," the reader will learn about a sociological method that adheres to J. Lopreato's (Gans 1982) perspective on our discipline. He states: "Sociology is a moral discipline. Its fundamental assumption is that society and culture constitute an apparatus devised by man, partly conscious and partly unconscious, to cope with the physical and human habitats. This means that at the highest levels of theorizing the discipline cannot avoid passing judgements—science if you will—but inevitably moral in their significance—about the functioning of social institutions and social arrangements... [and how] well they serve man and his groups."

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Writing articles of publishable quality is a difficult skill to master. My colleague Michael Blain shared with me the searing letters of rejection he received from editors of sociological journals who ruthlessly critiqued the articles he had submitted for publication. His strong desire to publish and his perseverance and eventual success encouraged me to return to conducting field research and to writing professional articles after a long hiatus following the devastating criticisms made by journal editors regarding articles I had submitted.

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Not all Mexican American males act out the machismo stereotype.

Juan Grazia recalls his father who fought in the Mexican Revolution.