Godparents Among Mexican-American and Anglo-American Catholics

Sonia Felicita Sanchez Lawson

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Abstract

GODPARENTS AMONG MEXICAN-AMERICAN AND
ANGLO-AMERICAN CATHOLICS

by Sonia Felicita Sánchez Lawson

This study dealt with the selection process and role expectations associated with the sponsor or godparent among Mexican-American and Anglo-American Catholics. The primary purpose was to answer four questions: (1) Who is selected to be a godparent; (2) How he or she is chosen; (3) When the godparent is selected; and (4) What the parents expect the godparent to do for the child. In order to answer these questions a sample of families selected by the priests of three parishes differing with respect to ethnic composition was interviewed. This sample was composed of families which had had a child baptized in the six-month period, November, 1972, to May, 1973. The data were collected by means of a personal interview which was based on a questionnaire designed to elicit the information needed to answer the questions posed by the study. In general, there were little or no differences in the role expectations and selection of godparents among Mexican-American Catholics and Anglo-American Catholics. However, there was considerable variation among Mexican-Americans from the expectations suggested in the literature. The primary differences between Mexican-American and Anglo-American Catholics appear to be frequency of contact with godparents (Mexican-
American Catholics had more frequent contact) and location of godparents (Mexican-American godparents were more proximal), two factors which are undoubtedly interrelated.
GODPARENTS AMONG MEXICAN-AMERICAN AND ANGLO-AMERICAN CATHOLICS

by

Sonia Felícita Sánchez Lawson

A Thesis in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Master of Arts in the Field of Anthropology

June 1975
Each person whose signature appears below certifies that he has read this thesis and that in his opinion it is adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts.

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Professor of Anthropology

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Peter Luna
DEDICATED TO

MY HUSBAND JACK

DAUGHTER MICHELLE KIMBERLY

AND SON

JOHN CHRISTOPHER
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to give special thanks to the priests of the three churches whose parishioners I interviewed; and Dr. James Stirling, Dr. John Elick, and Pastor Peter Luna for their invaluable help in the preparation of this paper.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. GODPARENTHOOD IN REVIEW</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Godparenthood in Latin America</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Godparent Function</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ritual Kin Selection</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Ritual Kin Relation: Godparenthood vs. Co-parenthood</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Role of Ritual Kin in Spanish Culture</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of the Ritual Kinship Relation</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. METHODOLOGY</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Sample</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characteristics of the Sample</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. THE GODPARENT MECHANISM</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of Godparents</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection of Ritual Kin</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timing</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who Is Selected</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency of Contact</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role Expectations</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role Performance</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. CONCLUSIONS

Why Are Godparents Important? ........................... 41
Who Is Selected to Be a Godparent? ....................... 42
How Are the Godparents Selected? ......................... 43
What Do the Parents Expect the Godparents to Do? .... 43
Where Do the Godparents Live? ............................ 45
How Frequently Do Parents and Godparents Visit
One Another? ................................................. 45
Implications .................................................. 47
Suggestions for Further Study .............................. 48

BIBLIOGRAPHY ................................................. 49

APPENDIX ..................................................... 53
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Importance of Godparents</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Godparents Chosen</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Frequency of Contact</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Purchase of Baptismal Garments</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Donation of Offering</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Performance of Godparents</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Ritual Kin for Other Children</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Performance of First Child's Ritual Kin</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

One recent and popular motion picture, "The Godfather," has focused the attention of many on one feature of the kinship system--the godparent or compadre--which is of special interest to social scientists. The godparent is not a universal cultural trait; nor is it equally salient in those cultures where it has become institutionalized. For some, the godparent is merely another ritual required by the church in order for their children to be baptized or christened. For others, the godparent is an extremely salient feature of their family life, and, therefore, they exercise great care in the selection of individuals to play this role.

The notion that certain tasks and/or obligations are assigned to some people, but not others--that tasks may be differentiated into roles--may be found throughout the social science literature (e.g. Banton, 1965; Gross, Mason, and McEachern, 1958). It may even be found in the nonsocial science literature. For as Shakespeare has so eloquently stated,

"All the world's a stage
And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances;
And one man in his time plays many parts"
(as quoted in Banton, 1965, 21-22).

A godparent's behavior toward his godchild and toward the parents of the godchild is generally governed by unwritten rules. That is to say, the godparent is expected to act in a prescribed
manner when he is playing the role of godparent. To a large extent culture determines the role expectations associated with the role of godparent. What one culture defines as the duty of the godparent another culture may not. The purpose of this study is to examine differences between Anglo-American and Mexican-American Catholics with respect to the selection and role of the godparent.
Chapter 2

GODPARENTHOOD IN REVIEW

The principle of having godparents or sponsors for a child at baptism is part of the dogma of the Catholic Church. A sponsor or godparent is required to aid in the initiation of a new member into the Church. Not everyone, however, can be a sponsor; the Canon Law states the conditions which must be met for a valid sponsorship. These are:

1. The sponsor must be a baptized person, and have the use of reason and the intention of discharging the office.

2. He must not be a heretic or schismatic, nor have been excommunicated by condemnatory or declaratory sentence, or declared infamous by infamy of law, or excluded from legitimate acts, nor be a deposed or degraded cleric.

3. The sponsor may not be the father, mother, or spouse of the person baptized.

4. He must have been designated as sponsor by the person to be baptized or by his parents or guardians, or, in default of these, by the minister of the Sacrament.

5. In the actual Baptism the sponsor must personally or by proxy physically hold or touch the person or lift him at once after Baptism from the font or from the hands of the minister (Sullivan, 1967, 615).

Other specifications required for a lawful sponsorship include:

1. The sponsor must be 14 years of age unless the minister of the Sacrament for a just cause admits a younger person.

2. He must not have been notoriously excommunicated even though no sentence has been passed on him, nor be one who has lost his good name.

3. He must know the rudiments of faith.
4. He must not be a novice or a professed member of any religious community unless there be a necessity and the permission of at least the local superior.

5. If he is a cleric in Sacred Orders, he should not be a sponsor unless he has received the explicit permission of his own ordinary (Sullivan, 1965, 615).

By agreeing to become a sponsor an individual establishes a spiritual relationship with the person baptized. The sponsors (godparents) bring the baby to the church for baptism. In the name of this baby they petition the gift of faith, make a profession of faith, and renounce Satan. The sponsors are also to take a lasting interest in their spiritual child and must see to it that he leads a truly Christian life, as they have pledged they will do in the solemn ceremony of baptism (Sullivan, 1967, 615). The godfather and the godmother represent, after the parents, the wider fellowship of the church (Smyth, 1965, 251).

History

The role of godparent has often been referred to in the literature as ritual kinship. This idea of ritual kinship had its beginning during the time of St. Augustine (354-430 A.D.). Previously, parents had usually acted as sponsors for their children. In fact, Bishop Boniface thought that no one but parents could act as sponsors at the child's baptism. This attitude prompted St. Augustine to write a letter to Bishop Boniface discussing the point and drawing his attention to cases in which parents had not played the role of sponsor. He pointed out that slave owners had often acted as sponsors for their slaves' children; orphans had been baptized with the
help of individuals who had consented to act as sponsors (godparents); and exposed children had been initiated under the sponsorship of religious women (Mintz, 1950, 344).

Over the course of the next several hundred years the ritual kinship system adapted to changing stimuli much like other parts of the social system. At the Council of Munich (813 A.D.), parents were prohibited from acting as sponsors for their own children (Mintz, 1950, 344). During this period, baptism and confirmation which had originally been one rite split and eventually became two separate ceremonies, requiring two different sets of sponsors (Mintz, 1950, 345). Moreover, there was an increase in the number of people who could be drawn into these kinship arrangements—at one time up to thirty baptismal sponsors were permitted. Finally, in 1298 A.D., it was declared that all sponsors who were present at any given ceremony entered into valid ritual kin relationships and, therefore, became part of the widening exogamic circle (Mintz, 1950, 345).

Through time the godparent mechanism has changed to meet the needs of the people—one of the more important characteristics of this mechanism. During this same time period the feudal order developed as well. Ownership of the land became vested in the feudal lord who also owned a share of the labor of the serfs who lived on the land. In return the feudal lord granted the serfs the right to use the land, ownership of certain tools, and the right to consume a portion of the agricultural and handicraft goods produced. The mutual obligations and service making up this system were maintained by custom which operated largely through face-to-face relationships between its carriers (Mintz, 1950, 346).
As the system of tenure within the feudal order became fixed, both individuals and households were drawn into a vertical relationship with the manorial administration. That is to say, under the manorial system the godparent relationship became one in which each individual or family was related to a member of another, usually higher, class (Mintz, 1950, 347). French parents tended to select as godparents those individuals who could be of material advantage to their children (Mintz, 1950, 348). In Germany, poor people asked individuals of higher status to become godparents to their children. In these and other places, mercenaries asked nobles to serve as godparents; day laborers asked their employers or the service staff of the manor; and officials often asked the city council to act as godparents. (Incidentally, city budgets of the time reveal that the expenses arising from these ceremonial duties were sometimes charged to the city treasury.) Monks, however, were not allowed to serve as sponsors (godparents) for fear that the Church would become decentralized (Mintz, 1950, 348).

The godparent relationship did not always lead to a vertical relationship, however. In some instances, mostly in rural areas, the godparent relationship functioned to solidify social relationships horizontally among members of the same neighborhood. In these places, the term compadre (godparent), could refer to neighbors. In Andalucia, Spain, the term compadre was used to refer to any acquaintance, and even strangers (Mintz, 1950, 349).

Toward the end of the Middle Ages, attempts were made by both the Church and the State to restrict the extension of exogamy through
ritual kin ties. Several synods were held between 1310 A.D. and 1512 A.D. which tried to set limits to the number of sponsors at baptismal ceremonies. However, these efforts were not successful. Later, during the Reformation, attacks on this custom were renewed (Mintz, 1950, 350-351). Finally, at the Council of Trent (1545-1563), the Church restricted ritual kin relationships to the baptizing priest, the child, the child's parents and the child's sponsors (godparents). It also put an end to spiritual fraternity (i.e. spiritual relationships between the sponsors themselves) and spiritual relationships arising from catechismal sponsorship. Later, it restricted the number of sponsors required at baptism to a maximum of two and at confirmation, to only one sponsor (Mintz, 1950, 351).

With the expansion of Protestantism and the development of industrial civilization the godparent mechanism was nearly eliminated in those areas witnessing the greatest development of industrial capitalism, the rise of a strong middle class, and the disappearance of feudal or neofeudal tenures (Mintz, 1950, 352). The godparent mechanism has been retained most completely in areas such as Spain, Italy, and the Balkan countries (Mintz, 1950, 352). Consequently, it was from Southern Europe that the godparent or compadre system was transmitted to Latin America.

Godparenthood in Latin America

In Latin America these Catholic ceremonial complexes developed under very different conditions from those of fifteenth-century Europe. These people were baptized from the time of first contact.
During the period between 1521 and 1576, more than four million "souls were brought to the baptismal fount" (Mintz, 1950, 352). At times, thousands of adult Indians were baptized in a single day (Mintz, 1950, 353; Braden, 1930, 228, 230, 232).

For Catholics, baptism was a sacrament designed to remove the stigma of original sin. The baptismal ceremony established an individual in the Catholic universe. By having godparents the initiate could feel assured that he would have the necessary guidance in the early years following baptism.

The baptismal ceremony and the ritual kinship tie were probably accepted by many Indians because of the symbolic simplicity and their similarity to pre-Columbian practices. In fact, it is believed by some that the modern godparent ritual is basically an adaptation to pre-Columbian ceremonies and social patterns. Others, however, have speculated that, at a much earlier point in time, some of the apostles or their successors reached the new world bringing this ceremony (Mintz, 1950, 353). In any event, the Aztecs, for example, had a kind of baptism as well as a form of ritual kinship in which godparents were chosen for an ear-piercing ceremony. In spite of the similarities, however, it is not possible to determine with what ease the aboriginal ceremonies were accommodated to the new sacraments that the Church endorsed (Mintz, 1950, 354).

The Godparent Function

The ritual kinship system is often molded to fit the culture of the particular group which has adopted it. For this system is
basically a two-way social system which establishes reciprocal relations of variable complexity and solemnity. Moreover, it imposes varying degrees of sanctity and status, as well as obligations, on the people who participate, it makes the immediate social environment more stable, and finally, the participants more interdependent and secure (Mintz, 1950, 355).

Ritual Kin Selection

A godfather and a godmother sponsor the baptism of a child, thus becoming its spiritual parents. A single godparent of the same sex as the child is named for confirmation and first communion, and a pair of godparents, usually a married couple, is named for weddings. Of these three sets, the baptismal sponsors are the most important (Foster, 1961, 1181; Madsen, 1964, 47; Díaz, 1966, 131).

Ordinarily, a close friend or relative of the family acts as the sponsor of the child at baptism, and thus becomes his godparent (Wolf, 1972, 131; Padilla, 1958, 121; Grebler, Moore, Guzman, 1970, 354; Madsen, 1964, 47; Díaz, 1966, 130).

The Ritual Kin Relation: Godparenthood vs. Co-Parenthood

Different cultures emphasize different aspects of the ritual kinship tie. In the United States, the main emphasis is placed on the relationship between the sponsor and child. In Latin America, however, it is the tie between the parents of the child and the sponsor which is of primary importance—it is not godparenthood, but rather co-parenthood of the child that is of most significance (Wolf, 1972, 131; Padilla, 1958, 121-122; Foster, 1961, 1181-1182; Rubel,
1966, 82; Grebler, Moore, Guzman, 1970, 354; Díaz, 1966, 130). This difference in emphasis is illustrated in the following diagrams.

The godparenthood relationship is best illustrated as follows where the symbol O represents man, the symbol Q represents woman, and the symbol = represents marriage.

```
SPONSORS
O Q = O
      ↓ SPONSORSHIP
      O
      ↙
      CHILD

PARENTS
O Q = O
```

The co-parenthood tie, on the other hand, operates in addition to the sponsorship tie. It links the parental couple and the sponsoring couple on the same generation level, as follows:

```
SPONSORS
O Q = O
      ↓ CO-PARENTHOOD
      O
      ↙ SPONSORSHIP
      O
      ↙
      CHILD

PARENTS
O Q = O
```
One characteristic of the co-parenthood tie is that it does not end with the baptism of the child, for it is a mutual support pact between the compadres (i.e., co-parents) involved. Such a pact may be established between compadres who are social and economic equals, or between two people, one of whom is wealthier or of higher social standing, and/or more politically powerful than the other. In the latter instance, the tie is vertical (i.e., between individuals occupying different positions in the social and economic order), rather than horizontal (i.e., between equals) (Wolf, 1972, 132; Foster, 1961, 1182; Van den Berghe, 1955, 1236; Díaz, 1966, 133; Lewis, 1963, 350).

Additional terms which are commonly used throughout Latin America to refer to godparents are:

- padrinos - godparents
- madrina - godmother
- padrino - godfather
- ahijados - godchildren
- ahijado - godson
- ahijada - god-daughter (Sayres, 1956, 348-352)

The Role of Ritual Kin in Spanish Cultures

"Compadrazgo" (i.e., co-parenthood or godparenthood) has been defined as "a web of interpersonal relationships based on spiritual kinship recognized by the Catholic Church, achieved through sponsorship of a neophyte at baptism, confirmation, or marriage" (Foster, 1953, 1).

This web or network of relationships knits the community together. It formalizes the informal ties of friendship by making the parent and the godparent co-parents. As their bonds of friendship are formalized the two parties enter into a pseudo-kinship relationship, one of the most sacred of human ties, having religious sanction and
sharing the same incest prohibitions as the family tie. Once established it cannot be dissolved.

The following narrative is illustrative of the expectations associated with this relationship.

A compadre means a lot. It's something real, it means a lot. When you make a compadre you have to respect him and he has to respect you. Compadres help each other; you can't talk about him, and he can't talk about you. For example, if you tell someone that your compadre is drinking too much then he may go over and tell your compadre that you were talking about him. Then your compadre will come to you and ask why you are talking about him. Then you may get into an argument and maybe you won't talk to each other after that. You shouldn't run around with the girls in front of him because of respect. You should try to show off that you're a nice man, and that you were chosen because you are a nice man.

Like you take Francisco, for example. He's a good friend of mine, but he wouldn't be good for a compadre. What I mean is that he comes into the house and jokes with me and my wife, he cusses around us, he doesn't respect us. He couldn't be good for a compadre, but he's a good friend. Someone like you (author) would be a good compadre because you respect my wife, and like when I come in here I watch my manners with your wife and I ask for you, and you don't cuss or anything.

When you choose a compadre, you have to call him Sir in a way. You say usted. When you see him on the street, you can't go rushing up to him and yelling, "Hey, you--come here!" If you know him real well you address him by Sir. For example, you never say, "Fíjate, está muy buena la pesca ahora!" No! You would say, "Fíjase, está muy buena la pesca ahora!" You always say Sir. Even if he is younger than you are, you address him nicely" (Rubel, 1966, 82-83).

Generally speaking, sponsors (i.e., godparents or co-parents) are expected to give--and similarly they can expect to receive--loyalty, affection, respect, cooperation, and services (Padilla, 1958, 121; Gans, 1962, 74-75; Díaz, 1966, 136; Rubel, 1966, 81). More specifically, when an individual agrees to become a "compadre," he is promising that the child will be brought up as a Christian in the
event that anything should happen to the parents or if the parents fail in their duty to see that the child receives proper religious instruction (Moore, 1970, 105; Díaz, 1966, 131). Realistically speaking, however, many godparents fail to fulfill this obligation.

Godparents are also expected to be a source of help to the family (Padilla, 1958, 121; Rubel, 1966, 83; Madsen, 1964, 47). Among Puerto Ricans, for example, when an unmarried female migrates to the United States, her godmother is expected to assume a parental role and to protect her from men and "bad" company. Godparents may also assist the family by having the godchildren live with them while the parent(s) is/are trying to get settled. In some cases, a woman who has no husband will migrate to the United States bringing only one or two of her children. The others will be left with their godparents until such time as the mother is able to send them (Padilla, 1958, 122).

Another function which godparents are expected to perform, at least in certain circumstances, is that of parent to the child. That is to say, if the parents die, the godparents will assume the role of the deceased parents for their godchild (Padilla, 1958, 122; Foster, 1953, 2-4). In actual practice, however, it is usually the case that only those godmothers or godfathers who are related to the parents will bring up the child if the parents die (Padilla, 1958, 122; Lewis, 1963, 350).

Ritual kin are also expected to visit each other regularly and to cultivate a close relationship (Moore, 1970, 105; Madsen, 1964, 47). For example, in Tonalá, Mexico, compadres often invite one another
to fiestas held in their homes to celebrate marriages or saints' days. Moreover, they may also rely on one another for support in times of crisis or need. If they should need to borrow work animals or money, the first person they will ask is a compadre. If extra hands are needed at harvest time or if they themselves are unable to work because of illness, they can call on a compadre (Díaz, 1966, 131).

Finally, godparents may be expected to provide the child's white baptismal garment, to pay the church fees, to provide refreshments or a meal for the family following the child's baptism, to present the child with his first fitted clothing (after his baby clothes), and to give presents (Foster, 1953, 2-4; Rubel, 1955, 1038; Rubel, 1966, 83). For example, in Ojitlán, Mexico, the godmother will weave a young girl's first huipil. Moreover, if the child should die, the godparents will prepare the body for burial, the godmother will cleanse the child's mother, and later the godparents and the parents will hold a wake together at the grave. After this is done they will eat the ceremonial "mole de mesa" which has been prepared by the mother. However, although the godparents appear to play a very important role here, they are not concerned with rearing the godchild in the event something should happen to the parents. Neither are they asked to advise on the choice of a mate for their godchild when he or she reaches marriageable age (Rubel, 1955, 1038-1040).

Importance of the Ritual Kinship Relation

Given the many technological and cultural changes that have occurred, and are still occurring, it probably goes without saying that the ritual kinship relation (i.e., compadrazgo) is a less important
feature of urban life than of rural. Moore (1970), for example, reported that the compadrazgo is on the decline in the city. Grebler et al. (1970), found the compadrazgo to be a minor feature of kinship and community social organization in the major U. S. urban centers they studied. In their opinion, the compadrazgo was changing from an integral feature of the kinship system to an expressive one, resembling the practices found in Roman Catholic, Greek and Russian Orthodox, and Episcopalian groups.

It should be noted, however, that the compadrazgo mechanism still appears to have great strength among special subgroups (e.g., the politically active). For example, it has been reported that among Mexican-Americans the compadrazgo is as strong as ever in some small sub-groups (Moore, 1970; Grebler et al., 1970). Moreover, in some places, the ceremonial occasions entailing the selection of godparents have increased. In San Cristobal de las Casas, Chiapas, Mexico, for example, a person acquires sets of godparents not only at baptism, first communion, confirmation, and marriage, but also at "evangelios," the "coming out" fiestas for 15-year-old girls, high school graduation, and ordination to the priesthood (Van den Berghe, 1966).

Summary

In summary, godparents are selected for a child when he is baptized and when he experiences other changes in status or passes certain "life crises." Generally speaking, the baptismal godparents are the most important if not the only ones. The more important relationship in some cultures is not that between godparent and
godchild, but between godparents and the child's parents.

In many parts of Latin America godparents are expected to do several things for the godchild, such as rearing him/her if the parents die, giving gifts on special occasions, providing the child's baptismal garments, paying the baptismal fee or donation required by the church, providing refreshments or a meal for the family and friends after the baptism, providing financial or material aid to the child's parents if needed, taking care of the funeral arrangements in the event the child dies, and seeing that the child receives proper Christian or religious instruction if the parents fail to do so.
Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to examine the selection process of, and role expectations associated with, the sponsor or godparent among Mexican-American and Anglo-American Catholics. More specifically, this study will attempt to provide answers to the following questions: How important is the godparent? Who is selected to be a godparent? How is the godparent or sponsor selected? When is the godparent selected? and What do the parents expect the godparent to do for their child and/or for themselves as co-parents? In order to answer these questions, a sample of Mexican-American and Anglo-American Catholics were questioned regarding the selection of, and their role expectations for, the godparent(s) of their children.

The Sample

Three Catholic Churches within the city of Riverside were selected according to their relative ethnic constituency. I originally planned to select these three churches on the basis of their response to three questions asked of all Riverside Catholic Churches: Do you ever say Mass in Spanish? Do you ever hear confession in Spanish? And, approximately what proportion of your parishioners are Mexican-Americans? Anglo-Americans?

Unfortunately, the first two questions failed to provide information which could be used to differentiate churches according to
ethnic composition. Therefore, I selected (1) the church which had
the highest percentage of Mexican-Americans, (2) the church which had
the highest percentage of Anglo-Americans, and (3) the church which
had approximately equal proportions of both Mexican-American and
Anglo-American members.

Having selected these three churches, I made an appointment
to see the priest of each parish in order to obtain the names of
those members who had had a child (or children) christened in the
preceding six months (i.e., November, 1972, to May, 1973). Most of
the priests were very cooperative and even interested in what I was
doing and were willing to give me a list of names. However, the priest
of the parish having approximately equal proportions of Mexican-Améri-
can and Anglo-American members, was able to give me only two names.
In another case, the priest did not feel that he could give me any
names at all. Consequently, in each case I found it necessary to
select another church, the composition of which came closest to having
the percentage distribution I wanted.

I had hoped to obtain enough names from the priests of the
three churches selected so that I could draw a random sample of ten
mothers from each of the churches. However, this was not possible so
I decided to interview everyone the priest named who would be agreeable
to an interview. I contacted each of these individuals and explained
the purpose of my study and how I had obtained their names. In most
cases I was able to interview the respondent at the first contact using
an interview schedule designed to elicit information concerning the
selection and the role expectations of the godparent(s). (The
interview schedule appears in the Appendix.) In a few cases, I found it necessary to return several times in order to complete the inter-

view.

Most of the people I interviewed were very friendly and wel-
comed me into their home. However, several commented that they would not have agreed to an interview if I had not mentioned the fact that "Father ______" had given me their name. The respondents appeared to be very frank in their responses once I assured them that whatever they said was confidential.

The responses to many of the questionnaire items were coded, placed on IBM cards, and then computer-analyzed. I did not code the responses to the open-ended questions.

Characteristics of the Sample

Since it is the purpose of this study to examine ethnic (i.e., cultural) differences with respect to godparenthood, it was necessary to distinguish between those of Latin heritage and those of non-Latin (i.e., Anglo) heritage. In this paper, one group will be referred to as Mexican-Americans, the other, Anglo-Americans.

Of the 30 women I interviewed, slightly more than half (i.e., 16) were Anglo-Americans--14 were Mexican-Americans. The respondents ranged in age from 19 to 50. Thirteen of them fell in the age cate-
gory 25 years or less, 15 in the 26-35 year old group, and two fell in the 36-50 year old category. Approximately one-half of the respon-
dents in each age category were Mexican-American.

With respect to education, nearly two-thirds of the respon-
dents (19) had received a high school education or less. Only
one-third of the respondents (10) had had some college. One respondent had completed college and had done some graduate work. On the whole, the Anglo-American group may be characterized as having a higher level of education than the Mexican-American group. I also asked the respondent whether she had attended public school, private school, or some combination of both. Most of the respondents (24) had attended public school. Only a few of them (6) had attended a private school or some combination of public and private schools.

Of the thirty mothers I interviewed, only one worked full-time outside the home, and only four worked part-time outside the home. Most (25) were full-time mothers.

With respect to their husbands, most (18) were blue-collar workers: only one-third (10) were white-collar workers. Mexican-American households were much more likely to be headed by a blue-collar worker (12 out of 14 households) than were Anglo-American households (6 out of 16 households). Conversely, Anglo-American households were more likely to be headed by a white-collar worker.

Inasmuch as the majority of the respondents did not work outside the home, family income in large measure reflects the husband's earnings. The median family income was $10,000—half the households earned less, half earned more. Anglo-American households as a group had a slightly higher family income than Mexican-American households, a fact which reflects occupational differences.
Chapter 4

THE GODPARENT MECHANISM

As part of my research, I observed two baptisms: one was an infant girl, the other was a 5-year-old boy. The infant was dressed in a long, lacy, white dress; the boy wore a suit. During the ceremony, the children were held by their parents while the priest admonished the parents regarding their duty to see that their child was reared Catholic. The priest also admonished the godparents that they, too, were responsible for insuring that the child was reared a Catholic. After this admonition, the priest then asked several other questions, such as the name of the child and what they expected "God's Church" to do for the child. This part of the ceremony ended with the priest admonishing both the parents and the godparents that they were responsible as Christian parents to rear this child in "God's Church." The priest traced the cross on the forehead of the child and each of the individuals present did the same. The priest then prayed and, following his prayer, the parents and the godparents answered, "Lord, hear our prayer."

The child was then anointed with the "oil of salvation" while the priest asked God to give the child "new life through water." "This water", said the priest, "will insure that the child will receive the gift of new life." "The child is now to reject Satan, all his works and promises." He continued, "The child is to believe in God, in Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit and in the Catholic Church."
The priest then addressed the parents and godparents on a more personal basis. He asked, "Is it your will that this child be baptized in the 'faith of the Church' as we have professed it?" The parents and the godparents answered "Yes," and then they all touched the child again as the priest baptized him in the name of "the Father, Son and Holy Spirit," by pouring a small amount of water on the child's forehead. The priest then placed a garment on the child signifying his welcome into the Church as a member of "Christ's body" who now shares "everlasting life." After lighting a candle from the master candle, the priest admonished all present that the child should be as bright a light as the burning candle.

The priest ended the baptismal rite by praying for the parents and the godparents, that they should guide this child and rear him in the Catholic faith. He then made the sign of the cross and dismissed them. After shaking hands, the priest gave the parents a certificate of baptism and the candle used in the ceremony. The godparents paid the priest and thanked him.

It is generally assumed that the ritual kinship relation is culturally-based and that different cultures will exhibit different relationship patterns. If Spanish cultures differ significantly from non-Spanish cultures with respect to the ritual kinship relation, one could expect to detect differences in the patterning of this relationship by comparing a group whose members could be classified as "Spanish" (e.g., Mexican-American) with a group whose members could be classified as "non-Spanish" (e.g., Anglo-American).

One might expect to detect differences in a number of dimensions
of the ritual kinship relation. One dimension might be its salience or importance. That is, does one group attach greater importance to the relation than the other? Another dimension might be the selection process. In other words, are there differences between the two groups in the way they select ritual kin? Do they select different types of people? Finally, one might expect differences in the expectations associated with the ritual kinship role. Do different groups expect ritual kin to perform different tasks?

Importance of Godparents

One of the first questions I asked was, "How important do you think it is for your child to have godparents or sponsors?" Two-thirds (20) of the respondents felt that it was "very important" for the child to have godparents. None of the respondents felt that having a godparent was "not important." Mexican-American respondents were more likely to think godparents were "very important" than Anglo-Americans (see Table 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Importance</th>
<th>Mexican-American</th>
<th>Anglo-American</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very important</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat important</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not important</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Percents may not sum to 100 due to rounding.
The respondents gave a variety of reasons for stating that godparents were important. The main reasons given were that in the event that something should happen to the parents someone would care for the child (13), and to make sure the child received instruction in the Catholic faith (14). The majority of the respondents put it this way:

"Godparents have a responsibility toward the child."

"In the event that something happened to the parents, the godparents would be there to care for the child."

"In the event of the parents' death, the godparents would be there to rear the child."

"I would want the godparents to rear my child in the Catholic faith in the event that my husband and I couldn't or if we died." (10)

"Godparents are to be as second parents." (2)

"When the child is older, he can have godparents and can refer as such to them."

"With the help of the godparents, I hope to rear my child in the Catholic faith as my husband is not Catholic."

"I want the godparents to be friends to the child."

"If something happens to my husband and to me, the godparents could help support the child and see to it she remains Catholic."

"If something happened to the parents, the child would go to the godparents."

"Parents are more important than godparents. It is up to the parents to see to it that the child receives religious instruction, but if something happens to the parents then the godparents should be able to take over."

"If something happens, the parents and the child would need someone to depend on."

"I had the child baptized Catholic, so it would be raised Catholic."
"In the event that my husband and I died, the godparents could rear the child if no other member of the family were available."

Others felt that although it was important for the child to have someone who would take an interest in him, in actuality it was nothing more than a mere ritual required by the Church in order for the child to be baptized (7). As several of the respondents put it:

"The religion teaches that the child has to have godparents." (1)

"A mere ritual of the Church." (2)

"Nothing more than a ritual of the Church as relatives could do the religious training of the child in the event that something happened to the parents."

"It is nice for the child to have godparents if they are close to the child; however, I don't think you should have to have godparents in order for the child to be baptized."

"I feel better if my child has godparents because I was brought up to believe the child should be baptized and have godparents; however, I don't think it is necessary for the child to have godparents."

"Having godparents is nothing more than a status symbol. I don't think it is important for the child to have godparents; however, the Church requires someone be there when the child is baptized."

**Selection of Ritual Kin**

The next series of questions dealt with the timing of godparent selection; who is selected as a godparent; and the frequency of contact between the parents, the godparents, and the child.

**Timing.** The majority of my informants selected their child's godparents before he was born. Only nine of the respondents selected the godparents after the baby had been born. In one case in which the "baby" turned out to be "babies" (i.e., twins) the second set of godparents was selected after birth. However, if the parents had known
beforehand that they could expect twins they would have selected both sets before birth. However, it will be noted from the data presented in Table 2 that Mexican-American informants are more likely to select the godparent after the birth of the child than Anglo-American informants.

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When were the godparents chosen</th>
<th>Mexican-American</th>
<th>Anglo-American</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before birth</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After birth</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Who is selected? The selection of ritual kin is usually limited to relatives, friends, and neighbors—in that order. More than half of the respondents selected relatives to be godparents for their children. Surprisingly, given the customary assumptions about the strengths of the Mexican-American family tie, the Anglo-American informants were more likely to select relatives to be godparents than were Mexican-American informants. One possible explanation for this difference—assuming that it is a real difference—may be that the godparent relation among Mexican-Americans is a "vertical" relationship, whereas among Anglo-Americans it is "horizontal." That is to say, Mexican-American parents probably select as godparents those who can best perform their role expectations of godparent. Since relatives are likely to be in the same circumstances as they (i.e., poor),
non-relatives are selected. On the other hand, friends--the second most frequently selected category--are also likely to have similar status.

In any event, it is instructive to consider the reasons given by those informants for selecting the persons they did:

"They were very good, close friends, a giving person who would do anything for the family;"

"if we, the parents, died, the godmother is financially able to give good care to the child;"

"the godfather offered to be the godparent and we, the parents, accepted;"

"they were the only Catholics in town the family knew; they go to church, believe in the Catholic faith;"

"these people are good Catholics, they defend and know their religion well, they were brought up to be good Christian people, good Catholics and the godfather has a sister who is a nun;"

"knew them well, the godmother is like a mother to me;"

"they are relatives, good people;"

"in the event of death, they would take good care of the child;"

"they were the only ones in the family who had not served as godparents; therefore, felt an obligation to have them as godparents to the child;"

"the godfather was the mother's favorite brother and the godmother was married to the brother;"

"they are good Catholics who like children, they would see to it that the child received proper religious instruction;"

"for sentimental reasons;"

"the mother-in-law chose the godparents so the child would have good Catholic godparents;"

"they are very religious individuals;"

"they are very good friends."
The questionnaire also included a question regarding the ethnicity of the godparents. Generally speaking, I found that virtually all of the Mexican-American informants selected Mexican-Americans as godparents for their child while virtually all of the Anglo-American informants selected Anglos as godparents.

**Frequency of contact.** Assuming that godparents are supposed to exhibit some degree of interest in the godchild, I asked the respondents how frequently the godparents visited them (or the child) in their home. About half the respondents reported contact with godparents as frequently as once a month or more. Generally speaking, the Mexican-American respondents reported somewhat more frequent contact with their child's godparents than Anglo-American respondents (see Table 3). This general pattern is maintained whether contact occurs in the parents' house or the godparents' house. Although there are some differences in the patterning of contact with godfathers as compared to godmothers, the differences are small.

**Role Expectations**

I included a series of statements in the questionnaire with respect to what godparents should or should not do. The respondent was asked whether he agreed or disagreed with each statement. One statement dealt with the issue of whether or not godparents should rear the child in the event the parents died. Slightly more than half the respondents (16) agreed that they should rear the child. Mexican-American respondents were as likely as Anglo-American respondents to agree to this statement. Another statement focused on whether the
Table 3
FREQUENCY OF CONTACT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency of Godfather's Visiting in Parents' Home</th>
<th>Mexican-American</th>
<th>Anglo-American</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a week</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3 times a month</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than once a month</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than once a year</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response, don't visit</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency of Godmother's Visiting in Parents' Home</th>
<th>Mexican-American</th>
<th>Anglo-American</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a week</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3 times a month</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than once a month</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than once a year</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response, don't visit</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency of Parents' Visiting in Godfather's Home</th>
<th>Mexican-American</th>
<th>Anglo-American</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a week</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3 times a month</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than once a month</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than once a year</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response, don't visit</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency of Parents' Visiting in Godmother's Home</th>
<th>Mexican-American</th>
<th>Anglo-American</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a week</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3 times a month</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than once a month</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than once a year</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response, don't visit</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
godparents should give the child gifts on his birthday, on Christmas, or on other special occasions. About half (15) thought they should. Several felt it was a nice gesture if the godparents gave gifts to the child, but they thought that a card on his birthday or on other occasions was sufficient to show that they cared for and were interested in the child. One of the respondents commented that she gave gifts to her godchildren even though her children's godparents were not in the habit of giving gifts for any occasion, including Christmas.

When the child is baptized he often wears a special set of clothing which in some cases is purchased by the godparent. The questionnaire contained a statement regarding "whether or not godparents should buy the baptismal garments for the child." More than half of the respondents (17) disagreed with this statement (see Table 4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Godparents Should Buy the Baptismal Garment for the Child</th>
<th>Mexican-American</th>
<th>Anglo-American</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree completely</td>
<td>8 58</td>
<td>2 13</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree somewhat</td>
<td>2 14</td>
<td>1 6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree somewhat</td>
<td>2 14</td>
<td>1 6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree completely</td>
<td>2 14</td>
<td>12 75</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14 100</td>
<td>16 100</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The literature indicates that the sponsors or godparents of a child may donate the baptismal fee (Foster, 1953; Rubel, 1955; Rubel, 1966). When I asked the respondents whether or not they thought...
godparents should donate the fee for the baptism, the majority (19) agreed that they should. However, Anglo-American respondents were evenly divided on this issue--half agreed, half disagreed--while the large majority of the Mexican-American respondents agreed (see Table 5).

Table 5
DONATION OF OFFERING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Godparents Should Donate the Offering for the Baptism</th>
<th>Mexican-American</th>
<th>Anglo-American</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree completely</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree somewhat</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree somewhat</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree completely</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After the child is baptized, there is usually a family dinner or party. Analysis of the responses to the statement regarding whether or not godparents should provide the meal after the baptism revealed that most (27) of the respondents felt this was not an obligation of the godparents (i.e., most disagreed with the statement). Only a few Mexican-American respondents (3) agreed with the statement; none of the Anglo-Americans agreed.

According to the literature, Mexican-Americans expect godparents to help the family if the need arose (e.g., Padilla, 1958, 121; Rubel, 1966, 83; Madsen, 1964, 47). If one is in trouble he can turn to his child’s godparents for these people are the closest to him.
Consequently, the questionnaire included a statement with respect to whether the respondents expected the godparents of their child to provide financial or material help if the need should arise. Most of the respondents disagreed with this statement. Anglo-American respondents were more likely to disagree than Mexican-Americans but the difference was not significant. One respondent commented that it would be nice if they offered to help, but she would not expect them to give her anything. Another respondent stated that she had once been in need (her husband had been injured in an accident and was unable to work) and the godparents of her child had brought her fresh fruits and vegetables and had also slaughtered a cow for her family to eat. The godparents were not wealthy—they lived on a ranch and raised beef. Every summer the godparents invite her children to their ranch for a month, even though they are godparents of only one of her children.

In a discussion of compadrazgo Rubel (1966) commented that in the event of the child's death, the godparents may take care of the funeral arrangements. When I asked my informants if they thought that the godparents should make the funeral arrangements in the event that the child died, almost all of them (25) disagreed. In fact, about 80 percent of the informants in each group (i.e., Mexican-Americans and Anglo-Americans) "disagreed completely" with the statement. It is clear that they felt that this task was the parents' responsibility, although if the godparents offered to help it would be nice.

During the baptism the priest instructs the parents and the godparents that it is their duty to see that the child receives proper religious instruction. Therefore, I asked the mothers if they thought
that godparents should see to it that the godchild received proper religious instruction. The majority of respondents agreed that they should: Mexican-American respondents were more likely to "agree completely" than were Anglo-American respondents.

Role Performance

According to the literature, a good godparent is one who will rear the child if the parents die, give some gifts, donate the money for the baptism and see to it that the child receives proper religious instruction (Moore, 1970; Díaz, 1966; Padilla, 1958; Foster, 1953; Lewis, 1963; Rubel, 1966). Therefore, I asked my respondents whether the godparents of their child had done any of these things. About three-fourths of them (22) gave an affirmative response to this question—only a few responded negatively. A comparison of the responses given to this question by Mexican-American and Anglo-American informants reveals that the former group were more likely to give an affirmative response than the latter.

If the informants responded affirmatively to the question, I then asked what they had done. Many of them stated that the godparents had given the child gifts (16); had paid the baptismal fee (13); or had bought the baptismal garments (9). Others stated that the godparents had asked about the child's welfare (4); "showed the child love" (3); taken the child to church (1); visited the child at home (2); had dinner with the child (1); and had baby-sat the child (2).

Some parents indicated that there were other things which godparents could do for the godchild such as paying attention to him
(7); making sure the parents are giving him proper care (4); being there if the child should need them (2); being a good Christian example (3); taking the child to church in the event the parents cannot (2); seeing that he receives a good education if the parents cannot (1); and finally, visiting the child frequently (1).

Finally, I asked the informants if they thought the godparents of their child would do any of the things they had mentioned if they were to ask. The overwhelming majority (27) answered "definitely yes"; the rest were less positive in their responses but they were still positive (see Table 6).

Table 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Have the Godparents Done Any of These Things?</th>
<th>Mexican-American</th>
<th>Anglo-American</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, no opportunity</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Would the Godparent Do Any of These Things If You Asked Them to?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definitely yes</th>
<th>Mexican-American</th>
<th>Anglo-American</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probably yes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

First Child

Among the informants there were a sizable number who had children other than the one who had been recently baptized. In order
to detect differences over parity in the selection role, etc. of godparents, I asked these informants an additional series of questions, almost all of which focused on the godparents of the first child. These questions were not significantly different in content from those asked about the most recently baptized child. An analysis of the responses to these questions follows.

First, nearly all of the informants who had other children indicated that their other children also had godparents (see Table 7). Mexican-American informants were more likely to respond affirmatively to this question than were Anglo-American informants, a finding which is consistent with the relative importance the two groups place on godparenthood (cf. Table 1).

Table 7
Ritual Kin for Other Children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do All Your Children Have Godparents?</th>
<th>Mexican-Americans</th>
<th>Anglo-Americans</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No. 9 100%</td>
<td>No. 8 80%</td>
<td>17 90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>0 0%</td>
<td>2 20%</td>
<td>2 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9 100%</td>
<td>10 100%</td>
<td>19 100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Next, with respect to when the first child's godparents were selected, most of those who had children other than the most recently baptized child selected their first child's godparents before he/she was born. However, the difference in absolute numbers was not great and there were no significant differences between the two subgroups (i.e., Mexican-Americans vs. Anglo-Americans). It is interesting to
note, however, that the godparents of the most recently baptized child were much more likely to be selected before he/she was born than those of the first child. Perhaps experience teaches parents that it is better to select godparents before their child's birth than after.

Other questions in this series dealt with (1) the types of persons selected to be godparents; (2) the relationship of the godparents to one another; (3) the ethnicity of the godparents; (4) the residential location of the godparents vis-a-vis the informant; (5) the frequency of contact between the informant and the godparents; (6) the role performance of the godparents; and (7) the informant's opinion regarding the likelihood that the godparents would actually perform the role expectations if they were asked. Analysis of the data reveals that the informants were more likely to select a relative as the godmother and equally likely to select a relative or a friend as the godfather. Anglo-American informants were more likely to select a relative in both cases than were Mexican-American informants. With the exception of the godfather, these results are not significantly different from those pertaining to the most recently baptized child.

With respect to other findings, the overwhelming majority of godparents were related to one another as was the case with the godparents of the most recently baptized child; Anglo-American informants selected Anglo-American godparents, Mexican-American informants selected Mexican-American godparents; the godparents of the first child were more likely to be scattered geographically than the godparents of the most recently baptized child; and as a consequence of
spatial separation there was less contact with the godparents of the first child than with the godparents of the most recently baptized child.

Finally, most of the informants stated that the godparents of their first child had performed one or more of the role expectations cited earlier in the paper (cf. Table 6). This finding is similar to that regarding the godparents of the most recently baptized child. When questioned about the likelihood that the godparents of the first child would perform these expectations, most of the informants responded affirmatively (see Table 8). However, the proportion of informants who were certain that the godparents of the first child would actually perform these tasks was considerably smaller than the proportion who thought that the godparents of the most recently baptized child would (cf. Table 6). This may reflect the difference in spatial separation mentioned earlier, the idea that a great deal of excitement accompanies the birth of a child and as the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do You Think Your First Child's Godparents Would Do Any of the Things We've Mentioned If You Asked Them?</th>
<th>Mexican-American</th>
<th>Anglo-American</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definitely yes</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probably yes</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
child gets older this excitement and interest tend to die down; and the fact that as the years elapse, the informants may not recall whether or not the godparent has done anything or whether in their opinion the godparent will do anything for the godchild if asked.

Recapitulation

While choosing godparents for one's child is part of the ritual of having the child baptized, very often the expectations of the parents as to what the godparents should do differ with one's culture. The majority of the Mexican-Americans and the Anglo-Americans felt that it was very important for the child to have godparents. However, when selecting individuals to be godparents, Mexican-Americans were more likely to wait until the baby was born than were Anglo-Americans. Also, Anglo-Americans were more likely to pick relatives than were Mexican-Americans. Most people usually choose individuals to serve as godparents that are related to each other. This relationship in my sample consisted of either husband and wife, brother and sister, or mother and son.

While most of the Mexican-Americans and the Anglo-Americans agreed that the godparents should rear the child if the parents died and that they, the godparents, should give gifts or a token of remembrance to the child on special occasions, differences in their opinions as to what is the godparents' duty exist. For instance, ten of the Mexican-Americans felt that it was the godparents' duty to buy the baptismal garments for the child while thirteen of the Anglo-Americans felt that it was the parents' duty to purchase these same garments.
Most of the Mexican-Americans felt that it was also the duty of the godparents to give the offering in the church for the baptism while the Anglo-Americans were split eight to eight on this statement.

While the literature points out that it is the duty of the godparent to provide the meal after the child's baptism (Foster, 1953, 2-4; Rubel, 1955, 1038; Rubel, 1966, 83), the majority of the respondents felt that this was the parents' duty as a means of saying thank you to the godparents for baptizing their child. Most of the respondents also felt that it was not the godparents' duty to render aid if the need should arise. However, most felt that the godparents should give the child proper religious instruction if the parents died or if they failed to do this. Primarily this is the duty of the parents; however, if the parents fail to fill this need then the godparents need to step in to see that the child receives instruction in the Catholic faith.

Most Mexican-American and Anglo-American godparents live in the same city as the parents or in some part of Southern California. Among Mexican-Americans, the godparents visit in the parents' home on an average of at least once a week to one to three times a month. Among Anglo-Americans, godparents had a tendency to visit in the parents' home at the rate of one to three times a month to less than once a year or not at all. On the other hand, Mexican-Americans and Anglo-Americans visited the godparents in the godparents' home on the average of one to three times a month to less than once a month.

When asking these same questions for the godparents of the first child, the results were interesting and in several cases different.
The major difference was as follows: These godparents were more likely to be scattered geographically than were the godparents of the most recently baptized child; therefore, there was less contact between godparents and child and godparents and parents. In spite of this lack of contact and geographical distribution, most parents felt the godparents of the first child would perform the duties expected of a godparent. However, some degree of uncertainty did exist as to whether or not the godparents would do anything for the child if they were asked.
Chapter 5

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to examine the selection process and role expectations associated with the sponsor or godparent among Mexican-American and Anglo-American Catholics with respect to: (1) who is selected to be a godparent; (2) how he or she is chosen; (3) when the godparent is selected; and (4) what the parents expect the godparents to do for the child.

In order to obtain the information needed to answer these questions, a sample of Mexican-American and Anglo-American Catholics were questioned regarding the selection of the godparent(s) and the role expectations for the godparent(s) of their children.

Analysis of the data collected revealed few differences among Mexican-Americans and Anglo-Americans. It did, however, reveal interesting variations from my findings of the literature's conception of what the Mexican-American, in times past, has expected of the godparents of his children. A summary of these findings follows. It should be kept in mind, however, that this study was done of Catholics in the city of Riverside, California, and may not be applicable to Catholics in other areas.

1. Why are godparents important?

The general consensus appears to be that it is important for a child to have godparents. The main reason appears to be that in
the event the parents die someone will be there to rear the child and to see that he receives instruction in the Catholic faith. Another reason frequently mentioned is that godparents provide the child with someone to depend on should he need such support. For a few godparenthood is merely a ritual of the Catholic Church necessary for the child's baptism. For others godparenthood is little more than a mere custom—their children have godparents simply because they had godparents and their parents had godparents.

2. Who is selected to be a godparent?

Godparents are selected from two main sources—relatives and friends. Among Mexican-Americans and Anglo-Americans there appear to be no marked difference as to who is selected to be a godparent; however Mexican-Americans appear to choose friends over relatives. This may be due to the fact that the godparenthood relationship among Mexican-Americans is vertical rather than horizontal as among Anglo-Americans. Therefore, Mexican-Americans choose friends who are likely to be capable of performing the duties of a godparent instead of relatives who are usually in the same financial situation as they are. Anglo-Americans tend to choose relatives first. Godparents are usually related to each other, either by marriage, by being brother and sister, or by being mother and son. Consequently, most Mexican-Americans choose other Mexican-Americans as godparents while Anglo-Americans choose Anglo-Americans. The second largest group from which godparents are chosen is friends. In this instance, these friends may be so close that the parents feel as if they are somehow relatives.
If, however, the parents desiring baptism for their infant find themselves without relatives and friends conveniently close, they will either ask a neighbor to serve or ask the priest to pick someone to stand up for the child.

3. **How are the godparents selected?**

The prospective godparents are usually asked by the parents before the baby is born if they would like to serve. In the selection of the godparents Mexican-Americans tend to wait until after the birth of the baby. In the event of twins, the godparents for the second baby are chosen after the birth of the babies unless the parents knew there were to be twins. Sometimes, an individual will ask the parents if he can be the godparent of the unborn child and in this manner volunteers himself as the godparent for the unborn child.

4. **What do the parents expect the godparents to do?**

The parents expect the godparents to do several things in their role. The godparents are expected to give the offering at the church for the baptism. The Mexican-American parent expects the godparents of his child to buy the baptismal garments for the child while the Anglo-American parent does not expect this of the godparents of his child. The godparents, however, are not expected, in either culture, to provide the meal or the food for the party which follows the baptism. This is the parents duty as a means of saying thank you to the godparents for accepting the role of godparents for the child.

In the literature the idea is expressed that the Latin-American is very dependent on the godparents of his child for help...
(Foster, 1953, 2-4; Rubel, 1955, 1038; Rubel, 1966, 83). In my sample of fourteen Mexican-Americans I found five that felt the godparents should help them out financially or materially if the need arose. The other nine felt that the godparents did not have to help them at all; though, of course, such help would be appreciated. This is also the prevailing opinion of the Anglo-Americans. It is my opinion that most godparents would offer some type of help since most are relatives and as such would not stand by and watch their relatives do without if they could be of help. Perhaps in times past the Mexican-American has depended greatly on his compadres; however, the trend for this type of thing appears to be disappearing.

Half of my sample felt that if the parents died the godparents should rear the child. In this there is no marked difference between the Mexican-Americans and the Anglo-Americans. Once again only half feel that the godparents should give the child gifts on special occasions; in this also there is no marked difference between the Mexican-Americans and the Anglo-Americans.

Almost all of my sample feel that it is not the duty of the godparents to make the funeral arrangements if the child dies. Some remark that it is nice if the godparents offer to help since this would be a very trying time for the parents and it would be nice to have someone there to depend on. There is no marked difference here between the Mexican-Americans and the Anglo-Americans.

Most of my sample feel that it is the duty of the godparent to see that the child receives proper religious instruction if the parents fail to do this, or if they die. Actually, this is the main
function of the godparent mechanism as they see it. They seem to feel that if they die the godparents are there to insure that the child receives instruction in the Catholic faith and in this respect act on the parent's behalf. There is no marked difference between the Mexican-Americans and the Anglo-Americans.

5. Where do the godparents live?

Most Mexican-American godparents live in the same city as the parents while most Anglo-American godparents live in various areas of Southern California. This trend is also apparent in the godparents of the first child. Once again, most Mexican-American godparents of the first child live in either the same city or in the same county as the respondent while the Anglo-American godparents of the first child live in either Southern California, California, or in another state. This apparently means that Mexican-Americans tend to live closer to their relatives and do not move as often as Anglo-Americans.

6. How frequently do parents and godparents visit one another?

To determine the frequency of contact between the parents and the godparents, I asked the parents first of all how often the godparents visit them in their home and second, how often they visit the godparents in their home. In answer to my question I found that godmothers visit most often since the mother apparently goes over during the day while the husband and the godfather are at work. Combining both the godfather and the godmother, Mexican-American godparents visit the parents in their home from once a week to once or twice a month. The Anglo-American visits from less than once a month to
several times a month. The Mexican-American parents visit in the home of the godparents from once a week to several times a month while the Anglo-American visits in the godparents' home from several times per month to less than once a month. However, when asked about the frequency of contact with the godparents of the first child, I found that in both cultures the godparents visit in the parents' home on an average of less than once a month to less than once a year to not at all. The parents on the other hand visit in the godparents' home on the average of less than once a year to not at all. There is no marked difference between the Mexican-Americans and the Anglo-Americans.

Apparently, the godparents of the baptized child are visited most frequently at first, then as time goes on they are visited less and less, according to the results for the first child's godparents. This may very well be due to the fact that the godparents of the first child are more likely to be scattered geographically than are the godparents of the most recently baptized child; therefore, there is less contact between godparents and child and godparents and parents. Another reason for this lack of contact may be that at the birth of a baby there is a lot of excitement and as the child grows older the excitement dies down. I detected no concrete difference here; however, Mexican-Americans appear to visit the godparents on a more frequent basis than do Anglo-Americans according to the results of the questionnaire.

In summary, then, I would have to agree with Grebler and Moore that to the Mexican-American the idea of godparents or compadres is lessening and he is becoming more like the Anglo-American in his
expectations for his compadre (Grebler, Moore, Guzman, 1970, 355; Moore, 1970, 105). Perhaps in Mexico or other places in Latin America the individual still feels strong ties to his compadres, but to those of Latin descent in this country who were in my sample, the ties appear to be lessening.

The Church attended by the Mexican-American made no difference as to his expectations of his compadres. In my opinion the main difference in their expectations appears to be whether or not they have been in the United States very long. All the Mexican-Americans in my sample had lived in this country most of their lives if not all of it.

Implications

Although I found no large differences between Mexican-American Catholics and Anglo-American Catholics in the ritual kin relationship, I did find differences sufficiently important to warrant the attention of those (e.g., social workers) who may be involved in assisting Mexican-Americans in crisis situations. The attitudes and expectations of Mexican-Americans with respect to the godparent mechanism may be changing, but the mechanism does exist. Awareness of this mechanism will enable social workers and others to utilize this resource in responding to family and individual needs. Ritual kin can be used as source persons to learn more about Mexican-Americans as people. Working through the godparent mechanism will aid those working in the Mexican-American community in their attempts to bring about change in these communities as a means of improving their socioeconomic status. For of all ethnic groups in the United States, 'Mexican-Americans constitute the only ethnic group for which a comparison of the characteristics
of the first and second generation fails to show a substantial inter-
generational rise in socio-economic status" (Heller, 1966, 5).

The group of Mexican-Americans I interviewed may not be
typical of other Mexican-Americans since selection of a random sample
was not possible and the sample size was extremely small. The
priest of each parish undoubtedly selected individuals they thought
would be most knowledgeable about the godparent mechanism. For these
reasons, the findings of this study may not be generalizable to other
Mexican-American Catholics.

Suggestions for Further Study

In future studies, it would probably be profitable to have
two identical groups as closely matched as possible--one in the United
States and one in Mexico City--from which one could gather data on
the godparent mechanism. Another possible approach would be to study
families close to the Mexican border to determine whether the ties
to compadrazgo are stronger there than in the city of Riverside.
Also, it might be profitable to address these questions to a totally
Mexican-American community. If the response patterns were different
it might tell us something about the effects of acculturation or even
turn up new factors influencing this kind of interaction.
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Gans, Herbert Jr.
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Gross, Neal, Ward S. Mason, and Alexander W. McEachern

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Madsen, William

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Van den Berghe, Gwendoline and Pierre L. Van den Berghe  

Wolf, Eric R. and Edward C. Hansen  
APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE
1. First of all, I would like to ask you how important you think having (godparents) (sponsors) is for a child. Do you think having (godparents) (sponsors) is:

1 - Very important  (M:11; A:9)
2 - Somewhat important  (M:2; A:5)
3 - Not important at all
4 - No opinion
5 - Other (specify):  (M:1; A:2)

2. Why do you think having (godparents) (sponsors) IS or IS NOT important?


3. People have different ideas about how (godparents) (sponsors) should treat the child. I am going to read you some statements describing what some parents expect of their child's (godparents) (sponsors). Please tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with these statements. Remember, there are no "RIGHT" or "WRONG" answers as far as I am concerned. I am just interested in what you think:

A. A child's (godparents) (sponsors) should rear him/her if his/her parents die.

1 - Agree completely  (M:5; A:4)
2 - Agree somewhat  (M:3; A:4)
3 - Disagree somewhat  (M:4; A:4)
4 - Disagree completely  (M:2; A:4)

B. A child's (godparents) (sponsors) should give the child gifts on special occasions such as Christmas or birthday.

1 - Agree completely  (M:2; A:4)
2 - Agree somewhat  (M:4; A:5)
3 - Disagree somewhat  (M:5; A:2)
4 - Disagree completely  (M:3; A:5)

C. A child's (godparents) (sponsors) should provide the child's baptismal garments.

1 - Agree completely  (M:8; A:2)
2 - Agree somewhat (M:2; A:1)
3 - Disagree somewhat (M:2; A:1)
4 - Disagree completely (M:2; A:12)

D. A child's (godparents) (sponsors) should donate money to the church for the child's baptism.

1 - Agree completely (M:6; A:6)
2 - Agree somewhat (M:5; A:2)
3 - Disagree somewhat (M:0; A:2)
4 - Disagree completely (M:3; A:6)

E. A child's (godparents) (sponsors) should provide refreshments or a meal for the family when the child is baptized.

1 - Agree completely (M:2; A:0)
2 - Agree somewhat (M:1; A:0)
3 - Disagree somewhat (M:1; A:1)
4 - Disagree completely (M:10; A:15)

F. A child's (godparents) (sponsors) should provide financial and/or material aid to the child's parents if it is needed.

1 - Agree completely (M:1; A:0)
2 - Agree somewhat (M:4; A:1)
3 - Disagree somewhat (M:2; A:1)
4 - Disagree completely (M:7; A:14)

G. A child's (godparents) (sponsors) should take care of the funeral arrangements if the child should die.

1 - Agree completely (M:0; A:1)
2 - Agree somewhat (M:1; A:2)
3 - Disagree somewhat (M:2; A:0)
4 - Disagree completely (M:11; A:13)

H. A child's (godparents) (sponsors) should see to it that the child receives proper Christian or religious instruction.

1 - Agree completely (M:9; A:8)
2 - Agree somewhat (M:1; A:4)
3 - Disagree somewhat (M:1; A:0)
4 - Disagree completely (M:3; A:4)

4. What else do you think a child's (godparents) (sponsors) should do for the child? What other duties should the (godparents) (sponsors) perform?

4a. Are there any other duties or obligations?
5. Have ________________'s (godparents) (sponsors) actually done any of these things?

1 - Yes (M:11; A:11) What have they done?

2 - No, have not had an opportunity (M:2; A:2)
3 - No (M:1; A:3)

6. Do you think that they would do any of these things if you asked them to?

1 - Definitely yes (M:12; A:15)
2 - Probably yes (M:2; A:1)
3 - Probably no
4 - Definitely no
5 - Don't know

NOW I WOULD LIKE TO ASK YOU SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR CHILD WHO WAS RECENTLY BAPTIZED AND (HIS) (HER) (GODPARENTS) SPONSORS).

7. First of all, when was this child (name) ______________ born? (Month/Year): ____________________________

8. When did you first decide to choose (godparents) (sponsors) for (him) (her)? (Month/Year): ____________________________

(If month and year are unknown, was it before or after was born?)

1 - Before (M:8; A:13) 2 - After (M:6; A:3)

About how long (before) or (after)? (in months) ________

9. When did you finally select ________________'s godmother? (Month/Year): ____________________________

What about (his) (her) godfather? (month/year) ________________

10. Who did you choose to be ________________'s godmother?

Was this person:

1 - a relative: (M:7; A:10) How related? __________________
2 - a friend (M:6; A:5)
3 - a neighbor (M:1; A:1)
4 - other (specify): _______________________________

Was the godfather:

1 - a relative: (M:7; A:9) How related? __________________
11. Why did you choose these particular people to be ____________'s godparents?

12. Are ________________'s (godparents) (sponsors) related to each other?
   1 - Yes (M:13; A:14) HOW ARE THEY RELATED? ____________________
   2 - No (M:1; A:2)

13. Do you think it is better if the (godparents) (sponsors) are married to each other?
   1 - Yes (M:12; A:10)
   2 - Makes no difference (M:2; A:6)
   3 - No

14. Are ________________'s (godparents) (sponsors) Anglo or non-Anglo?
   1 - Anglo (M:0; A:15)
   2 - Non-Anglo (M:12; A:0)
   3 - Both (M:2; A:1)

15. Where do ________________'s (godparents) (sponsors) live? Do they live:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Godfather</th>
<th>Godmother</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (M:1; A:2) 1 (M:2; A:3)</td>
<td>in the same neighborhood as you do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (M:7; A:2) 2 (M:5; A:2)</td>
<td>in the same city as you do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (M:5; A:8) 4 (M:6; A:6)</td>
<td>in southern California</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 (M:0; A:1) 5 (M:0; A:2)</td>
<td>in California</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 (M:0; A:3) 6 (M:0; A:3)</td>
<td>in another state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 (M:1; A:0) 7 (M:1; A:0)</td>
<td>in another country (WHICH COUNTRY?)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16. About how often do ________________'s (godparents) (sponsors) visit or see you and your family in your home? Do they visit or see you and your family:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Godfather</th>
<th>Godmother</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (M:1; A:1) 1 (M:1; A:1)</td>
<td>daily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (M:4; A:1) 2 (M:3; A:1)</td>
<td>at least once a week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (M:6; A:3) 3 (M:6; A:3)</td>
<td>1-3 times a month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (M:2; A:4) 4 (M:2; A:4)</td>
<td>less than once a month</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
17. How often do you visit or see them in their home?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Godfather</th>
<th>Godmother</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (M:0; A:1)</td>
<td>1 (M:1; A:2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (M:1; A:3)</td>
<td>2 (M:1; A:2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (M:7; A:4)</td>
<td>3 (M:6; A:4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (M:3; A:5)</td>
<td>4 (M:3; A:3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 (M:2; A:2)</td>
<td>5 (M:2; A:4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 (M:1; A:1)</td>
<td>6 (M:1; A:1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

18. Do you have any other children?

1 - Yes (M:9; A:10)
2 - No (M:5; A:6)

19. How many other children do you have?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 10+

20. What are their names?

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6. 
7. 
8. 
9. 
10. 

21. When were they born?

22. Do these children have (godparents) (sponsors)?

1 - Yes, all of them
2 - Yes, some of them (M:9; A:8)
3 - No, none of them (M:0; A:2)

FIRST CHILD: (name)

23. Thinking back to the time when you selected (godparents) (sponsors) for __________, did you choose them before or after (he) (she) was born?

1 - Before (M:5; A:5)
2 - After (M:4; A:3)
3 - Don't remember
24. Who did you choose to be ________________'s godmother?
   Was this person:

   1 - a relative: (M:5; A:6) HOW RELATED? ____________________________
   2 - a friend (M:4; A:1)
   3 - a neighbor (M:0; A:1)
   4 - other (SPECIFY): __________________
   5 - the same as most recent child

   Was the godfather:

   1 - a relative: (M:4; A:4) HOW RELATED? ____________________________
   2 - a friend (M:5; A:3)
   3 - a neighbor (M:0; A:1)
   4 - other (SPECIFY): __________________
   5 - the same as most recent child

25. Why did you choose these particular people to be ____________'s godparents?

26. Are ________________'s (godparents) (sponsors) related to each other?
   1 - yes (M:8; A:5) HOW ARE THEY RELATED? ____________________________
   2 - no (M:1; A:3)

27. Are ________________'s (godparents) (sponsors)
   Anglo or non-Anglo?
   1 - Anglo (M:0; A:8)
   2 - Non-Anglo (M:9; A:0)

28. Where do ________________'s (godparents) (sponsors)
   live? Do they live:

   **Godfather**                                      **Godmother**
   1 (M:1; A:0) 1 (M:1; A:0) in the same neighborhood as you do
   2 (M:4; A:2) 2 (M:4; A:1) in the same city as you do
   3 (M:1; A:0) 3 (M:2; A:0) in the same county as you do
   4 (M:0; A:2) 4 (M:0; A:2) in southern California
   5 (M:1; A:1) 5 (M:0; A:1) in California
   6 (M:1; A:3) 6 (M:1; A:4) in another state
   7 (M:1; A:0) 7 (M:1; A:0) in another country (WHICH COUNTRY?)

29. About how often do ________________'s (godparents)
   (sponsors) visit or see you and your family in your home?
   Do they visit or see you and your family:
30. About how often do you visit or see them in their home?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Godfather</th>
<th>Godmother</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>daily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (M:2; A:0)</td>
<td>2 (M:2; A:1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (M:1; A:0)</td>
<td>3 (M:2; A:0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (M:1; A:2)</td>
<td>4 (M:0; A:1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 (M:1; A:3)</td>
<td>5 (M:2; A:3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 (M:4; A:3)</td>
<td>6 (M:3; A:3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

31. Have ____________'s (godparents) (sponsors) actually done any of the things mentioned previously that (godparents) (sponsors) should do?

1 - Yes (M:6; A:5)
2 - No (M:3; A:3)
3 - OTHER

32. What did they do?

33. Do you think that they would do any of these things if you asked them to?

1 - Definitely yes (M:6; A:5)
2 - Probably yes (M:0; A:2)
3 - Probably no
4 - Definitely no
5 - Don't know (M:3; A:1)

34. Were the godparents of your other children chosen in the same way?

1 - Yes (M:3; A:4)
2 - No (M:6; A:4) WHAT WAS DIFFERENT? ____________________________

NOW I WOULD LIKE TO ASK SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT YOU AND YOUR HUSBAND.

1. When did you move to Riverside? (month/year) ____________________

1 - Was born here
2. When did your husband move to Riverside? (month/year) ______
   1 - Was born here

3. Where did you live before you moved to Riverside? (city/state) __________________________
   1 - Always lived in Riverside

4. Where did your husband live before he moved to Riverside? (city/state) __________________________
   1 - Always lived in Riverside

5. Where were you born? (city/state) __________________________
   1 - Riverside

6. Where was your husband born? (city/state) __________________________
   1 - Riverside

7. When were you born? (month/year) __________________________

8. When was your husband born? (month/year) __________________________

9. Do you work outside of your home?
   1 - Yes, full time (M:0; A:1)
   2 - Yes, part time (M:2; A:2)
   3 - No (M:12; A:13)

10. What kind of work do you do? __________________________

11. Does your husband work?
   1 - Yes, full time (M:11; A:15)
   2 - Yes, part time (M:2; A:0)
   3 - No (M:1; A:1)

12. What kind of work does he do? __________________________

13. How many years of formal school have you completed?
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 16+

14. Did you attend public school or parochial (church) school?
   1 - Public school (M:13; A:10)
   2 - Parochial school (0)
   3 - Both (M:0; A:6)
15. Which grades did you attend parochial school?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 16+

16. How many years of formal school has your husband completed?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 16+

17. Did he attend public school or parochial (church) school?

1 - Public school (M:9; A:12)
2 - Parochial school (0)
3 - Both (M:1; A:4)

18. Which grades did he attend parochial school?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 16+

19. Are your parents Catholic? (IF PARENTS DECEASED: WERE THEY CATHOLIC):

1 - Yes, both (M:10; A:10)
2 - Yes, one (WHICH ONE) a - Mother (M:0; A:1) b - Father (M:2; A:2)
3 - No (M:2; A:3)

20. Are your husband's parents Catholic? (IF PARENTS DECEASED: WERE THEY CATHOLIC):

1 - Yes, both (M:11; A:9)
2 - Yes, one (WHICH ONE) a - Mother (M:1; A:1) b - Father (M:0; A:0)
3 - No (M:1; A:6)

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WERE HANDED TO RESPONDENT ON A SEPARATE SHEET OF PAPER:

1. About how often do you usually attend mass?

1 - Every week (M:4; A:7)
2 - 1-3 times a month (M:4; A:4)
3 - Less than once a month (M:3; A:1)
4 - About once a year (M:2; A:4)
5 - Less than once a year (M:1; A:0)

2. About how often does your husband usually attend mass?

1 - Every week (M:5; A:5)
2 - 1-3 times a month (M:4; A:3)
3 - Less than once a month (M:2; A:1)
4 - About once a year (M:1; A:5)
5 - Less than once a year (M:1; A:2)
3. When were you married to your present husband?
   (month/year) ________________________________

4. Is this your first marriage?
   1 - Yes
   2 - No

5. What was your approximate total family income last year?
   1 - Under $3,000  (M:0; A:1)
   2 - $3,000 to $4,999  (M:3; A:1)
   3 - $5,000 to $6,999  (M:2; A:2)
   4 - $7,000 to $9,999  (M:3; A:3)
   5 - $10,000 to $14,999  (M:2; A:1)
   6 - $15,000 to $19,999  (M:0; A:3)
   7 - $20,000 or more  (M:0; A:2)

6. Finally, what was the approximate income of the head of the household (your husband) last year (1972)?
   1 - Under $3,000
   2 - $3,000 to $4,999  (M:2; A:1)
   3 - $5,000 to $6,999  (M:3; A:2)
   4 - $7,000 to $9,999  (M:4; A:3)
   5 - $10,000 to $14,999  (M:1; A:5)
   6 - $15,000 to $19,999  (M:0; A:3)
   7 - $20,000 or more  (M:0; A:2)

M = Mexican-American
A = Anglo-American
SELECTION OF CHURCHES

The churches contacted by telephone in Riverside were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of MEXICAN-AMERICANS</th>
<th>Percentage of ANGLO-AMERICANS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine on Indiana</td>
<td>90.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine on 9th Street</td>
<td>Would not give me any of the information I wanted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Queen of Angels Church</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Sacred Heart Church</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*St. Anthony's Church</td>
<td>95.0 - 98.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Catherine's Catholic Church</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. John's Catholic Church</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Thomas Catholic Church</td>
<td>3 dozen families</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The churches marked by an asterisk (*) are those which were contacted by me for the names of those who had recently had a child baptized. St. Anthony's Church would not give me any names therefore I went to Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine on Indiana. Sacred Heart had had only two baptisms with addresses and when I tried to locate the people, I could not find them. The priest there told me that most of these people were migrant workers just wanting their babies baptized and left or rather had no permanent addresses. Therefore, I went to Queen of Angels Church.
In total there were 36 names of which there were six individuals who would either not talk to me (2); could not locate the addresses as given to me by the priest (2); and had moved away (2); therefore, I had 30 names left in my sample.