

Fifty Years of Change on the U.S.-Mexico Border: Growth, Development, and Quality of Life

Joan B. Anderson, James Gerber



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The U.S. and Mexican border regions have experienced rapid demographic and economic growth over the last fifty years. In this analysis, Joan Anderson and James Gerber offer a new perspective on the changes and tensions pulling at the border from both sides through a discussion of cross-border economic issues and thorough analytical research that examines not only the dramatic demographic and economic growth of the region, but also shifts in living standards, the changing political climate, and environmental pressures, as well as how these affect the lives of people in the border region.

Creating what they term a Border Human Development Index, the authors rank the quality of life for every U.S. county and Mexican *municipio* that touches the 2,000-mile border. Using data from six U.S. and Mexican censuses, the book adeptly illustrates disparities in various aspects of economic development between the two countries over the last six decades.

Anderson and Gerber make the material accessible and compelling by drawing an evocative picture of how similar the communities on either side of the border are culturally, yet how divided they are economically. The authors bring a heightened level of insight to border issues not just for academics but also for general readers. The book will be of particular value to individuals interested in how the border between the two countries shapes the debates on quality of life, industrial growth, immigration, cross-border integration, and economic and social development.

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