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Interviews

The Next Generation of Latino Civic Engagement

Giovanna Negretti
Executive Director, *¿Oíste?*, The Massachusetts Latino Political Organization
Interviewed by Cielo Castro

U.S.-Latin American Relations: A View from Mexico

José Carreño Carlón
Journalism Studies Coordinator, Universidad Iberoamericana (Mexico)
Interviewed by Jesús M. Acuña Méndez

Feature Articles

Latinos and their Housing Experiences in Metropolitan Chicago: Challenges and Recommendations

Madeline Troche-Rodríguez

For Love of Family and Family Values: How Immigrant Motivations Can Inform Immigration Policy

David Piacenti

Commentaries

A Spare U.S. Agenda for the Americas

Stephen Johnson

Targeting Diversity: A Critical Account of Language Policy and Public Education

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Special Content

Life on the Line: Crossing the Mexico-U.S. Border

Featured Photographs from the Border Film Project

Life through Latin America: Cuba, El Salvador and Puerto Rico

Featured Photographs from Josefina Delgado, Vanessa Yasmin Calderon and Emerita Torres

Book Reviews

Viva la Raza: A History of Chicano Identity and Resistance

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The *Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy (HJHP)* is currently seeking submissions for its 22nd volume. The *HJHP* is a nonpartisan scholarly review published annually at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

Articles and commentaries should explore the relationship between policy making as it relates to the political, social, and economic environment affecting Latinos in the United States. Book reviews should critically assess a book of importance to the Latino community. All submissions meeting these criteria are welcome. For the 22nd volume, *HJHP* especially encourages contributions from or about:

Latinos in the military; elected officials and public servants; the growth of Latinos in nontraditional regions in the United States; banking, housing, or foreclosure issues and the effects on the Latino home; the significance of the 2010 U.S. Census and congressional redistricting on Latinos.

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- Original and unpublished
- 15-25 double-spaced pages
- All figures, tables, and charts must be submitted as entirely separate files.

Commentaries must be:

- 5-10 double-spaced pages

Book reviews must be:

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In addition, all authors must observe the following:

- Submissions must be formatted on any version of Microsoft Word.
- Citations must be formatted in the author-date system via running text, according to the guidelines in *The Chicago Manual of Style*. Footnotes are not accepted.
- Authors must submit a cover letter with the author's name, address, e-mail address, day time phone number, and a brief biography; one hard copy of the submission.
- **Authors must submit an electronic copy of the submission on CD or by e-mail to hjhp@hks.harvard.edu by the 20 NOVEMBER deadline.**
- If submitting an article, include a 100-word abstract.
- Authors are required to cooperate with editing and fact-checking.

The *Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy* is an annual, nonpartisan, student-run scholarly review dedicated to publishing interdisciplinary work on policy making and politics affecting the Latino community in the United States. Its mission is to educate and provide leadership that improves the quality of public policies affecting the Latino community with the intention of furthering the community's economic, social, and political empowerment.

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Editors' Remarks

As the sun sets on the Obama administration's first 100 days, the nation, and indeed the world, looks on to see how (or if) the new president can deliver on his promise of change. A severe financial crisis has left our nation economically unstable and uncertain of its future: thousands of Americans are unemployed or in danger of losing their jobs; the collapse of the housing and banking industries have imperiled American homeownership, with an unprecedented number of families facing foreclosure; and others are struggling to stay afloat after years of home equity and retirement savings have vanished. Abroad, American lives remain committed in two wars, and the international community continues its close watch of U.S. foreign policy and diplomacy. The world waits to see how the U.S., as a global power, will act in the changing international landscape spurred by the global economic meltdown, and continuing involvement in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Latinos are also waiting to see how the United States will act on domestic and international issues. Latino communities share the public policy concerns of many Americans, but also face some unique challenges. The rapid growth of a politically and economically diverse Latino population has led to a breadth of public policy issues affecting Latinos, not often covered by mainstream media outlets. As has been the goal of the *Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy* since its first volume twenty-five years ago, we seek to draw attention to and offer recommendations for the public policy challenges of the Latino population in the United States. We continue this tradition in volume 21 through the work of our selected contributors, who contextualize and expand on several current challenges of American public policy through the prism of the Latino—and also Latin American—experience. We are pleased to present this year's content representing a true diversity of issues of importance to the Latino community and U.S.-Latin American relations.

Madeline Trouche-Rodriguez argues, in the wake of the housing industry's collapse, that a pervasive discrimination has impeded Latino homeownership in the Chicago suburbs long before the current housing crisis. David Piacenti illuminates the role of familial ties behind migration patterns from Mexico to the U.S. through multiple interviews with Yucatec-Mayan immigrant men, and opens up a dialogue on the current phenomena of reverse-migration and why immigrants return home.

Stephen Johnson, the outgoing Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (DASD) for Western Hemisphere Affairs (WHA), cautions the new administration to adopt an understated agenda for Latin America to promote long-term growth, stability, and lasting relations in the region. Eric Johnson and Elizabeth Brandt argue for adequate linguistic support for minority students through illustrating the difficulties facing educators in a resource-poor and majority English language learner (ELL) district attempting to implement Arizona's anti-bilingual education law.

Volume 21 includes interviews with Giovanna Negretti, Executive Director of *¿Oíste?* The Massachusetts Latino Political Organization; and José Carreño Carlón, Journalism Journalism Studies Coordinator at the *Universidad Iberoamericana* (Mexico) and

former Press Secretary to President Carlos Salinas de Gortari of Mexico.

Negretti highlights the significance of Latino civic engagement as the founder of *¿Oíste?*, which provides Latinos in Massachusetts with the tools necessary to run for elected office. Carreño offers a unique look at Mexico and its shared concerns with the United States, including trade, narco-trafficking, and border security, and discusses perceptions in Mexico of the U.S. and U.S.-Latin American relations.

This year the journal presents Gabriela Rico's review of *Viva la Raza: A History of Chicano Identity and Resistance* by Yolanda Alaniz and Megan Cornish. The book provides a new take on the history of Chicano militancy in the United States, and includes comprehensive accounts of Chicana activism and the contributions of gays and lesbians in the Chicano civil rights movement, often excluded in broader Chicano literature.

Furthermore, we are thrilled to continue a creative tradition that first began with volume 19 to display the work of Latino artists. This year we are expanding on this mission by highlighting the work of Latino photographers. Volume 21 includes select photographs from *The Border Project*, a collection of photos of migrants and minute-men on the U.S.-Mexico border, by Victoria Criado. In addition, this year's journal features an array of photographs capturing life in Cuba, El Salvador, and Puerto Rico from the personal collections of *HJHP* staff and students.

The publication of volume 21 could not have taken place without the efforts of many individuals. We would like to recognize the *HJHP* Executive Board for their continued support, guidance, and valuable insights throughout the journal's production process. In addition, we would like to thank the journal staff for their hard work and dedication in preparing content for publication in record time. We would especially like to acknowledge director of board relations Bryant Ives, managing editor Aranzasu De La O, and student journals publisher Jen Swartout for their exemplary leadership and support in making this publication possible. Last but certainly not least, we would like to thank professor Richard Parker and former editor-in-chief Tomas Garcia for their guidance and insights. We hope volume 21, like previous editions of *HJHP* before it, helps expand and inform discourse and scholarship in the U.S. on Latinos and Latin-America, and provides inspiration to future staff members to uphold and advance the journal's mission and purpose.

We proudly present the *Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy*, volume 21.

Emerita F. Torres
Gabriela M. Ventura
Editors-in-Chief

Cambridge, Massachusetts
April 2009

An Interview with Giovanna Negretti

Interviewed by Cielo Castro

Giovanna Negretti is the cofounder and executive director of ¿Oiste?, the first and only statewide Latino political organization in Massachusetts. The mission of ¿Oiste? is to advance the political, social, and economic standing of Latinos. ¿Oiste? offers programs in leadership development, civic education, campaign training, and advocacy and is currently planning its expansion to five states in the next three years.

Ms. Negretti has been profiled by the Boston Globe, the Boston Herald, and Chronicle and has been quoted on mainstream media outlets nationally and internationally on matters related to leadership, public policy, politics, and public service. She has been active in numerous political campaigns and was a delegate for Barack Obama at the 2008 Democratic National Convention in Denver, where she also blogged about her experiences for the Boston Globe. Ms. Negretti is an ardent advocate for human and civil rights. She was president of the Massachusetts Chapter of the National Congress for Puerto Rican Rights (1996-1998) and currently serves on the Executive Committee of the National Boricua Human Rights Network.

Since 2005, Ms. Negretti has offered leadership training and consulting to corporations, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and government sectors in Latin America, the Middle East, Europe, and the United States. Clients have included Dominican Republic President Leonel Fernandez; Sapientis, a nonprofit organization focused on education in Puerto Rico; EU Access, a company in Serbia dedicated to providing individuals with access to EU programs and funds; BIOANDES, Perú, an NGO dedicated to the environment; and activist groups dedicated to women's rights in Teheran including the Feminist School and Change for Equality.

Listed in Boston Magazine as one of the 100 Most Powerful Women in Boston (May 2003) and Top 40 People to Watch (2003), Ms. Negretti is a fellow of the National Hispana Leadership Institute and has a B.F.A., magna cum laude, from Emerson College and an M.P.A. from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, with a concentration in leadership. In 2008, Ms. Negretti was selected to be a part of the Prime Mover program, a national program that supports leaders who engage masses of people to create a more just society. In the same year, she was presented with the prestigious New Frontier Award by Caroline Kennedy on behalf of the Institute of Politics at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation.

Interviewer: Cielo Castro, Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy staff member, interviewed Giovanna Negretti on 16 January 2009.

Cielo V. Castro is Senior Editor for Interviews for the Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy and a 2009 candidate for the master in public administration degree from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. Before coming to the Kennedy School, Ms. Castro served as Director of Constituency Services at the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials Educational Fund. Originally from Norwalk, California, Ms. Castro is a 2001 graduate of Boston University, where as a student she interned for ¿Oiste?.

HJHP

What initially drew you to the work of Latino civic engagement?

Negretti

When I was working at the [Massachusetts] State House with a senator, there were no Latinos in office. But more so, there weren't any Latino staff members. And there were very few Latino city councilors, none in Boston that were Latino. And the voting population percentages were really low. So, I figured, there is something going on here.

A group of us got together and started to talk about, "What can we do? Because, obviously, the policies that are important to us are not even being raised, let alone passed." So, that's how we got this going.

HJHP

What was it about your personal background that led you to start an organization like *¿Oíste?*, which is the first and only statewide Latino political organization in Massachusetts, whose mission is to advance the political, social, and economic standing of Latinos.

Negretti

I come from a very activist background. Many activists come from activist backgrounds, and I'm no exception. My mom was a single mom with three kids, and she was very, very active in the pro-independence movement in Puerto Rico. I grew up understanding how important it was to fight for people's rights, fight for justice, and the importance of making sure that the little guy is taken care of.

She was also a journalist, and she was always fighting to ensure that the truth was being told. So, I grew up with this just around me, and it was very present. And, of course, my family is from Vieques, which has a whole history of fighting injustice.

HJHP

What were the early days of *¿Oíste?* like? I know it was kind of a start-up.

Negretti

It was confusing, because there was nothing like it—at least here in Massachusetts—and there had been many attempts, so there were a lot of threats to it. And people were skeptical. "Oh, this is not going to last. This is just a little project." But for me, I had a lot of conviction that this was going to be a permanent thing. And so it was confusing. It was poor, and it was in a little cave hole. But it was exciting. And luckily, we got a lot of press, and it was the right time, like the perfect storm. It was the right time to start something, because redistricting was happening. A lot of issues were on the forefront that affected us, and we were able to give some light to that from another perspective that was never there. So, people really liked that, and I think that really helped us grow quicker than we would have if there was nothing going on that was impacting us in a strong way.

HJHP

What made you think it was possible to start an organization like this in Boston?

Negretti

My stubbornness. No, I think it was really that there was a need. If you think in business terms, there's a need and you want to fit the market, and there was a market for it. And also because there was a lot of people who believed in this—a *lot* of people who believed in this. And then we started seeing small successes. So, the more successes that we saw, the more it built our confidence that it was actually possible and sustainable. And that was the important thing, that it was sustainable and permanent.

HJHP

How has the organization evolved over the last nine years? What has *¿Oíste?* done to move Latinos forward politically in Massachusetts?

Negretti

Well, the organization has grown exponentially. When we started, we thought we were going to be this training institute. And it's evolved so much more than that. Before we used to do civic engagement, but now we're more focused on leadership development, candidate training, and also civic education and advocacy. And we also do endorsements.

We've evolved to this organization where we meet people where they are politically. So, if you just got here three years ago, you're an immigrant, you don't know what's going on here, and you want to know more about the government, or you should know more about the government, then there's a program for you. If you're a young student who doesn't know anything about politics, there's a program for you. If you've been here ten years and you still don't know what's going on, and you're sort of active, but you want to be more active and more strategic, there's a program for you.

And if you're so sophisticated, you want to run for office, and crazy that you want to run for office, then there's a program for you. And if you're already a candidate, we endorse you and we support you, right?

So, it's evolved to this statewide, very real organization with membership and programs that meet the specific demands of the constituency that we serve. And that's been very effective on many issues from redistricting to clean elections, to bilingual education, to education in general—really tackling the issues not just statewide, but where we really are clear that all politics is local, so also on a very local level, in your city. And I think that's what makes us different from any organization in the United States.

HJHP

What are some of *¿Oíste?*'s priorities for this year?

Negretti

Well, for this year, one of the things that we want to do is we have two pieces of legislation that we're going to be putting forth in the legislature, because now we even have a lobbyist. We are going to be doing that specifically around education, because we polled everyone, we surveyed people, and education really is the number one issue here in Massachusetts. So, we're going to submit some pieces for legislation that will ensure that 60,000 kids, English language learners—where

bilingual education is not an option because it was eliminated a few years ago—have some better programs that are more effective to ensure that they are learning English, that they don't drop out of school. That's our priority this year, as well as legislation on in-state tuition.

Those are our two priorities. And we're going to be working either ourselves or with the collaboration of other organizations, because that's the other lesson that we've learned—for any crazy person that wants to start an organization somewhere—you really have to understand the validity and the importance of working in partnership with other organizations. And many times we're in competition, but the most effective we've been is when we've learned to collaborate and partner strategically to make things happen.

Apart from those priorities, we will continue with our programs and training candidates. We have a program called Initiative for Diversity in Civic Leadership where we're training people of color to run for office, and we're moving ahead with that, and also ensuring that our regions statewide are fully developed. And then lastly, we're expanding. We're hoping to expand to other states. We're not sure if it will happen this year, but it's a goal. So, at least we're going to start covering the groundwork to ensure that if it doesn't happen this year, it can happen soon.

HJHP

That brings up two follow-up questions: First, by "in-state tuition," you mean something like the Dream Act?

Negretti

Yes, but on a local level. And it's been very, very hard to pass that here. And with the economic crisis, I suspect it's going to be even more difficult. But we have really strong legislators that are supporting this and sponsoring this bill, and we're hoping that people understand that this is not about giving money to people who don't deserve it. It's really about ensuring that people who have been here and contributed and have been educated here, who have the potential to contribute even more to this country, can do so by pursuing the dream of education and not being on the streets in some gang.

HJHP

Second, you talked about ¿Oiste?'s potential expansion. Can you tell me a little bit about what states or what areas you're looking at where you see a need for this kind of service?

Negretti

For more than five years we've been receiving letters and e-mails and phone calls saying, "Can you do an ¿Oiste? here? Can you do an ¿Oiste? there?" We weren't ready. We didn't think that we had the capacity to do that.

But now we do. I think we do, and I think we're prepared to show other places that this model can work and be very effective in places where there are growing populations of Latinos or new populations of Latinos. For example, we're thinking of places like Virginia, places like Minnesota, Michigan, Colorado. We've been requested to go to Florida and Texas, but those places have very strong

infrastructure. So, we don't want to step on any toes, but we want to make sure that people see what we have to offer. And then if they think it's valuable, then we'll go.

HJHP

So, obviously, that answers the question of what you envision for the future of ¿Oíste?. Is there anything else that you can think of?

Negretti

You know, I'll tell you what I'm not interested in. I'm not interested in another Latino national organization. We have enough of those, and they're very effective—you know, NALEO [National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials], NCLR [National Council of La Raza], LULAC [League of United Latin American Citizens]. They are very effective in their own right.

I think what Latino communities need, in my perspective—and people may disagree—is local infrastructure, statewide organizations that really build on the local, city, and state communities to build some local political power. I think that will translate into that national power, so every four years we don't have to dump \$12 million dollars on voter registration campaigns because it'll already be done on a local level. And it'll translate into political power locally, and then national power.

And that's simple. That's what we want, right? We want quality education and healthcare and all those things, but that all starts on a local level. So, I think if we can build some local organizations—not a national organization, but local organizations, like franchises—in different states that can do that, I think we would put our little grain of salt into the empowerment and the betterment of our community.

HJHP

Speaking of every four years, 2008 was a pretty exciting year for Latinos in politics. We had our first viable Latino presidential candidate and an increased presence in state houses across the country. What does this say about potential Latino political power?

Negretti

I think that demographics speak for themselves. It's the nature of things, and I think that that's one piece, the demographics. We have second- and third-generation Latinos in many states, and that's always, obviously, going to transfer or transmit to political power. But more so, I think that when we see people elected to office, and when we see people, like in the past presidential election, just increasing the vote, then we're talking about people seeing something that's possible that wasn't possible before. There's a space for something. And that's where people are grasping it, and taking it, and running with it. And I think that's really important.

We're seeing policy changes all across the United States, people thinking differently about what this means in terms of having Latinos in our community. What does this mean to have a growing population? How can we view it not as a threat? And us, as in our community, I think we're helping shape that, in a way, because we're being a lot more active and productive. Instead of taking a stance of

passiveness, or a stance of powerlessness, we're taking a stance of, "Wait a minute, this can be done, and we're going to be part of it, and we're going to help solve this problem, or help solve this issue, or help solve this situation."

I think that's really important. That's what happened here. There was nothing, and now there is quite something. And there have been achievements along the way, and now, whereas ten years ago some young Latino didn't think that they could run for office, or even dream of running for office, because there were no people that he or she could look up to, now there are. And now they don't even think [about] it twice. We have waiting lists of people waiting to run for office or work on campaigns. And the voter participation rates go higher when people are running for office. That's a given, right? When people like us are running for office.

That's what we're seeing, and that's what we're going to continue to see. This is a train. It's running. It's not at full speed yet, but it's getting there. And I don't think that there's anything that's going to be able to stop it.

HJHP

As you know, Latinos turned out in large numbers for now President Barack Obama, after initially turning out big for now U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton. What does this say about the Latino electorate?

Negretti

Well, I think the Latino electorate is more sophisticated than people want to give us credit for. I think a lot of Latinos voted for Hillary Clinton—and many say because of her husband. I truly think it's because she was a fabulous candidate. And I was one that didn't support her. I supported Obama from day one. She had an intense campaign that validated Latinos. Her campaign manager was a Latina. She was serious about Latino issues, so she earned the Latino vote, as far as I'm concerned. I think that's why they were with her.

And that makes us quite sophisticated. We know, I think, at this point in our political history who really is for real, in terms of very seriously earning our vote and who needs to work on it. And I think Obama really had his work cut out for him—not with just Latinos, but with many others. He had to earn people's confidence to be able to get elected. And once Hillary lost, I think the Latinos really gave Obama the opportunity, and other candidates the opportunity, to figure out how they were going to earn our vote. And I think Obama stepped up to the plate and did so.

To me, what it speaks to is our political sophistication, and that we're learning how to play in that sphere. And I'm pretty proud of where we got to. Yeah. I think it's great.

HJHP

Now, what are your hopes for the Obama administration? Is there a wish list for Latino civic engagement, or Latino political empowerment, that you would like to see from this administration?

Negretti

Well, yes, for sure. And I think one of the things that I really would like to see the administration do is be a little bit more serious about putting Latinos in leadership positions that actually make some sort of sense and are really relevant. And I know they've done some work. I am of the opinion that they can do more. And also [I would like to seem them] ensure that people who are in secondary- and third-sort-of-tier positions . . . can get the leadership development and support to, at some point—maybe in the second term of the administration—get some play.

I think also, that the administration, in terms of civic engagement, should be more involved at the local level—getting Latinos more involved in the local political party, the Democratic Party. I think a lot more can be done in terms of involving Latinos in the political party structure, because the Republicans are going to sit back, they're going to see this. And one of the main things that they're saying, that even Karl Rove is saying, is that Latinos need to be targeted more by the Republican Party. And if the Democratic Party just sits there and just falls asleep on that, they're going to be seeing another type of challenge in the next elections, or maybe after the second term.

HJHP

Changing themes here, and going back to your personal background, you recently received the designation of a Prime Mover from the Hunt Alternatives Fund. What are your plans as a Prime Mover?

Negretti

Well, first, it's an extreme honor. I think that one of the things that the program does is give us an opportunity to look at ourselves as people who could have some sort of influence or have potential, and currently have some influence, in mobilizing people towards a common goal in policy. What I hope to achieve with it really is to use this time to reflect and see how I can be more effective in taking my organization to a national level, or, if that doesn't happen, how I can be more influential in ensuring that our policies are at the forefront of this administration or any administration.

And the third tier is how I can be more successful at developing more leaders like myself, or people in leadership positions to make more of a difference. I think we're lacking in that sense in the Latino community. We have a lot of gatekeepers, but I don't think a lot of people that actually exercise leadership and that are willing to share that leadership, especially women—Latinas. So, I think Prime Movers is helping me get to that point and helping me develop those skills.

HJHP

I think that that ties in for us as students here at the Kennedy School. You're an alumna of the Mid-Career Program. What advice do you have for current students, and as you said, especially Latinos and Latinas?

Negretti

Well, first of all, enjoy your time here. Make the best of it. And also, I think one of the challenging things here at the Kennedy School is most of us are here for only one or two years. So the impact they can make at the school is really limited.

But don't take that for granted. I think there's a lot to be said as to recruitment of Latinos in this school and retention of Latinos in this school and also the diversity of professors. There are tons of issues. You can do a lot of mobilizing in the school, more than you think. I'm not inviting you guys to start a revolution, but let's start a revolution. But even the diversity of the staff, not just of the faculty and of the student body—that's one thing.

The other thing is I hope that you don't lose what brought you here in the first place. And I'm making a huge assumption that what brings people here is wanting to do public service or make the world a better place. But if that is it, then it's very tempting to go to the McKinsey's of the world and make a lot of money. And that's good stuff. But don't lose sight—even if you do go to a McKinsey—don't lose sight of that core inner thing that brought you here and that roots you, what keeps you anchored.

And I think that's really important for us as Latinos, because we need people like you, like me, that are here, that have all this knowledge; to just keep it to ourselves or make it for profit doesn't really help our communities. And I think that we're the chosen few, and that we have a responsibility because of that.

HJHP

Thanks, Giovanna. And speaking of the chosen few, you recently received quite an honor. This is my last question: How did it feel when you learned you would be the recipient of the John F. Kennedy 2008 New Frontier Award?

Negretti

You're embarrassing me, but that, to me, was an incredible honor. And I don't have words to describe how nervous I was that evening, because it's quite an achievement, being recognized for your work. But it really speaks more about where we've come as a community. I'm very aware that it's really not about me, that it's really about where we've come as a community. And that just fills me with pride. I get tears in my eyes because it fills me with pride, where we've come.

And for a *jibarita* like me to come from Puerto Rico and get this award at the Harvard Kennedy School from Caroline Kennedy, it gives me goose bumps, because I never would have thought that I, personally, would come this far. But also, that the community would come this far, and that our community can be recognized for its political advancement. And I'm just very proud to be the recipient. But really, it's really sort of like the person in between, me and the community, right? In between Caroline Kennedy and the community. So, I'm just like a placeholder for that thing. But it's a very nice place, I promise. And whoever wants to go see it can visit me, and I'll be glad to share it with everyone.

But yeah, it was wonderful. And one thing that was really cool was that my mom and my grandmother got to see it, via satellite. And you were there, and thank you for being there. So, it was nice.

An Interview with José Carreño Carlón

Interviewed by Jesús M. Acuña Méndez

Professor José Carreño Carlón is currently the Coordinator of Journalism Studies at the Universidad Iberoamericana (Mexico) and is a weekly columnist with the Mexican newspaper El Universal. He received a master in international public law degree from Leiden University in the Netherlands and a Ph.D. in public communication from the University of Navarra (Spain).

Mr. Carreño has more than forty years of experience in public communication in Mexico, including overseeing the national papers and serving as press secretary to President Carlos Salinas de Gortari. As Press Secretary for President Salinas, he was a member of the president's working committee on the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The meetings held by the Mexican president and his U.S. counterparts, former Presidents George Bush and Bill Clinton, led to the finalization of NAFTA in 1993.

Prior to his role in the Salinas administration, Mr. Carreño served as a federal congressman, where he participated in three comprehensive inter-parliamentary meetings with U.S. lawmakers on common issues of security, trade, and border-related matters. Mr. Carreño has also acted as ambassador to the Netherlands and was awarded Mexico's National Journalism Prize in 1987.

Interviewer: Jesús M. Acuña Méndez interviewed José Carreño Carlón on 17 January 2009 in Hermosillo, Mexico, and continued over phone and e-mail in February 2009.

Originally from Hermosillo, Mexico, Jesús M. Acuña Méndez will receive a master of public policy degree from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University in 2010. Prior to pursuing graduate study, Acuña Méndez worked as a political and legal advisor to the Mexican Senate in Mexico City and worked at the law firm Acuña Griego y Asociados. At the Harvard Kennedy School he is focusing on issues surrounding the administration of justice, organized crime, and social development. He holds a law degree from the Universidad Iberoamericana (Mexico.)

HJHP

What would you say are the most pressing issues in Mexico right now?

Carreño

The two main problems in Mexico are: (1) a public safety crisis, in various cities, driven by organized crime and gangs that have infiltrated many key security corporations [and local police outfits] in the country; and (2) economic insecurity, which has citizens worried about confronting more pronounced losses of economic dynamism, unemployment, and inflation, which occurs when income per household drops while everyday prices go up.

HJHP

How do you perceive the current economic situation in Mexico?

HJHP

Some people from Mexico and the United States believe the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) should be modified. Do you think certain economic provisions within the NAFTA framework could be readdressed?

Carreño

That is a good question. In the United States, there's a tendency to favor unilateral action. This is somewhat of a concern for Mexico as it is deeply aware of the promises made by [U.S.] President [Barack] Obama to U.S. labor unions. [These promises] could take [the United States] back to protectionist policies that would eventually close the gates to Mexican products. Fortunately for Mexico, though, the two presidents—[Felipe] Calderon and Obama—stated in their meeting [in January 2009] that only parallel issues in the agreement that don't directly pertain to NAFTA would be revised, especially those concerning labor.

I also believe that the Mexican government has shown reluctance to revising the commercial agreement, while assuming a passive attitude towards putting forth any additional proposals. Here is where I believe there is an enormous opportunity for both the Mexican government and the new U.S. administration to [better address] the threats posed by the global crisis. In an effort to overhaul the current situation in North America, Mexico could promote a true community for North America where each of its members [can] take unilateral measures—unlike in the European Union. It would be prudent that the United States understand a new framework under which it will no longer be possible to adopt defensive measures to maintain domestic employment at the expense of eliminating jobs in Mexico and Canada.

One example is the automotive industry. . . . I mean such [an] industry is tri-national, even global. An initiative the Mexican government should push for is to pursue agreements between the [U.S., Canadian, and Mexican] governments, the automakers, and the unions of [all] three countries, with the aim of determining the jobs to be saved [in each]. . . . This could be achieved through the method used fifteen years ago to put together the North American Free Trade Agreement, where representatives from the business sector and the unions of all three countries took part in negotiations.

HJHP

What is your opinion, from a bilateral perspective, on the topic that is now getting increased attention from the media in the United States: organized crime and public insecurity in Mexico?

Carreño

We live in a world that is both reality and perception. It is very serious, then, that the United States has begun to develop a perception that Mexico is turning into a failed state and that organized crime is overtaking the government simply because of events that occurred in some parts of the country. In this sense, I think Mexico has to double its efforts, both by authentically combating criminal organizations as well as working on changing those perceptions through effective communication strategies, to stem misperceptions in the U.S. while correctly informing others on

how Mexico is countering crime. I believe the chief problem is the bilateral relationship. On the one hand—part perception, part reality—there is this idea that Mexican crime is invading U.S. cities. There is a belief [in the United States] that the Mexican mafia is actually competing against traditional domestic organized crime outfits inside the United States, including the Russian, Korean, and Italian mafias. That is very negative. But on the other hand, in Mexico there is a reality-perception combination that the local criminal organizations are being armed by commercial weapons from the U.S. [The belief here is that] unfettered commerce is helping to spread drug trafficking money to U.S. weapons producers and distributors. Ultimately, these weapons end up in the hands of criminals that murder civilians, policemen, and militaries in Mexico. This is a very important area where we could have bilateral cooperation: the United States ought to control the flow of weapons into Mexico, while Mexico [should] monitor and suppress the infiltration of Mexican criminal organizations into the United States. While it is true that the majority of weapons for the Mexican drug cartels come from the U.S., it is also true that much of the criminal workforce is being supplied by Mexico. We have to find a way, then, to see this phenomenon with more objectivity, both in the bilateral negotiations as well as in the mass media.

HJHP

Talking about perceptions, in Mexico there is this collective idea that local problems related with organized crime are basically a result of U.S. demand for drugs. Do you agree with this idea?

Carreño

Of course not. There is a very clear history in Mexico where the “rule of law” culture didn’t exist. This has resulted in traffickers being empowered to take advantage of an unstable tradition in our country and evolve into very complex organizations. As we say in Mexico, “*con un dedo no se tapa el sol*” [we cannot try to cover the sun with a finger] by pretending that all of our problems come from the outside. This is a globalized world, and this is a global problem with ramifications here [in Mexico], there [in the United States], and down there [in Guatemala and the rest of Central America]. [An example of] this phenomenon [is] when Mexico asserts itself against the drug cartels at home and problems suddenly arise in other countries. For instance, when criminals are chased [to Mexico], they flee to Central America. By asserting ourselves in the fight against traffickers, we displace effects onto other countries. This is why crime is a global problem, and it’s also why we need to meet this challenge together. If criminal organizations are allowed to flee to other countries (for example, Central America), then they will grow stronger there and eventually come back to Mexico. We have to strengthen the North-South cooperation [to solve this problem].

HJHP

Following up on your last point, we are now seeing a war being waged in Mexico against these sophisticated criminal organizations that not only have accountants, economists, and lawyers on hand, but also heavily armed gunmen and mercenaries. Do you think Mexico is winning or losing this war?

Carreño

Well, in all reality, there is no referee that can keep tally as to who's winning or losing. [I mean], how can you measure who's winning or losing? [I guess] one way is to count the number of deaths incurred. If that's the case, then without question more deaths have been incurred by the criminals. [But] this has a lot to do with the fact that they are killing themselves. This also owes to a successful Mexican campaign to fight crime.

There are several indicators that could show us who is winning. I think there are several qualitative indicators that suggest we are making strides in the battlefield. Tens of thousands of criminals are incarcerated, and billions of dollars have been seized from them. However, there are also perceptions that do not help because with each defiant act, like executions of police chiefs or beheadings of militaries, it makes people think that the criminals are still in control, have great communications, and a great strategy. [But] I believe that Mexico might actually be winning the war against crime—I do not know what the “score” might be—but we are losing the battle of perceptions. Like in all wars, the first casualty is truth. In this context, crime has a great advantage in the war of perceptions because each spectacular and exaggerated action allows them to create the perception that they are in control of the situation.

The issue surrounding perceptions here is very important. For example, there are several studies that show how even Mexican states that haven't been touched by this problem [of high incidence of violent crimes] are not free from the phenomenon of perception. Even though they are safe, people who live there watch and read the news at all hours, everyday, about the criminals and the ongoing battle between the government and the cartels. This makes people uneasy and paranoid. The government has to pay special attention to this matter. We saw this phenomenon in Spain in its battle against terrorism and in Colombia as well. It is something [Mexico] has to work on.

HJHP

The climate of social and political uncertainty in Mexico also impacts foreign investment and the level of trust other governments may have toward Mexico. The changing of parties, from the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) to the National Action Party (PAN) in 2000, was viewed positively outside the country. Even today many people in the United States see former Mexican President Vicente Fox as a champion of democracy in Mexico. What steps should Mexico take to ensure an authentic democratic transition?

Carreño

Well, this is a more complicated analysis. Carlos Castillo Peraza—although a former politician from the PAN, he was very bright—once said that in Mexico we have a problem of trying to build a democracy without having any democrats. We have a very antidemocratic culture that prevails among all the political actors and even among a good portion of our society. Several polls in Mexico and Latin America reveal societies are disappointed with democratic change, because democratic change hasn't solved any of the deeper problems such as poverty, education, health, etc. There are countries where the problem is much more pronounced than

in Mexico. And in such cases, people are more willing to sacrifice democracy as long as someone appears to have [divine] proposals to solve [their] problems. Examples of this are some leaders in South America and even some in Mexico. So it is a problem that goes beyond simple remedies; it's a cultural problem that requires patience. Above all, I believe we have to identify the root of the problem in places with polarized societies, where the biggest percentage of society is made up of poor people, and where populism appears to be the solution among the disenfranchised, simply because "democracy" has done nothing for them.

HJHP

What is your perception of the election of Barack Obama? How do you think the Mexican government [and Mexico] can benefit from this new relationship?

Carreño

I think it is a big opportunity for everyone. The problem with Obama is that he's generated a lot of expectations around the world and even said during a [recent] interview with the *New York Times* that some of his goals may not be achieved, [and] much less in the short term. . . . From here on out, he knows he can't be playing the expectations game. By avoiding that, [he should be able] to think from other perspectives, such as from the Mexican and Latin American perspectives. [He has a] solid leadership style with an emphasis on long-term social programs that could reconstruct the financial system and lift the United States' shattered economy out of the crisis and restore confidence to the global markets. With [the success] of that step alone, he could definitely improve the perception everyone has of the United States. Furthermore, if he is able to withdraw U.S. troops from Iraq, distance himself from [Former U.S. President George W.] Bush's policies, and not get carried away by expectations created during his campaign, I think Mexico should work with this new neighbor. He's a new leader with a more open-minded view, of racially distinct origin, with a multicultural perspective. All of this represents a very attractive opportunity. Nothing is certain, everything remains to be seen, but without question it is a great opportunity.

HJHP

What do you think about the United States' current approach toward Latin America, including Cuba and the possibility that President Obama's administration could lift the embargo? What path do you think the United States should pursue with respect to Latin America?

Carreño

Once those who held high expectations see that there will not be any kind of "Copernicus²-like" change in U.S. policies [toward Latin America], they will definitely be frustrated. [In regards to Cuba], I also think great expectations have been built up inside of Cuba, but if the island's leaders are not willing to make tough decisions and change their manners of governance there won't be any changes from the United States. Change will not occur simply because of Obama's goodwill; he might have very good intentions and he might be very lucid, but he has his constituents, a Congress, and a Secretary of State to think about. So, I believe that the greatest change, or marginal changes, will [occur] once there is more

tolerance and sympathy towards left-leaning governments, which go against conventional U.S. wisdom.

Obama's intellectual brilliance and open-minded views will indeed be helpful to understanding and tolerating other leaders of the world with similar characteristics, whether they come from the left or from the right. There will be good relations with [President Luiz Inácio] Lula [da Silva of Brazil] and [President Michelle] Bachelet [of Chile]. However, relations will not necessarily improve with [President Hugo] Chávez [of Venezuela] if he does not improve. In order for there to be a change in the United States, there also has to be change, a modernization, in other countries like Venezuela and Cuba. I think the time has come. The embargo over Cuba is irrational, useless, and should have been removed long ago. I think the time is almost ripe for Obama to begin moving towards Cuba, but on the grounds that Cuba takes steps towards the U.S. as well. I also think there are other areas where the two countries could enter into discussions to reach some kind of agreement on reciprocal modernization. But we would be speculating. I think it would speak well of Obama to have relations with Cuba and the center-right government in Colombia and even with governments in the Middle East.

Endnotes

¹The use of or reliance on voluntary action to maintain an institution, carry out a policy, or achieve an end.

² Polish astronomer and mathematician who was a proponent of the view that the Earth revolved around the sun in a daily and yearly motion.

Latinos and their Housing Experiences in Metropolitan Chicago: Challenges and Recommendations

by *Madeline Troche-Rodríguez*

Madeline Troche-Rodríguez currently teaches social science and sociology courses at Harry S. Truman College, one of the City Colleges of Chicago. Prior to her appointment at Truman College, she was the Community Education and Resources manager for the Latino Policy Forum (formerly Latinos United), a multi-issue nonprofit organization serving the Latino community in metropolitan Chicago. She has worked on fair housing since 1999 designing curricula in Spanish, facilitating workshops about fair housing rights and responsibilities, and testing for discrimination in Chicagoland. She is a cofounder of MoveSmart.org and serves on the board of directors of the Latin United Community Housing Association and Loyola University Chicago's Center for Urban Research and Learning.

Abstract

This article examines instances of housing discrimination against Latinos in the Chicago suburbs through several interviews with thirty-four Latino families who live in towns with a recent history of controversies around fair housing. Whether they are living in the central city or in the suburbs, Latinos continue to experience housing segregation. Latinos often move away from the central city and into suburban neighborhoods for a better life, but they continue to experience hardship in acquiring adequate housing conditions that meet their needs. This article explores different forms of housing discrimination through the use of exclusionary practices such as predatory lending, inconsistent and selective enforcement of strict housing codes, systematic misinformation about home-buying, anti-immigration sentiment, and urban renewal and revitalization. The results of these practices are illustrated in currently foreclosure rates among Latinos. These challenges and housing experiences are seen from the perspective of the families. Finally, policy recommendations are offered that promote fair, affordable and decent housing opportunities for Latinos and other low-income and minority groups in the region.

Introduction

Housing discrimination is pervasive throughout the United States. Members of subordinate groups still find many barriers to housing despite fair housing laws designed to protect them. The disabled, people of color, and families with children are among the most vulnerable groups. Latinos, in particular, face housing discrimination on the basis of their ethnicity, familial, and immigration statuses. Beginning with the home-buying process, Latino families are restricted in the kinds of homes they can purchase by the real estate and banking industries, and more recently many have fallen victim to predatory mortgage brokers. These

industries also determine the kinds of mortgages and neighborhoods available to Latinos. This article explores the housing experiences of many Latino families through the testimonies of Latinos in various Chicago suburbs that have histories of discrimination against minorities such as Elgin, Cicero, Berwyn, Waukegan, and Evanston. The experiences of these thirty-four Latino families illustrate how municipal exclusionary practices succeed in preventing many Latinos from achieving the American Dream of attaining affordable and adequate home ownership.

Lack of Scholarship Regarding Latino Housing

There is very limited documentation about Latinos and their housing conditions. Earl Shorris (1992) wrote about the housing conditions of Mexicans living in the Southwest during the early 19th century. He documented the struggles faced by Mexican families who did not have access to sanitary facilities. He also documented the lack of affordable housing or at least the inability of families to keep up with housing costs. Manuel Gonzales (1999) documented Latinos' poor living conditions during the 1940s as more families settled in urban areas. Many families saw the move to the city as an improvement on their standard of living, yet they still faced inadequate housing conditions. Félix Padilla wrote about Puerto Ricans and Mexican Americans who were concentrated in poorly paid jobs in Chicago during the 1950s and 1960s and observed:

Puerto Ricans were trapped in the most deteriorated or run-down residential sections in their communities of settlement not only because of poverty but also because of a stringent pattern of housing discrimination. (Padilla 1985)

José R. Sánchez (1986) described similar housing conditions for Puerto Ricans living in New York. Housing choices were very limited in the city, forcing many Latinos and others into inadequate housing units where rents were extremely high.

More generally, the consensus among many advocates and researchers is that housing discrimination is still prevalent in the United States (Yinger 1995; Morales 1996; Betancur 1996; Fleming 1994; Dreier and Atlas 1995). A spectrum of research supports the fact that housing discrimination is pervasive in suburban municipalities (Squires 1999; Yinger 1995; Dreier and Atlas 1995; Betancur 1996; Cuadros 1993, 1995). Scholars have done extensive research around issues of lending and housing discrimination, as well as zoning and building codes affecting Blacks and Asians (Morales 1996; Yinger 1995). Yet these studies do not substantially address housing discrimination against Latinos.

Federal Government Intervention

The U.S. federal government, through the enactment of the National Housing Act Amendments of 1938 and the Federal Housing Act of 1949, provided subsidies and created decent housing opportunities to address the poor living conditions of low-income residents and minorities, especially for African American families in need of affordable housing. These resources would later be accessible to the growing number of Latinos abiding in the United States. Yet very few Latinos, especially recent immigrants, have utilized public housing or other subsidized

housing (Latinos United 2006; Oldweiler 2007; McRoberts 1995; Ihejirika 1994). Historically, eligible Latinos have been underrepresented in public housing primarily because they are unaware of such housing. According to the *Chicago Tribune*, “While Latinos make up 25 percent of the population eligible for public housing in Chicago, they occupy just over 2 percent of the authority’s units in use” (McRoberts 1995).

Both the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) have failed to conduct sufficient outreach in the Latino community to inform qualified individuals about the available services, programs, housing units, and job opportunities. In 1994, Latinos United, a housing advocacy organization, sued the CHA after years of negotiation because of the lack of Latino representation and access to housing opportunities. As a result, CHA agreed to include eligible Latino families on waiting lists for various housing programs, provide remediation vouchers, and develop specialized community outreach programs in the Latino community (Latinos United 2006).

The U.S. Fair Housing Act of 1968 has had mixed results, but ultimately has not succeeded in creating racial balance and integration in every city as it originally set out to do. The act was amended in 1988 to prohibit discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, disability, familial status, or national origin in housing, but to this day its enforcement by the federal government, that is, the U.S. Department of Justice and HUD, is questionable (National Fair Housing Alliance 2004). The Fair Housing Act has not done enough to dispel segregation and discrimination from the fabric of U.S. society.

Segregated Housing Markets

Race continues to play a role in the shaping of cities (Feagin 1986; 1997). This has been documented for both African Americans and Latinos living in major metropolitan areas. Most studies on suburbanization focused on the White flight that occurred in the 1950s; very few looked at new immigrant settlements in those suburban communities (Alba et al. 1999; Logan, Alba, and Leung 1996; Morales 1996; Keating 1994; Baldassare 1992; Alba and Logan 1991; Logan and Messner 1987; Orfield 1986). Dual housing markets evolved as a function of discriminatory practices. There was a surplus of new construction in the White housing market for affluent buyers in larger metropolitan areas, and another market with different housing options available to people of color.

The development of a dual housing market was exacerbated by the zoning laws, which determined the categories of housing allowed in different parts of the city, thereby affecting who lived in each market. Zoning was used in the suburbs as an exclusionary mechanism by reserving large lots for single-family homes and prohibiting the construction of multifamily rental developments. This practice of zoning out affordable multifamily units kept low-income families and minorities out of many suburban communities (Marcuse 1990). Suburbia, thus, came to symbolize an ideal and exclusive kind of American society (Jackson 1976; 1985).

Latino Demographic Change

The past two decades have seen an increase in the Latino population nationwide. Illinois was home to about 900,000 and 1.5 million Latinos in 1990 and 2000, respectively. According to the most recent census data, the Latino population grew significantly in Cook County, going from 694,194 in 1990 to 1,071,740 in 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau 2000a; 1990). Mexicans represent the largest group (73 percent) of Latinos in Cook County compared to Puerto Ricans (12 percent), Cubans, and others from Central and South America (14 percent). In Illinois, Latinos make up 12.4 percent, while in Chicago they comprise 26 percent of the population (U.S. Census Bureau 2000b).

The landscape has changed significantly as more Latinos move from the city to other destinations. In fact, Chicago is no longer a port of entry for Latino immigrants. As documented by the media (Paral 2003) and more recently confirmed by the University of Notre Dame's Institute for Latino Studies (Ready and Brown-Gort 2005), many Latino families move directly to the suburbs seeking new job opportunities and better schools for their children. New Latino communities are emerging in neighborhoods and suburban municipalities west of the city following a spillover effect. That is, as other immigrant communities, especially European, move away from inner ring-towns, Latinos move in trying to access affordable housing.

Chicago Housing Discrimination

Media coverage and the work of fair housing advocacy groups in the region show that the Chicago metropolitan region is still a breeding ground for housing discrimination (Saunders 2009; Breymaier 2005; Breymaier and White 2005; Rendón 2005; Schechter 2005). According to a report released by the Chicago Area Fair Housing Alliance (CAFHA), more than 2,000 housing discrimination complaints were filed with private fair housing agencies in 2007 (Breymaier and Schmid 2008). Residents cited race, familial status, and disability as the most frequent basis for the discrimination they experienced. One plausible explanation is that many communities in the Chicago metropolitan area do not tend to welcome low-income families in spite of housing policies that prohibit discrimination (Black 2003; Spak 2003; Wronski 2003; Mann 2002; Mihalopoulos 2000; O'Connor 1999; Belluck 1997; Flink 1996; Cuadros 1993; 1995; Quintanilla 1994).

A recent shift in demographics moved Latinos away from the city to settle in large numbers in the suburbs. Major economic and structural changes, including an expanding service industry and suburban job growth, brought an increased minority labor force, especially Latinos, to the surrounding suburbs (Latino Institute 1994).

Life in the suburbs has not always proved advantageous to most minorities and immigrants. Segregation continues to thrive in Chicago and adjacent suburbs, which has hindered other aspects of social life such as family safety and access to adequate employment and education opportunities. Urban planner John Betancur contended, "even though suburban Latinos are slightly better off than Latinos in the city, their suburbanization is proceeding along the lines of clustering in the

most deteriorated rental areas” (Betancur 1996). Thus, Latinos who move to the suburbs may encounter neighborhoods and housing conditions very similar to that of the city. Towns and satellite cities like Cicero and Elgin exhibited the same kinds of social problems (i.e., poverty and crime) as central cities (Orfield 1986).

Response to Municipal Housing Discrimination

The effect of municipal housing policies on Latinos is complex. Municipal actions—that is, the enforcement of occupancy and building codes—that are otherwise legitimate efforts to protect the public can be discriminatory when they are enforced selectively against Latinos. Four lawsuits were brought by the Department of Justice and several fair housing organizations in the 1990s against municipalities that discriminated against Latinos and challenged their family arrangements. Fair housing organizations have been successful in pushing fair housing legislation and holding municipalities accountable for their actions. For instance, HOPE Fair Housing Center, Latinos United (now Latino Policy Forum), the extinct Leadership Council for Metropolitan Open Communities, and the Interfaith Housing Center of the Northern Suburbs have been fighting housing discrimination in the metropolitan area for decades. These fair housing advocates, along with the Department of Justice and HUD, brought lawsuits against Cicero, Elgin, Addison, Waukegan, and the city of Chicago where fair housing laws were not enforced. Fair housing enforcement agencies also tested and filed complaints against lending, mortgage, and insurance institutions that limit access to equal and fair housing opportunities.

The increasing number of Latinos in suburban communities underscores the need to more carefully examine how affirmative housing practices, community education, inclusionary zoning practices, and monitoring and enforcement of the Fair Housing Act encourage or discourage equity in housing access. The ensuing ethnographic research reveals the issues facing Latinos seeking home ownership through the experiences of several Latino families in Chicago’s suburbs.

The Sample

Between 2004 and 2005, I conducted face-to-face, semi-structured interviews with thirty-four Latino families in towns with a large number of Latinos and/or a recent history of controversies around fair housing, including Elgin, Cicero, Evanston, Berwyn, and Waukegan. Elgin, Cicero, and Waukegan are also examples of communities where Latino suburbanization has taken place since the 1990s (US Census 2000b; 1990). I interviewed families who experienced or believed they experienced housing discrimination. As it turned out, some modifications were made in the process of data collection. Respondents did not necessarily know what I meant by “housing discrimination.” Thus, I interviewed Latinos who were willing to share their stories about housing in the selected suburbs and those who have been cited by housing inspectors for alleged violations to the occupancy codes. I collected information about the following: (1) housing situation; (2) general fair housing experience to examine the process of finding a house, the participants’ knowledge of fair housing rights, housing issues facing Latinos, and familiarity with fair housing organizations; (3) municipal actions to examine how

housing-related policies affected the family and to describe the interaction with the local government; (4) Latino identity, survival strategies, and community involvement; and (5) family history and immigration.

By unrestrictedly the sample and interviewing both families who identified with housing discrimination and those who did not, I was able to capture the overall housing experience of Latino families, whose stories I share here. Of the respondents, 90 percent were born in Mexico. Some of the remaining respondents were of Mexican descent but born in Chicago, and a few others were from Guatemala and Puerto Rico. The sample is by no means representative of the Latino population in Chicago's metropolitan area but is a convenient sample based on instances of housing discrimination in the region from people who were accessible to the author and willing to be interviewed.

Mi Casa Es su Casa: Reaching the American Dream

As mentioned above, home ownership is touted as the American Dream. With Latinos becoming the largest minority in this country, it is not surprising that both the government and the private market are very intentional in promoting home ownership among Latinos. Latinos, U.S. born and immigrant alike, believe in home ownership as a pathway to the American Dream. In fact, since the mid-1990s home ownership for Latinos in the United States has increased consistently (Vargas-Ramos 2005). The government offers products that include subsidized home ownership programs, no down payment options, and low interest rates on loans. The real estate and banking industries, such as Banco Popular, are highly competitive and aggressively market their products to the Latino community. The largest real estate companies such as Century 21, RE/MAX, and Coldwell Banker, to name a few, have subsidiaries with Latino or Spanish-speaking staff. Locally, mortgage brokers and financial institutions such as American Banc Financial and Genworth Financial also cater to the Latino community through constant advertisement in major Spanish-language newspapers. The media plays a significant role delivering the message that home ownership should be the goal for Latino families.

The real estate and banking industry's aggressive marketing is often effective, but may have unintended consequences for Latino families. The newspaper's real estate section and TV and radio ads promise products that are hard to pass up by prospective home buyers. For example, a mortgage broker promises loans without income or employment verification. Another lender offers refinancing with very low interest rates. A realtor talks about obtaining the house of your dreams regardless of your "bad credit" history. These promises are very attractive, especially for a sector of the Latino population without long employment history or established credit in this country. The problem is that none of these advertisements or services addresses the complicated home-buying process. The process of buying a home can be confusing to people with little knowledge of how the market works. The fact that these industries outreach to Latinos does not necessarily mean that the programs and policies benefit the Latino community. Rather, such aggressive outreach implies the exploitation of new markets. Families might end up buying homes they cannot afford, which may eventually lead to foreclosure.

In fact, the Latino Policy Forum, citing data from the Woodstock Institute and the Center for Responsible Lending, recently reported that the foreclosure and default rates for Latino families in the Chicago metropolitan area have risen significantly (Feliciano and Hernandez 2008). According to their report, “in the Chicago region, Latinos were 1.5 times more likely to receive high cost loans than Whites. Latinos received 24.4% of high-cost home purchase loans and only 12.3% of prime loans.” That is, Latino families were victims of predatory lenders who charged them higher rates and offered mortgage products, that is, adjustable rate mortgages (ARMs), option ARMs, and stated-income loans, that these families could not afford (Feliciano and Hernandez 2008). Various initiatives were created by the banking industry in partnership with low-income housing developers to encourage Latino home ownership (Schmidt and Tamman 2009). Unfortunately, many Latino first-time home buyers were not ready, or were not qualified, to purchase a home due to their lack of credit history and insufficient income.

Predatory lenders were highly concentrated in predominantly minority neighborhoods (Feliciano and Hernandez 2008). The Latino Policy Forum report indicates that the suburban municipalities where I interviewed Latino families also experienced “an increase in the number of foreclosure filings between the first half of 2007 and 2008.” At a recent hearing held by the National Commission on Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity in Chicago, Illinois, Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan stated that Latinos and Blacks are more likely to be victims of predatory lending. She stated, “[The foreclosure crisis] isn’t the natural result of a slumping economy, and it isn’t the result of homeowners taking on more than they can handle. . . . This crisis is the direct result of unfair, deceptive and discriminatory lending practices by the lending industry” (Patterson 2008). This is a threat to the financial stability and home ownership prospects of Latinos.

“*Mi casa es su casa*,” which translates into “My house is your house,” in fact embodies the American Dream. *Mi casa es su casa* is a welcoming statement with a three-pronged definition. First, the housing market suggests that Latinos are welcome in this country and that they should become home owners to reach the American Dream. One example of this encouragement is the federal government’s American Dream Downpayment Initiative launched in 2003, which assists first-time home buyers with their closing costs and down payments. Both the government and the private sector capitalize on this phrase as an advertisement gimmick that appeals to Latinos.

A second definition of “my house is your house” is rooted in Latino culture and its familial orientation. It is an open invitation to relatives and friends who should always feel at home when visiting or staying with the family. Many Latinos and other immigrant communities open their homes’ doors as a stepping-stone for newcomers. The practice is often received with shock in the United States.

For Latinos, a third and unexpected definition of “my house is your house” comes from prejudice, lack of cultural sensitivity, intolerance, and fear of “the other.” In this definition “*mi casa*,” as one respondent said, is not really “*mi casa*.” What happens in one’s home is controlled by local government ordinances. So, literally, “my house is your house,” or at least is subject to another authority.

Now let us turn back to the second definition. What does it mean for Latino families to own a house? The most frequent response that the participants provided has to do with reaching a dream—the family’s dream or the American Dream. The next two most frequently stated responses referred to the sense of freedom that can be found in the United States and financial security and upward mobility. Below is Olga Muñoz’s discussion about the meaning of having a house in Berwyn; she began by laughing and then stated:

Well, I thought it meant this was my house. [She laughs.] Now ... [Author, MTR, asked: Isn’t it?] No, no because now you do not feel it as your house. There are rules, laws that prevent you from feeling that this is your house. I believe that to own a house is every family’s dream, right? But when you listen to the rules [you realize] certain rules are unfair so you can’t say “this is my house.” [MTR: What are those rules?] For example, I bought my house, which is a single-family home; and my house has two bedrooms, living room, dining room, and kitchen on the first floor. There is open space downstairs with a small bedroom that can’t be used. It was here; they sold us this house with that small bedroom. . . . I come in, and [we] can’t use it. There is another room upstairs, as a bedroom, but it can’t be used. Therefore those are the rules so that you have your house, but you cannot use your house as you wish to use it. [MTR: Why?] The town has rules saying that you cannot put beds here or over there. So, how can you allow a couple in one bedroom and your daughter in another bedroom in your house, but if I have another child, where do I put him? If I can’t put beds downstairs nor can I put beds upstairs. . . . How come this is your house yet you cannot accommodate your own family? Do you understand me? [Author’s translation]

Olga moved to Berwyn at a time when not too many Latinos were living there. She is among the Latino families who encountered resistance and also faced the unintended consequences of strict building code enforcement. Olga’s case has multiple layers. A law-abiding woman with strong religious and family values, Olga suddenly found herself not in compliance with the town’s rules while caring for her ailing father. She was asked to decide between caring for her father and obeying the law that prohibited an extra person from living in the house. Her statement above shows her frustration regarding owning a house that is not really for her to live in as she wishes or needs. Other families in the sample echoed this sentiment. They shared stories about having to ask relatives and friends to leave their homes after learning from housing inspectors that they could only allow a determined number of people per bedroom and that neither the basement nor the attic could be used for sleeping purposes. These occupancy restrictions were never mentioned or made clear when the families originally purchased the homes.

Housing Challenges for Latinos

When asked what the main housing difficulty facing Latinos in the suburbs was, families pointed to the lack of affordable housing and the restrictions on family size as the most pressing issues. The next frequently mentioned problem was the inconsistent enforcement of housing codes. These two categories are closely

related. Latino families, especially those born in the United States or those established here, are typically not very large. According to the most recent census, the average family size in the United States is 3.14 (U.S. Census 2000b). The average family size for Mexicans in the United States and Illinois is 4.16 and 4.39, respectively (U.S. Census 2000b). Latino households in the sample—namely the traditional family structure of two parents and their children—usually consisted of four family members. The prevalence of larger families—or extended families that include other relatives and friends—who live in the same house serves as an indicator of the lack of affordable housing options that are available in the community, as well as an indicator of low wages. In 2008, the Latino Policy Forum (formerly Latinos United) documented an increase in overcrowding among Latino families in Chicago’s metropolitan area as a result of survival strategies to address the lack of affordable housing and livable wages in the region (Roth 2008). One can foresee the problem being further exacerbated by the current foreclosure crisis that also affects Latino home owners.

Families do not usually perceive the inconsistent and selective enforcement of housing codes as a form of discrimination because they are not aware of such systemic patterns. This type of housing discrimination at the municipal level can only be measured by looking at the disparate impact that selective enforcement of housing codes has on a particular racial or ethnic group. According to fair housing advocates, the occupancy codes and other housing codes are not discriminatory when applied to every resident regardless of their race or any other Fair Housing–protected category. More blatant forms of discrimination such as denying an apartment because one has too many children or is Mexican are less frequent and seen as a hurdle not worth anyone’s time and energy. Families who were denied housing on these terms simply moved on to the next apartment that was available to them. The lack of affordable housing has a direct impact on these families as something measurable or tangible.

Ursula and Gael Delgado also raised a very important argument about the effect of misinformation for Latino families as they observed and talked to other residents. The following is their assessment about the main housing difficulty facing Latinos in Evanston:

Let’s see, I believe the problem is the lack of information about interests, taxes, and [mortgage] payments. We have talked to some people who say they can no longer afford their homes. They have to . . . they end up subletting to others because by doing so they can make their payments. [That’s] normal because it is very expensive, and the [property] taxes are too high. It seems they pay many taxes. People, well, they are not perfectly aware of how much they pay towards principal, and how much toward interest. They don’t know. That’s the impression we have. They don’t know when they’ll be able to pay off the house. That is, the need or the illusion of owning a house is what they desire the most, but in the long run they don’t know how the process works. They do it because they want it [to own], but they don’t know all that is involved in owning a house. [The loans] last years and years, I believe the general term is thirty years, and then they refinance and so forth. They never

finish paying the house because they refinance thinking the thirty years started the first year when they bought the house. But every time they refinance, they “set back the clock.” I think that’s the problem . . . people don’t know that information or because they were not told about it. I don’t know if this is misinformation or that the information is not provided. [Author’s translation]

The Delgados raised a great point with regard to the misinformation about mortgages, loans, and the ultimate price people pay for a house. Families do not always know where their payments toward interests, taxes, insurance, and the mortgage/principal actually go. In most cases, respondents have told me that the insurance and taxes they paid were all included in the monthly payments they made directly to the bank, but they may not necessarily know exactly where the money is going.

Another recurring theme is one of pooling resources from several families to meet the monthly mortgage. This arrangement may save the family from foreclosure and even homelessness in the long run. Families often live with other relatives who have more or less “inherited” the property as the others “move up” to other neighborhoods or suburbs. However, this is where the enforcement of municipal ordinances may have a negative impact. Families with plenty of space in the house may not be able to use up all the space or rent their basements and rooms to help make the payments because it seems as though municipalities strictly enforce occupancy codes that arbitrarily limit space use. HUD’s general guidelines suggest a two-persons-per-bedroom rule, while some municipalities have adopted more restrictive rules based on the housing unit’s square footage. This may have the unintended consequence of trapping a family in a house that will eventually end up foreclosed, because by restricting the number of inhabitants, the rent cannot be paid. This practice also pushes families down the mobility track, sending them to the street or back to the rental markets if they lose their property.

Discussion: Latino Home Ownership and the American Dream

The home ownership rate for Latinos was approximately 48.1 percent compared to the nation’s overall rate of 68.1 percent in 2000 (U.S. Census 2000b). The home ownership rate for non-Latino Whites was 74.6 percent. Most of the Latino families in the sample moved to the suburbs seeking a better quality of life because they had purchased a house in those communities. Yet Latinos continue to face many challenges to reach home ownership parity with the rest of the population. Researchers have identified that life in the suburbs does not always translate into a better quality of life for immigrants (Drier 2004; Benner 2002; Betancur 1996). In fact, immigrants living in the suburbs often find themselves in the midst of community and local government tensions aggravated by the current anti-immigrant sentiment. Immigrant population growth in the suburbs—particularly with the sharp growth of young families with children—means that some municipalities experience fiscal strains and cannot address the needs of new community residents. According to Margaret Benner (2002), a high demand for social services and stagnant budgets leads to lower-quality or reduced services, poor health care

policy makers need to address in creating comprehensive strategies to benefit everyone.

Latino families in the study identified family size as a housing challenge. For example, newly constructed homes in most suburban communities are typically unaffordable to smaller families or unaccommodating to larger families. Schechter states that many Latino families in Lake County live in substandard housing conditions. Schechter said that the dwellings are often small and have poor plumbing. The extreme outcome of the lack of affordable housing is homelessness. Homelessness looks different for Latinos, which is mitigated to the extent that Latino families double-up to share living space. However, since doubling-up is construed as overcrowding by the local authorities, Latino families' ability to resolve homelessness internally is short-circuited and ultimately produces a homeless population that requires more social services and public resource support.

Another important housing challenge is the selective and inconsistent code enforcement that discourages Latinos from living in some municipalities. The selective enforcement of occupancy codes has been contested by fair housing activists in the region, by HUD, and in the courts by the Department of Justice (Breymaier 2005; Kleina 2005; Wronski 2003; Mihalopoulos 2000; Cuadros 1993; 1995). Such selectivity and inconsistency often result in families having to de-convert their properties and tear out basements, bathrooms, or attic improvements. In other cases, they have to spend more money to make needed repairs or additions. Latinos in the study felt frustrated and mistreated by housing inspectors who consistently misinformed them about inspections. Some families say they were told that the spaces they intended to use in the homes they were purchasing were fine to utilize. It was only after buying a home that occupancy codes came into focus as the result of vigilant municipal code enforcement in Latino neighborhoods. However, many families do not perceive the inconsistent and selective enforcement of building and occupancy codes as a form of discrimination because they may not be aware of such systemic patterns.

In spite of their occupations and low-education attainment, many families in the sample perceive themselves as members of the middle class. This, and the fact that they own a house in the suburbs, is seen as a measure of their successful "moving up" and reaching the "American Dream." The attainment of the "American Dream" can be misleading on two levels. The families in the study define themselves as middle class, yet in most cases they are employed in blue-collar and service occupations, which suggests that their incomes are not high. Secondly, given their failure to see or understand discriminatory treatment by realtors, mortgage brokers, and local municipal officials, they do not have total control of their "dream" home. Their ability to afford it and/or use it as they wish is compromised by such discrimination. Housing discrimination at the individual level may not be as blatant as it was in the past. However, it still affects the Latino family quality of life and choices. The stories in the study suggest that those who encountered housing discrimination found it easier to move on than to spend their energy complaining about it. These families' priorities lie in enhancing their children's education, maintaining their jobs, and keeping their homes for the next generation. This is a challenge for fair housing advocates who stress that housing

discrimination today usually occurs with a “handshake and a smile,” negatively impacting the most vulnerable populations.

As a result of inconsistent housing policies in the city and the inability of suburban governments to deal with the influx of new residents, many families are displaced into resegregated communities in the suburbs. In an interview with the author, Bernie Kleina and Florentina Rendón from HOPE Fair Housing Center indicate that municipalities discourage Latino families from moving into their communities, and for those who are already there, they make the living situation insecure and uncomfortable. The selective enforcement of municipal occupancy codes excludes and discourages families of color, thus threatening the stability of Latino families and their housing experiences in these municipalities. As noted earlier, various towns across the nation have passed ordinances that seek to curtail overcrowding by redefining the concept of the family. Municipal redefinition of the family has negative implications for Latinos as it threatens the core of immigrants’ lives and disrupts their family support networks.

Municipalities engage in exclusionary practices (i.e., through zoning, strict building codes, renewal, or revitalization) that keep low-income families and people of color segregated. These practices, which are also a part of a national trend, have greatly affected Latino families. As Diego Vigil suggests, “housing covenants and restrictions ensured that anyone who did manage to move up would still find it nearly impossible to move out” (2002). Social and residential segregation limit upward mobility for Latinos living in the city and suburbs with similar characteristics (i.e., crime, violence, isolation, poor working conditions). Also, the decrease in the availability of industrial jobs after the 1960s and the weakening of the welfare state, which has affected the delivery of services provided by community organizations, has increased the poverty rates for Latinos (Gonzales 1999).

Policy Recommendations

The following recommendations emerged from conversations with fair housing advocates, my own experience in the field, findings from my study, and the limited available research conducted on Latinos and housing:

1. Increase the supply of a wide range of housing options for families and individuals with different socioeconomic statuses to meet their needs and fair housing rights. Ensure that building codes and occupancy ordinances are not exclusionary or in conflict with housing development trends. That is, enforcement of occupancy codes for public safety reasons should come with sufficient options for decent housing to accommodate different types of families. Race and ethnicity are never used as criteria for enforcement of housing codes.
2. Further affirmative, inclusionary, and fair practices at the municipal level through effective partnerships between fair housing advocates and local officials. To address the increasing diversity and immigrant population growth in the suburbs, municipalities must have a cultural understanding of the housing experience of the new residents. Suburban municipalities can tap into their resources in partnership with HUD and fair housing groups to

provide community education and outreach to Latinos and others by using myriad nontraditional media outlets (i.e., radio, faith-based organizations, and religious institutions are important links to the Latino community). Another example is MoveSmart.org's use of Web-based technology to promote racial and economic integration in the region.

3. Increase funding for fair housing education, outreach, and enforcement for longer cycles of time to effectively address housing discrimination and to work in partnership with local municipalities and community residents. Language assistance should be a requirement mandated to local municipalities and others serving diverse immigrant populations.
4. Train and educate municipal governments to interact with fair housing advocacy groups that can facilitate housing discrimination issues (i.e., fair housing rights, landlord/tenant rights and responsibilities). This type of training can be developed in partnership with national and local fair housing groups, real estate agencies, and developers committed to residential, racial, and economic integration, as well as with state and local human relations commissions. Diversity and cultural competency training for municipalities that are experiencing or might experience Latino population growth may foster a better intergroup understanding about how Latinos contribute to the local economic, political, and social fabric.
5. More research about Latinos and housing is necessary. The most recent studies addressing Latinos and housing provide a broad perspective about the housing characteristics for Latinos (Diaz-McConnell 2005; Vargas-Ramos 2005), but they overlook studying the housing experience through the eyes of Latino families themselves. Additional research of new Latino real estate, banking industries, and mortgage brokers to address the predatory lending and steering practices eroding Latino neighborhoods is also needed. What I contribute to the field is a more local perspective intersecting the qualitative housing experience of Latinos in the suburbs with my own experience as a Latina fair housing advocate. Their stories can provide a better picture on the effect of municipal exclusionary practices on their families and housing experience overall.

Conclusion

The future of Latinos and their housing experiences—as it relates to the suburban context within Chicago's metropolitan area—is uncertain given the current anti-immigrant sentiment in the United States. Institutional discrimination, racism, and the anti-immigrant backlash have real consequences for U.S.-born and immigrant Latinos. In her examination of the experience of subordinate groups in the context of institutional discrimination, oppression, and internal colonialism, Antonia Darder points out:

As such, subordinate communities continue to be stigmatized by both external and internalized perceptions of inferiority and deficit, whereby their members are, for the most part, viewed as inadequately prepared or socially unfit to

enter mainstream American life. (1998)

That is, in the context of U.S. racial and ethnic relations, the experience of all Latinos is that of racialized brown people.

It is possible that the work of Latino community leaders and fair housing advocates, along with the awakening of the Latino population, as evidenced by the most recent large demonstrations across the country (i.e., the 1 May 2007 protests and 10 March 2006 movement), has brought attention to the positive contributions that immigrants make to the United States. The sustained growth of the Latino population by immigration or birth has dramatically changed the makeup of U.S. society and cannot be reversed. According to a recent report released by the Pew Hispanic Center, “The Latino population, already the nation’s largest minority group, will triple in size and will account for most of the nation’s population growth from 2005 through 2050. Hispanics will make up 29 percent of the U.S. population in 2050, compared with 14 percent in 2005” (Passel and Cohn 2008). U.S. institutions may have to understand and adapt to this demographic transformation. This important historical juncture along with a new federal administration led by our first Black president provides an opportunity to highlight Latinos’ rich culture, values, and assets that make the United States a better home for all.

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For Love of Family and Family Values: How Immigrant Motivations Can Inform Immigration Policy

by David Piacenti

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Abstract

This article consists of more than fifty interviews with Spanish and Yucatec-Mayan men from Yucatán, Mexico, to the United States. Based on interview responses, I contend that Yucatec-Mayan immigrants support Jeffrey Cohen's (2004) "household model" and use a ch'i'ibal-centered, or family-centered, decision-making process to frame leaving and returning to their hometown. I theoretically underpin this motivation with Max Weber's wert-rational or value-rational social action. Weber states, "*Wert*-rational [involves] a conscious belief in the absolute value of some ethical, aesthetic, religious, or other form of behavior, entirely for its own sake and independently of any prospects of external success" (1947). Therefore, immigrating is, on the surface, a rational social action, but is underpinned by an emotional, family-based, absolute value system. Absolute values such as love, caring, respect, concern for family maintenance, and family creation in Yucatán are expressed as motivations to both leave *and* return. This theory is more holistic compared to macroeconomic and microeconomic models, which are useful in explaining why people leave but explain very little as to why people might otherwise return. Because of this, I argue that immigration policy makers should implement a family-based policy. If the institution of family and family values are reasons to leave and return, and are likewise assumed to be important social values, immigration policy should reflect similar social values. Policy should be data-driven and promote familial stability by reflecting the underlying motivations behind immigrating to the United States, as well as the underlying motivations for returning to the sending community. Since policies will never eliminate immigration, the next step is to create immigration policy that seeks to lessen the negative impact of immigration on the immigrant families who experience the phenomenon directly.

One of two areas of concern in the ongoing study of immigration theory from Mexico to the United States is the level of analysis in which to operate. To this end, various analyses at the macro-, meso-, and micro-sociological levels of theory have been applied in order to understand the full range of factors that underlie immigration. The second area of concern is completeness of coverage

and literature gaps. That is to say, due to the difficulty in generalizing any one ethnography or data analysis to every sending region or town in Mexico, we must always demand coverage of new regions and towns. This, in turn, will provide the broadest range of data possible in order to promote the appropriate changes in the structure of immigration policy.

This project contributes to these areas of concern in at least two ways. First, this sample of more than fifty ethnographic interviews emerges from the southeastern Mexican state of Yucatán. Yucatán represents a newer sending region than its more central and northern counterpart states, where immigration is both more pervasive and of a longer historical duration. Because of this, Yucatán is under-researched on the application of theoretical models of immigration. Second, this sample seems to support the “new economics” of immigration. That is to say, this sample appears to support a meso-sociological, familial approach to the agency of the immigrant actor, effectively placing them within a “household economics” model of immigration. Briefly, the meso-sociological level of analysis consists of informal social groups, as well as formal social institutions such as religion, government, or education. The focus here, though, is on the institution of the family.

This project contributes to these areas of concern by providing the point-of-view insights and experiences of more than fifty immigrants who had either not yet returned or had returned to Madrina [pseudonym], Mexico, from either San Francisco, California, or Kalamazoo, Michigan. The interviews delved into biographical components of their lives, their families, and the impact of immigration on the town, as well as their motivations for immigrating from and returning to Madrina. This article focuses on the motivations for immigrating and returning. All respondents speak both Yucatec-Maya and Spanish and were primarily interviewed in Spanish, with occasional flourishes of Yucatec-Maya; one interview was done in English. In order to prevent confusion, I use the term “immigration” consistently throughout. Neither “migration” nor “immigration” adequately defines the life trajectories of all the respondents in this sample. To be sure, people who expect to only migrate temporarily stay in the United States forever, and people who expect to immigrate and settle forever return to their sending community.

The Main Contention

I contend that Yucatec-Mayan immigrants use a *ch'i'ibal*-centered, or family-centered, value-rational decision-making process in which to frame leaving and returning to their hometown. This “family-centered immigration model” supports Douglas Massey and others (1994), Massey, Jorge Durand, and Nolan J. Malone (2002), and Jeffrey Cohen’s (2004) “household” or “new economics of migration” model. However, I employ Max Weber’s “wert-rational” or “value-rational” social action to theoretically underpin this sample. Weber states, “*Wert*-rational [involves] a conscious belief in the absolute value of some ethical, aesthetic, religious, or other form of behavior, entirely for its own sake and independently of any prospects of external success” (1947, 114). More simply defined, *wert*-rationality is rational action that symbolizes or represents sentimental or emotional values such as respect, caring, and love. Therefore, it is a *wert*-rational

or value-rational action to immigrate on behalf of the family's well-being, as that value is the true motivation that underpins immigrating for rational, economic gain. Lucrative employment does not cause people to immigrate; rather, they immigrate because the underlying values of love, caring, and concern for loved ones eventually outweigh the physical risks and psychological insecurity of leaving.

From the immigrants themselves, the decision is not individually rational, but rather rational as it is embedded in family values, love, and hope for a more comfortable life for their family. This means that the push and pull of economics is not the ultimate motivation and that the overall success of immigrating rests not in better wages but in supplementing one's ability to support the family. Massey et al. state, "[The new economics of migration] is consistent with a growing body of circumstantial evidence . . . that suggests that poor households use international migration in a deliberate way to diversify their labor portfolios" (1994, 709). The need to diversify the labor portfolio, then, is a reflection of an emotional value system connected to family maintenance and family creation in Yucatán.

A Family-Centered Immigration Model

There are many competing theories that attempt to explain why immigration occurs (for an outline of the myriad approaches, see Massey et al. 1987; Massey and Espinosa 1997; Deléchat 2001; Massey, Durand, and Malone 2002; Durand and Massey 2004; Cohen 2004; Puerta 2005; and Sladkova 2007, and for a survey of literature on neoclassical, household, segmented labor market and world systems theory, see Massey et al. 1994). However, the household model comments on the deficiencies of both the neoclassical macroeconomic and microeconomic level of modeling.

Certain theories offer a macroeconomic model of immigration, advocating a structural push and pull of labor markets through a neoliberal global economic lens. Briefly, neoclassical immigration economics claims that immigration is caused by disparities in wages between two contexts. This is coupled with low labor supply and high labor demand in the receiving context, causing labor immigration. As the labor supply increases in the receiving context, wages are lowered through increased labor competition. Meanwhile, wages in the sending context increase from the labor vacuum, and as the two contexts reach parity, the labor shifts back toward the original sending context, effectively recreating the initial unbalance and disequilibrium, which is perpetuated through a series of purely rational choices by the individuals involved.

Other theoretical models offer individualized models of immigration, including psychological and microeconomic, where the immigrant acts in pure, rational self-interest—seemingly oblivious to family and community. Ricardo Puerta (2005) goes so far as to frame the decision in terms of an equation: decision to emigrate = expulsion + attraction > costs and risks. Although both microeconomic and macroeconomic theories lend valuable insight to the phenomenon, neither hinge on the complexity of familial units seeking to diversify their economic portfolio through the immigration of household members. More simply put, microeconomic and macroeconomic theories do not adequately explain *why* people immigrate, why

they *do not* immigrate, and why they *return*. To be sure, people return although wages remain disparate between the sending and receiving contexts. Likewise, people also return against their individual will. These are the deficiencies in both models.

Emotion and sentiment seems to be central to some immigrants. Drawing on the work of Cohen (2004), who found that immigration from rural towns in the southern state of Oaxaca to Los Angeles, California, was best explained through a household model, the family, in a *wert*-rational manner, is the core value behind the impetus to immigrate to the United States. Cohen deconstructs the stereotype of the “self-interested Mexican migrant,” stating, “unlike the Mexican migrant who is a loner, focused on self, and uninterested or unable to think about households and communities, the Oaxacan migrant thinks about his or her family and is deeply concerned for the future and the changes that are going on in the region” (2004, 143).

One familial strategy is to send a family member to the United States to supplement local forms of income and food production. From discussions with families in Madrina, I have learned that some leave in rotations akin to a military “tour of duty,” whereby some sons remain behind to help in the *milpa*, or cornfield, while others supplement the household by working in the United States. After several years, the son or sons will return to “*hace milpa*,” or tend to the family cornfield, while other family members venture out in their place. This is in accordance with Massey et al., which argues that households deliberately use international migration to diversify their labor portfolios (1994, 709).

Previous immigration experience and the knowledge sets learned from that experience, as well as social networks and the social climate of the sending community, are all part of the rationale for leaving. That is to say, knowledge, experience, and context create a higher probability for further value-based, *wert*-rational social action. Deléchat states, “The decision of Mexican male household heads to work in the U.S. is influenced mostly by the impact of previous migration experience, family network, and prevalence of migration in the origin community, reflecting the effect of these variables on the costs and benefits of U.S. labor market entry” (2001, 460).

Since each family is different in size, resources, and socioeconomic placement, this explains why some families in Madrina do not have immigrant members. Macroeconomic conditions and individual psychological variation do not speak to a lack of immigration, as do household resources, familial expectations, and needs. For this sample, the value put on the family’s well-being is a stronger source of motivation. The decision to leave occurs within the context of household needs and a sense of duty as a reflection of caring. The immigrant does not truly *have* to leave but is made *able* to immigrate and feels *compelled* to leave in order to provide for the family. In other words, respect, caring, concern, and the ultimate value of love drive the immigrant’s perceived sentimental duty and felt obligation to act toward the family’s general economic well-being, security, and safety.

To place the town of Madrina in a broader historical and cultural context, Matthew Restall claims that pre-Columbian orientations to ethnic identity were

not to being “Mayan” but to land and family (2004). Restall argues that *ch'i'ibal*, which is Yucatec-Mayan for extended family, and *kaaj*, which is Yucatec-Mayan for village or town, were likely ethnic designations (2004). This is important to understand, as one of the main themes emanating from the interviews is of leaving and returning out of duty and sentimental connection to family and land.¹

From the interviews, two main reasons for departing for the United States emerge. The first reason is finding better paying employment. However, this theme does not stand alone but rather is only the rational means to an emotional end. That end is success in supporting and creating a family in Madrina. Although the assumed prosperity of the United States is one facet, a lack of employment in Yucatán and the perception of governmental corruption also emerge as themes. The ability to work for more than just food is important, since Madrina is an agricultural-, subsistent-sending context. However, working for more than just food is underpinned by the true motivation for leaving—that of family.

Review and comparison of other research findings on immigration motivations will help place this sample into a broader context. Most interviewees underscore the decision to immigrate with the desire to house, clothe, educate, and generally provide for their family in a time frame that is not possible from the rather limited local opportunities. Similar to the findings of Paula Heusinkveld (2008), the immigrants cite the ability to upgrade from more precarious traditional housing, such as a house of *paja*, or tree construction, to a house constructed from masonry. In a hurricane-prone peninsula, solid home construction is especially crucial to security, well-being, and psychological comfort. To offer your spouse a more secure house in which to live and your kids the opportunity to have, continue, or supplement their education is at the core of the *wert*-rational decision. In other words, the money is not solely for frivolous, individual consumption (although some amounts are used in this way, reflecting changes in consumptive patterns in both the United States and Madrina); the majority of the money is used for a safer, more secure, long-term familial future.

For the single men in this sample who do not have responsibilities such as a spouse or child, the curiosity of the journey can be enough to warrant leaving. Hearing the tales from friends and family who remain settled in the United States, or who return with grand stories, sparks interest and perpetuates, at least indirectly, the decision to leave. However, they too expressed sending money back to family members as a motivation. Therefore, the prospect of satisfying curiosity while making more money for the family is clearly one part of the experience. However, in contrast to Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994), the immigrant who leaves Madrina solely for curiosity and adventure is the exception, not the rule. Hondagneu-Sotelo states, “the men I interviewed reported that their primary incentive was not to seek money for their families in Mexico, but a desire for adventure and to see new sights. The remittances they sent home were more of an afterthought or a rationalization for migration” (1994, 83).

The findings here demonstrate something different. Though curiosity is certainly a part of all travel plans, the immigrants of Madrina usually report the betterment of their home, family, and children as the primary reason, with most never mentioning the “adventure” of the process. Even single sojourners, who lack the

sentimental duties of immigrants who are married and have children, still place the decision to immigrate and—more importantly since they are single—to return within a sentimental, familial framework. That is to say, even when controlling for marital status, family is still the primary value-based motivation for both immigrating and returning. Some interviews were performed in the United States while others were done in Madrina, with a consistency in theme emerging between the two subsets.

Finally, other research has offered a gender-based approach to household immigration strategies. Juana González-González and Valentina Zarco (2008) claim that immigration in Southern Europe and South America reflect gender ideology in that the woman is expected to immigrate in order to fulfill traditional gender roles such as ensuring her children and family's security and comfort. González-González and Zarco state, “[migration] is interpreted and justified by women according to a gender-based approach which is more related with their traditional responsibilities, i.e. ensuring their children's well-being and improving the family's standards of living” (2008, 448). González-González and Zarco cite a South American woman directly, who says “more than anything, women migrate because they want a better life for their children. . . . I don't want my daughter to suffer like I have . . . I want to give her a better life” (2008, 448). This may seem to reflect female ideological gender roles, but the male sample from Madrina echoes this sentiment closely, which seems to suggest that it is not the ideology of gender but the ideology of familial respect and obligation that triggers both the leaving and the return. This lends further support to the value-rational, family-centered model as a valid, theoretical approach.

The reasons for returning involve three main ideas: family, land and traditions, and family maintenance. These themes emerge not only as a result of the question as it was directly asked during the interview but throughout the interview. When the family was not the principal answer, other answers seemed to relate to similar emotional attachments of family within the context of community and land or *kaaj*, such as friends and social relationships, work and farming the cornfields, bees, or cattle, and the customs and cultural lifeways of the town and region. Lastly is the idea of returning in order to start a family. Other minor themes of returning consist of boredom and isolation from the hometown and a general distaste for the cultural ways of the United States.

As a conjectural component to the expectation of returning, MacDuff Everton states, “the pre-Columbian Maya modeled the universe around the concept of cyclicity. All events both human and divine were locked into their own cycles” (1991, 29). It is possible that the desire and expectation to return to the Yucatán, instead of settling in the United States, is a residual component of a culture based on the cyclicity of time. Returning from immigrating may reflect just one such type of cyclicity in the lives of Yucatec-Mayans (Farriss 1987; Jimenez-Castillo 1992; and Burke 2004).

Methods

In this project, more than fifty immigrants who had either not yet returned or had returned to Madrina, Mexico, from either San Francisco or Kalamazoo were interviewed. Interviewees discussed their thoughts and experiences in a semi-structured interview of approximately one hour in a private setting in Madrina, San Francisco, or Kalamazoo. Using a set of guided interview questions, interviewees were allowed to venture into thematic areas not specified by the interview script, with follow-up questions by the researcher potentially being offered. All respondents speak both Yucatec-Maya and Spanish, but were primarily interviewed in Spanish with occasional shifts into Yucatec-Maya or English. One interview was completely in English at the respondent's request. As a note, although this article presents the respondents' answers translated into English, when the respondent spoke in English or Mayan during the interview itself, we've chosen to put the word or words in brackets in the context of the statement for the quotations given throughout the article.

Data: "Why I Left"

Money is undoubtedly the rational means to an emotional end. I asked one immigrant why he left, and he jokingly replied "*tres palabras—di-ne-ro,*" or "three words, di-ne-ro." However, from my experiences with the men in Madrina, the main reason to immigrate is to produce a higher standard of living, especially for the family, in a fraction of the time that they could do so in Madrina. Without attempting to deconstruct the structural specifics of policy or treaties such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the immigrants have made it clear that they understand that immigrating is part of the broader economic context of Yucatán. For example, when casually asking immigrants why a nearby town does not experience the same rate of outward emigration as Madrina, the reply is, invariably, "they have a *maquiladora* [factory] and do not need to go to the United States." Whether or not *maquiladora* factories actually have a staying effect on their host town requires investigation, but it nonetheless reflects immigrant consciousness of the economic backdrop from which their attitude on immigration partially emerges. Nevertheless, the immigrants still place the decision within the context of family as a referent, value system. The underlying value orientation toward family and the potential and realized benefits of immigrating emerge as the values that seed the social action, as opposed to frustration with local economics and lack of local opportunities.

Almost as a rite of passage, the young immigrant prepares for the trek. The immigrant plots the place of arrival and type of work, which is based on current skills and the type of work others are doing at the place of arrival. The immigrant considers the hypothetical time staying in the United States, which can and does quickly extend or never end, thus putting extra strain on loved ones in Madrina. The immigrant returns to family and community with new patterns of capital, new materials, new skills, and, quite possibly, a new approach to ethnic identity. This new approach to ethnic identity may come from imagining *ch'i'ibal* and *kaaj* from "the other side" for the first time or from experiencing ethnic or racial marginalization while in the United States. The concept of ethnic identity may also entail

allowing previously unshared categories such as “Hispanic” or “Mexican” to be embraced through the shared adversity between Yucatec-Maya and other Spanish-speaking populations in the United States.²

Many immigrants were quite certain things would be easier in the United States, so when I asked why they returned, a puzzled look occasionally arose on the face followed by the seemingly paradoxical statement, “*No sé, me supongo mi familia*” [“I don’t know, I suppose my family”]. This exemplifies the findings below. The decision to depart one’s hometown is undoubtedly one of the most difficult to imagine making. The separation, danger, loneliness, and isolation from friends, family, children, and spouses are serious causes of concern for both the immigrant and their loved ones back in Madrina. Nevertheless, it is not only a need or desire for lucrative employment that influences people to immigrate but the underlying values of love, caring, and concern for parents, grandparents, a spouse, and children, both here and there, that ultimately allow the risks and sadness of immigrating to be overshadowed by the potential benefits.

The first theme of family is closely related to house and home. Though a lack of gainful employment is cited as the reason for departure, this employment is generally related to improving the existing house or building a new home for the family. It is important to note that this home may potentially house three to five generations and is a source of pride and long-term security. As noted earlier, Madrina resides in a hurricane zone, so having a house of concrete instead of the more traditional *paja*, or tree palms, is an important matter. The need for shelter, security, food, and children’s education are all expressed reasons and concerns for emigrating. To return to the potential increase in frivolous consumption from immigration, Juan Rodríguez de la Gala, Vanessa Molina, and Daisy García (2007) found that Yucatec-Mayan immigrants from the town of Tunkás reported using their remittances in the following ways: household maintenance and food (73 percent), house construction (13 percent), medicine and healthcare (7 percent), and other (7 percent). This clearly demonstrates the familial motivation in effect beyond the social action of immigrating. Similarly, Cohen found the following rank-ordered reasons for leaving the rural, indigenous towns of the southern state of Oaxaca: “1) To find work, 2) To better a family’s living conditions, 3) To allow a household to save money for a future investment, 4) To purchase a specific item, and 5) To have an adventure” (2004, 104). The findings from the Madrina sample are comparable, as men in Madrina appear to be negotiating immigration from a very similar, household-centered model of immigration rather than for self-interest and frivolous consumption.

Pesos for the Family

Economic factors have an influence on the decision to immigrate (Sladkova 2007). Simply put, nearly all, excepting those who cited adventure and curiosity, cited economics, employment for the family, and housing as major reasons to leave. The point to take here is that even purely economic answers often relate back to familial underpinnings.

Roberto and Manuel were interviewed in Madrina after living in Kalamazoo for three and a half years and stated essentially the same thing: “[I immigrated] for work opportunities in the U.S.” Roberto also gave one of the most interesting reflections on immigrating, using a familial model to frame the relationship between the United States and Mexico, saying:

“Madrina and Mexico is my mother, my heart, emotional. But the U.S. is my father, my business, my economics, [it’s] serious.”

Tomas, who was interviewed in Madrina after living in San Francisco for seven years and who left primarily for work, had a desire to learn English and saw immigrating as an easier way to do so than trying to learn English in Mexico. Tomas, who is now near-native-speaking-fluent in English and who was the only respondent to interview in English, declares:

“I went to the U.S. for employment. However, I also wanted to learn the language [English] there because it is more difficult and expensive to learn here in Mexico.”

Knowing what could be achieved in the United States was obvious, but knowing what could not be achieved in Mexico was also clear. Luis, who was interviewed in Madrina after living in Kalamazoo for three years, says:

“Necessity, for money, work. There is nothing here in Yucatán, *there* in the U.S., yes. There are things here [in Madrina], yes, but only a little. There’s a lot of work, but you have nearly nothing.”

Pedro, who was interviewed in Madrina after living in San Francisco for one year, contrasts working for food to working for money, stating:

“[I immigrated] to have a better life. Here in Yucatán it’s tough. There’s work here, but no money. [In the United States] there is money and work. Here [in Madrina], there is only work for food, nothing more. I’m poor, so it’s about money.”

Soon after discussing employment opportunities, the men move on to tangible reasons—not just money, but also the betterment of their lives in concrete terms. This generally is expressed through material possessions such as food, a house, cars, bicycles, and clothing and books for their children. Similar to the findings of Heusinkveld (2008), Gregorio, who was interviewed in Madrina after living in the United States for five years, residing in both San Francisco and Kalamazoo, mentions the tangible goal of housing. Gregorio also relates the influence the immigration of others had on him, saying:

“[I immigrated] because it would please me to have a house. Many of my cousins built [houses]. For me, it was the same reason, having the house. I was working in a restaurant called McDonalds, in Michigan.”

Nestór, who was interviewed in Madrina after living in San Francisco for five years, connects the need to immigrate to the lack of opportunities after finishing school. Nestór also mentions the potential influence of having family and community in the United States, stating:

“[I immigrated] because in Mexico, when one finishes studying in the *secundaria* there are not many possibilities for good work. The person never uses

their education, just as it is after the *preparatorio*. There are more opportunities in the U.S. if you want your house. When you're a child, your mother and father say, 'in the future, you have to build your house.' There is work here [in Yucatán], but not good paying. Although in the U.S. the pay is not good either, in comparison to Mexico, it is much better. We arrive in the U.S. as humble families, as the poor. Here [in Yucatán] you cannot build your house. Now you all are working to send [money] for your house, and that you might have a little bit of money. The majority of friends and cousins are in North America. It is very painful to separate from your customs."

The safety and security of a new house is certainly rooted in familial obligations, and, as Peri Fletcher (1999) and Emilio Parrado (2004) also found, is a reason to immigrate. Other material possessions needed to live comfortably, such as clothing, and other necessities also reflect an orientation to family, familial responsibility, and family values. Jose, who was interviewed in Madrina after living in Kalamazoo for three years, embeds the family within the decision, stating, "[I immigrated] for work and to make money for my family." Similarly, Alfonso, who was interviewed in Madrina after living for two years in both Kalamazoo and San Francisco, says:

"[I immigrated] because of necessity, family, and my house."

"For a new house?" he was asked.

"Yes."

"Are there any other reasons?" he was asked.

"To supplement [my income] a little."

David, who was interviewed in Kalamazoo, having lived there for four years, states:

"Because of work, because of necessity, to make more money and send money to my family, yes, for the family."

Silvio, who was also interviewed in Kalamazoo, having lived there for two years, says:

"[I left] because of family, nobody was helping them. For all my family, I [also] have a nephew."

Quite similarly, and with an emphasis on consumptive possibilities, Arturo, who was interviewed in Madrina after living in Kalamazoo for three years, says:

"[I immigrated] because there isn't much work here [in Madrina]. I have seven children to maintain. The money that I make here [in Yucatán] is not sufficient for food, *hamacas*, nice shoes, and clothing."

Felipe, who was interviewed in Madrina after living in San Francisco for six years, mentions both his responsibilities and the difficulties of relying on animals and bee farming apiculture for prosperity, saying:

"[I immigrated because] I have nothing, no house, nothing. The money comes quicker now, for my two-year-old baby. [I immigrated] to be richer. Neither the bees nor the cattle were suitable for profit, and for that I went [to the United States]."

Data: “Why I Returned”

Since infidelity, having children out of wedlock, and familial abandonment are social concerns related to immigration, it is important that our theoretical models and immigration policies reflect and support immigrant motivations and the impact of these motivations on their families. Using the household model, this sample finds permanent settlement in the United States less desirable than returning to family in Yucatán. Most importantly, the idea of marrying a U.S. citizen, even a Mexican American, is the exception not the rule. This reflects an orientation toward *ch'i'ibal* (family) and *kaaj* (community) in Yucatán, as the value of marriage and family is contingent upon their creation and maintenance in the sending community. The findings are in contrast to Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994), who found “curiosity” and “adventure” were the most commonly cited reasons for leaving from the northern state of Michoacán. The motivation for family and family creation and maintenance in Yucatán supports Cohen (2004), who studied an indigenous town in the southern state of Oaxaca.

Reasons for returning are also directly connected to marriage, family, and familial love and concern, rather than macroeconomic forces or individual self-interest. If the respondent did not leave due to familial concern, the individual often returned because of the emotional bond felt to family, not to mention the town and land in and around Madrina. Beyond the central theme of family, other themes like isolation from friends and family, land, traditions, boredom, and problems encountered in the United States emerge.

Policy on immigration appears to have an impact on stay duration in the United States, as Massey, Durand, and Malone (2002) found that the policy changes and increased border patrol from the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act increased the number of years immigrants lived in the United States. However, since a family model of immigration is employed here, it may be useful to study marital status as a potential factor in determining length of stay in the United States. In this sample, twenty-four of the respondents were married when they immigrated. The married cohort averaged three years in the United States, while the average stay duration for the single immigrant was 4.2 years. So, aside from immigrants focusing on the family as the reason for both leaving and returning, being married may also decrease stay durations. If this is true, then immigration policy should be similarly “family modeled” to prevent exacerbating the already disrupted and separated family.

Note that in the following sections all respondents were interviewed in Madrina after they had returned.

Family

Tomas, who was in San Francisco for seven years and was the only respondent to interview in English, declares:

“[I returned] because of my mom and dad and my family. Money is not enough in life; I want to be close to my family.”

Similarly, José, who lived in Kalamazoo for three years, says, “[I returned] for my family, my wife and my kids.” Pedro, who was in San Francisco for one year, follows with, “Why did I return? To be with my family.” Alfonso, who lived in the United States for two years and lived in both Kalamazoo and San Francisco says, “[I returned] for my children and my family.”

Within some of the familial responses, the sheer emotional weight of living in the United States while the family resides in Madrina emerges. Fidel, who was in San Francisco for two years states, “The reason [I returned] was to continue here in Mexico with my family; because of the family, emotional [reasons].” Esteban, who was in San Francisco for three years, says he returned, “to see the family, and my children. So, emotional reasons? Exactly.” Mario, who was in the United States for 6.5 years in both San Francisco and Kalamazoo, mentions the difficulty of leaving a pregnant wife, claiming:

“I returned for my child, as he wasn’t born when I went. I wanted to know him. I returned to know him.

“So it’s emotional?” he was asked.

“Uh-huh.”

Francisco, who lived in San Francisco for two years, broadens the familial description eloquently and demonstrates the difficulty of both leaving and staying, saying:

“The truth is, [I returned] because of my family. My children miss their papa. When we talked they would say ‘When are you going to come [back]?’ My wife would say ‘I think it’s been a long time.’ We didn’t go together. I went to work. What we did was very hard, so I didn’t leave again. I am not going to go [again]; the family is waiting, hoping, and expecting [that I stay.]”

Ronaldo, who was in Kalamazoo for four years, explains how familial emergencies were one reason to return, saying:

“My father was ill, so I returned. Then my father was well, and I went again. I am thinking of going another time [to the United States].”

Marcelo, who was in San Francisco for one year, connects the need to return to family with the extra work that others in his family endured during his “tour of duty,” demonstrating an attachment to family. Marcelo says:

“I returned for my son, and my father’s problem, the animals take work. In returning, I thought, ‘My God, I need to reconnect with family, because I am getting old and gray.’ [So] I returned to Yucatán, now I know my son, the animals, and I said to myself, ‘I don’t have a reason to go [back to the United States].’”

Carlos, who lived in San Francisco for three years, tells of having a house in the capital city of Mérida, built by his being in the United States, along with his children, explaining:

“I returned to Mexico, because I have a house in the capital, on the outskirts of Mérida. Having a house in Mérida is the answer. My kids returned, three sons, and three nephews.”

“So you have a house in Mérida and the money from the U.S. helps?” he was asked.

“There are three children that took themselves [there], and three here, and three nephews.”

“You constructed the house?” he was asked.

“Soon, there will be [a house] from the U.S. that is from the children. All of the houses are from [working in] the U.S.”

Javier, who was in San Francisco for three years, acknowledges being annoyed with living in the United States, as well as being emotionally distanced from his children, as reasons for returning, stating:

“Now I have my house, and it bothered me being there [in the United States]. Because of the family I returned, for my children.”

“Do you have a lot of children?” he was asked.

“Three.”

“So you returned for emotional reasons?” he was asked.

“Uh-huh, yes.”

Family as Social Control

The following entries candidly explain the perceived pitfalls of life in the United States. Many who return from both San Francisco and Kalamazoo describe how behaviors such as drinking to excess, disrespect toward family members, parents, and elders, and drug use can occur. The interviewees also addressed these issues with respect to the perception of cultural change in the town of Madrina. Ultimately, the responsibilities of family cause some to take account of their behavior and return in favor of the potentially decadent life staying in the United States may offer. This surely relates to the fact that respondents are separated from traditional forms of social control that exist as a result of physical proximity to family. Alejandro, who was in San Francisco for one year, emotionally describes the general types of problems encountered in the United States. In Spanish and some English, he claims,

“In America [there is] a lot of drugs [English: for me, no more]. [English: No [more] for me] no more beer, no more cigars, no marijuana, no cocaine, no morphine.”

Similarly, Arturo, who was in Kalamazoo for three years, illustrates,

“The problem is the age of my children here, they are in school. But, they were allowed to drink beer, they were allowed drugs, they didn’t obey their mother and I wasn’t here [in Madrina], so, because they lacked a father, my children were not [being] good. Because I immigrated to the U.S., my children gave in to the beer and drugs a little. Because of this, I returned to stop this problem with the drugs.”

Finally, Mario, who was in the United States for six and a half years in both San Francisco and Kalamazoo, mentions some of the “behavioral remittances” from the United States to Madrina, proclaiming:

“At times people return from there and are crazy. As for me, nothing happened. But, many drink, do drugs, and other things.”

For Land and Traditions

One of the defining elements of being from Yucatán for the Yucatec-Mayan speaking population is to “*hace milpa*,” or to work one’s cornfield. Roberto, who lived in Kalamazoo for three and a half years, mentions the family, but also embeds family within the location and land around Madrina, saying, “[I returned for] my family, and my place of origin.” Manuel, who also lived in Kalamazoo for three and a half years, mentions the land that he is from but adds that the traditions of his home are also a reason for returning, claiming, “[I returned] for my family and my land—I miss the traditions.” Mateo, who was in San Francisco for four years, directly relates back to the family and his birthplace, articulating:

“[I returned] for the family. Explain [English: For] the family, I was born here, I grew up here.”

Juan, who was in San Francisco for two years, also confirms:

“Although the [land] is rocky here, we feel the security that we are sure in our land and in owning a house.”

Marcelo, who was in San Francisco for one year, says:

“Now there is tranquility, [because] I returned to my land; my land is the [one] good thing.”

Finally is Nestor, who was in San Francisco for five years. Though family is the first response, he later elaborates on the broader community ties and attachments felt and places these ties in a central location in his reasons to return, disclosing:

“I believe there is a large difference between our culture [and the United States]. It’s from being attached, attachment to parents, as well as attachment to the family and the customs of Yucatán, the culture. One says ‘I am going to return to Yucatán because I want to go to the fiesta, for my grandmother. I want to go for my parents, brothers, my friends, and my cousins.’ We are very attached, and I returned for family. Because of this, we return.”

For Family Creation and Family Building

One motivation to return concerned family creation rather than maintenance. At least a few respondents said they returned to Madrina because they now had enough money and a nice enough house to be a more desirable suitor—in other words, they acquired the tools needed to build a family. Though Enrique Martínez-Curiel (2004) found that marrying a U.S. citizen was a pathway strategy for U.S. citizenship, the respondents here felt that marrying and living in Madrina, as opposed to the United States, was more desirable and that, after returning, they now

had the wherewithal for marital courtship. This is important with respect to ethnic identity, as marrying a U.S. citizen, either Mexican American or a *gringa*³, would likely be a departure from familial and community expectations. Miguel, who spent two and a half years in San Francisco, simply states the obvious, that he eventually needed to return to marry, to utilize the bees and sewing machines he was able to purchase by being in the United States, and to support his father, declaring:

“I returned, and I married, because when I was [in the United States], I bought bees and [sewing] machines. Then I returned, because my father would not be able to work the bees, he would not be able to work.”

Similarly, Octavio, who was in San Francisco for four years, says in some English and Spanish:

“[I returned for] [English: my family.] That is a common answer.”

“Are there no other reasons? Just family?” he was asked.

“Family and to search for a woman.”

“So family, and to get married?” he was asked.

“Yes. I have been married eight months now.”

“Congratulations.”

Humorously, and with reference to a U.S. colloquialism, Nestór, who was in San Francisco for five years, smilingly declares:

“Well, [I returned] to have my house, my ranch, my car, my wife! [English: No money, no honey!] [laughs] Sure! [Both laughing].”

Conclusion: The Main Contention

I contend that Yucatecan immigrants use a *ch'i'ibal*-centered, or family-centered, value-rational decision-making process in which to frame both leaving and returning to their hometown, or a “family-centered immigration model.” This supports Massey and others (1994), Massey, Durand, and Malone (2002), and Cohen’s (2004) “household” or “new economics of migration” model. Massey et al. state, “[The new economics of migration] is consistent with a growing body of circumstantial evidence . . . that suggests that poor households use international migration in a deliberate way to diversify their labor portfolios” (1994, 709). I argue that the superficial rationality of immigrating is anchored to a foundation of absolute values connected to family maintenance and family creation in Yucatán. Again, Weber states, “*Wert*-rational [involves] a conscious belief in the absolute value of some ethical, aesthetic, religious, or other form of behavior, entirely for its own sake and independently of any prospects of external success” (1947, 114). This data sample reflects the central importance of *ch'i'ibal* (family) and *kaaj* (community) as reasons for both leaving *and* returning. Consequently, the household model comments on the deficiencies of the macroeconomic and microeconomic models, which speak to leaving, but cannot comment on the motivation for both leaving *and* returning. People often return though wages remain disparate between the sending and receiving contexts. Likewise, people also return against their individual will. These are the deficiencies in both models.

Implications for Immigration Policy

In order to promote viable and humanistic immigration policy, data must be made available that reflects all facets of the process. The data presented here demonstrates the need for policy that focuses on the families who feel the impact directly. As Massey, Durand, and Malone (2002) clearly explain, the increased border patrol from the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act increased the number of years immigrants lived in the United States. In this case, the provisions of the act had the unintended consequence, through increased border patrol, of making it more difficult to return. Since a family model of immigration is employed here, policy should likewise focus on lessening the potential negative impact, such as time of separation on immigrant families. If the married cohort here averages three years in the United States, while their single counterparts stay 4.2 years, then marriage and family seem to influence stay duration and return. If this is the case, then immigration policy should not make it more difficult to return, but rather promote a process that supports the institution of family through “family-centered models” of policy.

Immigration policy should reflect the underlying motivations behind immigrating to the United States, as well as the underlying motivations for returning to the sending community. If the institution of family and family values are truly assumed to be universally important social values, and if immigration policy is to reflect this assumption of family and family values as important, then policy must promote the stability of family, in all of its various forms, as an institution. It is clear that immigrants take great risks to the physical, psychological, and emotional self by immigrating. However, it is equally clear that this action is not self-interested, nor is it necessarily wanted, but that this action is a noble action, an action of character, an action of love, caring, concern, and mutual support and self-sacrifice. Without a doubt, these are attitudes and behaviors that policy makers must acknowledge and support through appropriate immigration policy.

If we begin from a point of understanding that treaties and policies will never eliminate immigration, the next step is to lessen the potentially negative impact of immigration on the families who experience the phenomenon directly. To be sure, the growth and prosperity of both the United States and Mexico, as they are conjoined under the auspices of treaties such as NAFTA, are contingent upon the success of the citizens and institutions of each. Failing to support policy that promotes the growth and prosperity of family is to undermine the very hinge that connects the individual to the broader society. This also includes the general elimination of poverty and the enhancement of all educational systems. This work provides material witness to the need for creation and implementation of immigration policy that acknowledges vital, family-related belief systems that are shared across cultures, politics, and regional geopolitical blocs.

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Endnotes

¹ For one contemporary look at Yucatec-Mayan ethnic designations, see Hervik, Peter. 1999. *Maya people within and beyond boundaries: Social categories and lived identity in Yucatán*. Australia: Harwood Academic Publishers.

² My research also shows that 80 percent of this sample identifies itself as Yucatec-Mayan, showing a regional orientation to language, community, and customs.

³ Although the terms “gringo” and “gringa” can have pejorative connotations in certain contexts, in Yucatán they lack this meaning. They are used instead as simple statements of fact, not as words reflecting hatred, malice, or ill will.

A Spare U.S. Agenda for the Americas

by Stephen Johnson

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At the time of this writing, U.S. President Barack Obama was scheduled to attend the Fifth Summit of the Americas in Trinidad and Tobago from 17-19 April 2009. While there, he might do well to underplay what the United States can do for its neighbors. World events have a way of redirecting the best of intentions, as former U.S. President George W. Bush found out just months after he announced his Century of the Americas concept at the April 2001 Third Summit of the Americas in Quebec.

First came the September 11 attacks, then the war on terror and lasting preoccupation with the Middle East. Even though the Bush administration managed to conclude trade agreements with eight Latin American countries, boost counternarcotics assistance to Colombia and Mexico, launch Millennium Challenge Corporation grants, and cultivate an extensive network of working relationships throughout the Americas, the perception lingered that U.S. engagement had not only slipped to the back burner, but had somehow fallen off the stove. In light of this sentiment, this article focuses on what a new U.S. agenda in the Western Hemisphere must consider.

An ambitious new agenda toward the Western hemisphere may be risky. Compared to billion-dollar-a-month operations in the Middle East and efforts to stem a global recession, anything we do in this corner of the world may now look like small potatoes.¹ Still, ensuring solid, neighborly relations in this region should be on President Obama's list. Shared geography and economic interdependence, plus the need to bolster democratic progress and build cooperation against emerging threats, are good reasons for not letting matters drift. A new agenda should emphasize partnership in areas of mutual interest, encouragement of regional cooperation and leadership, and a suite of fresh solutions for enduring challenges.

Why It Matters

The United States and its neighbors are already more closely bound than most U.S. citizens probably realize—meaning that what happens in one country can affect another. The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) that links commerce between Canada, the United States, and Mexico does nearly \$1 trillion in business annually. Canada is the largest market for U.S. exports, followed by Mexico.² Although Latin America claims only 8 percent of total U.S. merchandise (two-way) trade, it is one of our fastest-growing regional partners, surpassing Asia in 2008.³ And, while our Western hemispheric neighbors supply roughly half of

our imported oil,⁴ immigrant workers in the United States support local economies back home with their remittances.⁵

In terms of travel, it takes less time to fly from Washington, D.C., to Bogotá, Colombia, than it does from our nation's capital to Los Angeles, California. And as easily as tourists and cargo cross borders, smugglers move arms, drugs, and people all over the Americas through well-worn routes and trails. Through immigration, legal or otherwise, the U.S. Census Bureau estimates that by next year some 48 million Americans, or 15 percent of the U.S. population, will be Hispanic—probably making it the second- or third-largest Spanish-speaking population in the world.⁶ So, in many ways, our lives and futures are intertwined.

Keeping Up with the Times

The Western hemisphere is not the same as it was thirty years ago, when civil wars raged in Central America and dictators outnumbered civilian elected leaders. Today, all countries in this hemisphere except Cuba enjoy some level of democratic rule, facilitating collaboration on a range of interests. Unlike even fifteen years ago, most states now participate in regional forums, are beginning to cooperate in matters of law enforcement, and contribute to international programs such as peacekeeping. In addition to Canada, countries like El Salvador, Honduras, the Dominican Republic, and Colombia contributed troops to coalition efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Our neighbors have growing diplomatic and commercial clout. Chile now has trade agreements with more than fifty countries.⁷ Since signing NAFTA with the United States and Canada, Mexico has inked commercial accords with nineteen partners including the European Union.⁸ Prior to the current economic slowdown, Latin America and the Caribbean enjoyed a respectable average of 5 percent economic growth. Over the past five years, the general level of investment has been rising and total external debt as a percentage of gross domestic product has declined.⁹

Such advances are fragile, however. Trade only brings prosperity when accompanied by fair regulations that apply to all businesses, large and small. In some parts of Latin America, corrupt practices and complicated laws favor monopolies and block the creation of small enterprises that are the best sources of jobs. There, large percentages of workers resort to the informal sector¹⁰ for employment, while about 30 percent of Latin America's increasingly urban inhabitants live in poverty.¹¹ Moreover, deep inequality lingers in access to education, health care, and housing—a recipe for simmering discontent and instability.

Regrettably, government institutions have been slow to develop competency. Despite recent economic booms, weak tax collection keeps many developing states from delivering basic services and guaranteeing public security outside of big cities. Typically, armies are under-equipped and spend most of their budgets on salaries. Police are often poorly paid and under-trained. Many courts rely on archaic written trials and are backlogged with cases.

Emerging Threats

Over this backdrop, transnational crime, terrorism, and natural disasters have replaced civil wars and border disputes as main threats. Drugs and attendant

violence now pose the gravest danger to public safety in the Western hemisphere. Huge demand in consuming nations has fueled smuggling networks that have spread across North and South America, as well as to Africa and Europe.

Illicit narcotics is now a global multi-billion dollar business¹²—so big that traffickers can afford to operate business jets and small submarines for one-time use. Compare that to the meager budgets that support a few antiquated light planes and a handful of 1960s-era helicopters that Central American countries use for interdiction, and it is easy to see how cartels are overpowering local governments, let alone law enforcement in big countries like Mexico.

In like manner, drug-funded terror groups have taken advantage of the short reach of the law in remote areas of the Andes and Amazon Basin jungles. They include the 10,000-member strong Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) that operates across borders and smaller groups such as the Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) hiding out in the highland valleys of Peru. Meanwhile, ideological supporters of Middle Eastern terror groups reside throughout the Americas and have carried out isolated acts or raised funds for movements back home.

Because expanding, mostly poor populations live on mountainsides, near riverbanks, and on coastlines, natural disasters can put as many lives at risk as internal wars or terrorists. Like the United States, Latin America and the Caribbean are often battered by hurricanes, earthquakes, and flooding. Yet, resources, personnel, and equipment to handle emergencies differ greatly from country to country, and cooperation is often arranged on the spur of the moment. If natural phenomena did not affect large populations very frequently in the past, they do now.

Though they pose no imminent danger, hostile leaders such as Venezuela's Hugo Chávez seek to bully neighboring democracies, advocating a return to strongman regimes reminiscent of the region's past. He has used Venezuela's oil wealth to purchase some \$4 billion in sophisticated fighter-bombers, attack helicopters, and automatic weapons from Russia.¹³ But his vision has appeal only in countries where political reforms and social integration seem weakest—Bolivia, Ecuador, and Nicaragua. Moreover, Chávez and his imitators are still subject to elections.

Extra-hemispheric influences abound from the European Union to China, Russia, and Iran. While China's interests are largely economic, Russia would like to use its visits to the Western hemisphere to offset U.S. influence in Eurasia. On the other hand, Iran seems intent on allying itself with Venezuela to confront the United States and other liberal democracies.

Next Steps in the Relationship

For more than a half century, U.S. policy toward hemispheric neighbors (outside of Canada and Mexico) has been largely to boost economic development through aid or intervene from time to time to remove hostile regimes or stabilize collapsed governments. These policies came into being when most people in the Western hemisphere's developing states lived in poor, rural areas¹⁴ and when weak governments were targets of Soviet-backed insurgencies. Today, the Western hemisphere is more urban, democratic, and stable. That being the case, the United States

probably needs to act less like an overseer and more like a collaborator with those who share its values.

One way to do that is to rely less on Washington-conceived aid programs except where needed to promote reform, to address broadly shared needs, or to conduct humanitarian relief.¹⁵ The existing Millennium Challenge Corporation grant program that offers development aid conditioned on institutional and economic reforms is an example worth continuing. Security assistance that many countries want and that benefits the United States in curbing narco-terrorism is another. Needs are still great for Colombia, trying to reestablish state presence in former narco-guerrilla zones. They extend to small Central American and Caribbean states that clearly need help acquiring radars and equipping their own counternarcotics forces. Finally, aid can be good public relations when it provides a human interface for people in need. The Peace Corps and U.S. military disaster response efforts tend to build goodwill in ways that leave lasting positive impressions.

Another way to improve ties is to favor partnerships over unilateral action. Because it is a problem on both sides of the border, Mexico asked the United States for help in strengthening police to reduce trafficking and attendant violence. In the jointly developed Mérida Initiative, Mexico is supplying the bulk of the funds and, in turn, is helping Central American governments combat smuggling in their jurisdictions. Elsewhere, countries like Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Uruguay have expressed interest in technology exchanges and collaboration in improving institutional capabilities. Trade and investment agreements between the United States and partner countries are a way to provide market opportunities to diversify industrial bases and provide jobs. The U.S. Congress should approve pending trade pacts with Panama and Colombia.

Still another useful approach would be to promote regional cooperation and leadership. As democracy and economic growth have taken hold in the Western hemisphere, sovereignty and national pride have become more important. There is no reason that the United States could not endorse the Caribbean Community's excellent Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA) as a model other subregions might emulate or promote Brazilian expertise in environmental protection or Colombia's experience in strengthening public security. The United States does not need to maintain a high profile in such areas. Instead we can help showcase the efforts of our allies and leverage their influence in forums where U.S. engagement may not be an option.

Finally, the United States might consider fresh approaches to enduring problems. Today's hemispheric threats require mostly law enforcement and first-responder solutions. However, it seems the U.S. government is better organized to send soldiers. Why not strengthen institutional support between agencies that have foreign operations responsibilities to ensure better coordination with neighbors in matters that involve armies, police, and civilian agencies? Perhaps it is time that more of our federal agencies had robust international components that could facilitate law enforcement and regulatory agency cooperation, provide training and exchanges, and promote idea sharing in such areas as energy and education—chores now performed mostly by the U.S. Departments of State and Defense.

Instead of worrying about Chinese and Russian engagement in the Western hemisphere, the United States should encourage these nations to become good trade partners and contribute toward solving the challenges the region faces: lagging economic opportunity, arms and drug smuggling, terrorism, and uneven disaster response. In turn, we might work out with our hemispheric partners how to shape Iran's expectations of the kind of relations it may have within our neighborhood.

Finally, President Obama has already taken a step toward resolving one nettlesome issue by setting a goal of achieving energy independence from troublesome foreign oil producers like Chávez-led Venezuela. In that way, the United States can avoid supporting an antidemocratic strongman and advance efforts to develop sustainable sources of energy that may benefit all of us in the longer term.

A Realistic Agenda

At the Fifth Summit of the Americas in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, hemispheric leaders will discuss how their societies can achieve prosperity, energy security, and sustainable development. A U.S. president who shows up without an ambitious plan or a checkbook might be a bit of a shock. Talk of partnership in areas of shared interest, promoting regional cooperation, and seeking fresh solutions for stubborn problems may seem boring. But the times are not propitious for grand announcements or high-dollar programs. Moreover, it is not assured that the United States could take on any more initiatives than it has on the table. More realistically, we can pool efforts to boost economies, enhance human capital, and seal spaces that criminals and hostile forces seek to occupy. Perhaps in that sober fashion we can resume the political and economic progress that is the promise of this hemisphere. In under-promising, we could end up over-delivering.

Endnotes

¹ The U.S. government spent approximately \$12 billion a month in Iraq and Afghanistan during FY2008. For the entire year, it requested \$2.1 billion in combined assistance for Latin America and the Caribbean. See Belasco, Amy. 2008. The cost of Iraq, Afghanistan, and other global war on terror operations since 9/11. OpenCRS, Congressional Research Reports for the People, 15 October 2008, Table 4, p. 17; Cook, Colleen W., Clare Ribando Seelke, Mark P. Sullivan, and Connie Veillette. 2007. U.S. foreign assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean: FY2006-FY2008. OpenCRS, Congressional Research Reports for the People, 28 December 2007, 3.

² The figure is \$964.3 billion in two-way trade with Canada and Mexico in 2008, ranked by the value of total U.S. exports. See U.S. Department of Commerce. 2008. Top trade partners. Office of Trade and Industry Information, International Trade Administration (<http://ita.doc.gov/td/industry/otea/OTII/OTII-index.html>).

³ Hornbeck, J. F., and Marisabel Cid. U.S.-Latin America trade: Recent trends. OpenCRS, Congressional Research Reports for the People, 18 July 2008, 2.

⁴ This is some 6 million barrels of total crude oil products out of 13.4 million imported per day in 2007. See Energy Information Administration. 2009. U.S. imports by country of origin. U.S. Department of Energy (www.eia.doe.gov/oil_gas/petroleum/info_glance/petroleum.html).

⁵ As an example, remittances have recently accounted for more than 15 percent of gross domestic product of, and several times the amount of annual foreign development assistance to, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua. See Aguias Dovelyn. 2006. Remittance trends in Central America. *Migration Information Source*, April 2006 (www.migrationinformation.org/Feature/display.cfm?id=393).

⁶ This is according to U.S. Census Bureau population projections. See U.S. Census Bureau. n.d. Hispanics in the United States. PowerPoint Presentation (www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/hispanic/files/Internet_Hispanic_in_US_2006.pdf). Since not all Hispanics speak Spanish, estimates of Spanish-speaking numbers are just that—estimates. Some sources list the United States as having the fifth-largest Spanish-speaking population in the world, while others claim higher. For one interpretation, see Spanish SEO. 2008. Worldwide Spanish speaking population statistics (www.spanishseo.org/resources/worldwide-spanish-speaking-population).

⁷ See ChileInfo's "Chile Facts and Figures" (www.chileinfo.com/conocechile.php); SICE's "Information on Chile" (www.sice.oas.org/ctyindex/CHL/CHLAgreements_e.asp).

⁸ Workman, Daniel. 2007. World's top free trade country. Suite101.com, 24 February 24, 2007 (http://free-trade.suite101.com/article.cfm/worlds_top_free_trade_country); Also see SICE's "Information on Mexico" (www.sice.oas.org/ctyindex/MEX/MEXAgreements_e.asp).

⁹ International Monetary Fund. 2008. World economic outlook database, October 2008.

¹⁰ Unemployment statistics do not easily compare. Not all countries collect regular data, nor follow the same methodology. Some report unusually low jobless figures because they count those seeking work as employed. A more insightful statistic—though subject to interpretation—is that at least nine Latin American states report more than 50 percent of those employed (ages 15-64 years) working at informal jobs. See Sociometro's Inter-American Development Bank (www.iadb.org/sociometro/index.html).

¹¹ An estimated 35.1 percent live below the poverty line in Latin America, in both urban and rural areas, with 29.8 percent in urban environments alone. See Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. 2007. Poor and indigent population, urban and rural areas, Table 1.6.1. Statistical yearbook for Latin America and the Caribbean 2007 (http://websie.eclac.cl/anuario_estadistico/anuario_2007/eng/index.asp). The data does not include Haiti with more than 80 percent of the national population living in poverty, according to the CIA World Factbook. (www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ha.html).

¹² Estimated at \$400 billion in the 1990s. See *New York Times*. 1994. Drug traffic's value put at \$400 billion, 16 December 1994.

¹³ Romero, Simon. 2007. Venezuela spending on arms soars to world's top ranks. *New York Times* 25 February 2007.

¹⁴ In 1960, 49.2 percent of Latin American and Caribbean inhabitants lived in urban areas, while in 2005 some 77.4 percent did so. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. 2007. Percentage of urban population, Table 1.1.11. Statistical yearbook for Latin America and the Caribbean 2007 (http://websie.eclac.cl/anuario_estadistico/anuario_2007/eng/index.asp).

¹⁵ The United States needs a guiding foreign assistance strategy, an insight highlighted in Susan B. Epstein and Matthew C. Weed's "Foreign Aid Reform: Studies and Recommendations," OpenCRS, Congressional Research Reports for the People, 17 December 2008, p. 8.

Targeting Diversity: A Critical Account of Language Policy and Public Education

by *Eric J. Johnson and Elizabeth A. Brandt*

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The Pragmatics of Bilingual Education

For non-English-speaking students, negotiating language barriers in the classroom can be an exasperating process. Without adequate resources, these language-minority students easily fall behind their peers and are often classified as having learning disabilities. To address this issue, schools have adopted a variety of language-assistance programs. How these programs are implemented has a profound effect on the scholastic achievement, language-acquisition, and identity of immigrant students. Unfortunately, schools that service communities with high immigrant populations are often faced with a severe lack of resources (Johnson 2008b).

In the United States, the enrollment of all students in bilingual education programs rose from 2.1 million in the 1990-1991 academic year to more than 5 million in 2003 (Flannery 2006). A 2000 congressionally mandated study found that students in bilingual programs receive lower grades, are judged by their teachers to have lower academic abilities, and score below their classmates on standardized tests of reading and math. Furthermore, with respect to the immigrant students to whom a majority of these language-minority programs are targeted, the dropout rate for foreign-born Latino students between the ages of sixteen and twenty-four is an astonishing 36.5 percent, as compared to 4.7 percent of non-Latino immigrants (U.S. Department of Education 2007). In response to these types of educational trends, many people (e.g., English for the Children, see Johnson 2008a) have pointed the finger at bilingual education programs as the cause of such widespread failure.

The debate surrounding bilingual education has many facets. From a pedagogical perspective, researchers and educators work vigorously to determine the most efficient methodologies. In addition to multiple other challenges educators experience

in the public school system, teachers are faced with a lack of resources and the support necessary for educating language-minority students. With more than 425 first languages spoken by immigrant students in the United States, teachers and administrators can only rarely provide native-language instruction (Flannery 2006). Even when language services are provided, many people still blame bilingual education programs for low achievement and high dropout rates. Furthermore, from a mainstream social standpoint, using foreign languages in the classroom commonly is seen as a threat to the vitality of English.

Before pigeonholing bilingual education programs as the determinant of underachievement, social views toward immigrants and broader educational practices must be addressed. First, public schools emphasize English as an indispensable skill for achievement. While it is understandable that public schools prioritize English for the sake of academic achievement, such prioritizing is frequently done in such a way that immigrant languages are discredited or devalued. Advocates of English-only programs equate conformity to success and promote linguistic diversity as social degradation and deviation. In programs where English is used as the sole medium of instruction, native speakers are automatically accorded higher levels of power and influence (Tollefson and Tsui 2004). This automatically relegates minority languages to an inferior position. Often, bilingual education programs are defamed as inhibiting the acquisition of English and denying access to the American Dream (Johnson 2006). Hidden behind this negative facade, however, is the true goal of bilingual education: to cultivate multilingualism and multiliteracy.

Accountability in Arizona

Drawing from the surge of anti-bilingual education sentiments at the turn of the millennium, Ron Unz and the program he initiated, English for the Children, promoted Proposition 203 to dismantle bilingual and English as a second language (ESL) programs in Arizona's public schools (Johnson 2008a). According to Unz's initiative, language-minority students were to be placed in "Sheltered English Immersion" (a term coined by the English for the Children movement) for a period usually not to exceed one year before being mainstreamed into the regular education classroom. Not only does this methodology contradict the research on the most effective bilingual education methodologies and language acquisition models, but it is culturally insensitive, and its subtractive nature disregards the inherent value of bilingualism (Baker 2006; Crawford 1999; Cummins 1996; Faltis 2000; Krashen 1996; Krashen, Tse, and McQuillan 1998).

In spite of the imploring cries of educators, researchers, and community organizations around Arizona denouncing Proposition 203, the pro-203 community was able to reinforce its position through a well-funded and well-organized media campaign (Johnson 2005a; 2005b; 2006; 2007; 2008a) and convinced 64 percent of Arizona's voters to limit the educational services that language-minority students receive. At best, voters may not have realized that they were doing away with all of Arizona's bilingual education and ESL programs in favor of sink-or-swim immersion. While Unz decried bilingual education as perpetuating academic failure, in reality, only 30 percent of students eligible for language services in

Arizona were involved in true bilingual education programs (MacSwan 2000); most language-minority students were either in ESL programs or not receiving any services at all.

Contributing to these legal challenges facing language-minority students, state and federal accountability measures were instituted during the same time period. In November 2001, voters in Arizona endorsed Proposition 301, which allotted funds to the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) to design a “system to measure school performance based on student achievement, including student performance on the AIMS [Arizona’s Instrument for Measuring Standards] test” (Franciosi 2007, 4). The actual legal stipulations for the accountability system are stated in section 15-241 of the Arizona Revised Statutes (ARS 15-241). The system developed by the ADE is referred to as Arizona (AZ) LEARNS. The assessment of each school provided by the ADE is referred to as the school’s Achievement Profile (for examples, see www.ade.az.gov/azlearns).

As part of this assessment, the ADE assigns each school a profile ranking. Schools are categorized as either: (1) Excelling; (2) Highly Performing; (3) Performing Plus; (4) Performing; or (5) Underperforming. Schools that are designated as “Underperforming” for three consecutive years are labeled as “Failing to Meet Academic Standards” and are subject to a school improvement plan. Furthermore, in accordance with Section 1116 of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), any school receiving Title I funds will be designated “Federal School Improvement Status” after failing to meet the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) measurement defined by NCLB for a second consecutive year. If AYP is not met during the following year(s), schools, administrators, and teachers are subject to harsh penalties (see www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/pg2.html#sec1116). This intense focus on accountability and standards-based education restricts educators from adapting to diverse local contexts and cultivates anxiety among administrators. Confounding this situation, the guidelines set by state and federal agencies can be convoluted and opaque.

While this process of gauging school achievement and accountability can be considered convoluted and drawn out, it is important to underscore the emphasis placed on Arizona’s high stakes accountability assessment—the AIMS. Scores on the AIMS test are the most influential factor in assessing student, school, and district achievement for state and federal designation purposes. Considering the immense pressure on schools to perform, the situation facing schools with a high language-minority student population is exacerbated under the imposed guidelines of Proposition 203 and the ongoing legal battles in the legislature. In order to understand how this context is translated into the everyday experiences of students and educators, the current study focuses on a school district that serves a predominantly language-minority community.

Milagros School District

In order to better understand how federal and state policies affect local schools, a three-year ethnographic project was carried out in the Milagros School District in Phoenix, Arizona (Johnson 2008b). All four K-8 schools in the Milagros district are nestled in an industrial sector of west Phoenix. This area is made up of a large

immigrant population, both documented and undocumented—predominantly of Mexican descent—with Spanish as the primary home and community language. The focus of the overall investigation elaborated on the ways in which language policies are implemented in the classroom and their resulting effects on language use outside of school. The arguments posed in this article are supported by multiple in-depth interviews with educators that participated in the study.

The current condition of the Milagros district is defined by its distinct academic and demographic features. According to the ADE, the four Milagros schools serviced 2,919 students during the 2007-2008 school year. More than 90 percent of the student population is Latino, and while 60 percent is *officially* classified as English language learner (ELL), very few do not speak Spanish (~5 percent). Socially, most of the students come from impoverished households. Recent assessments estimate approximately 35-40 percent of families within the district live in extreme poverty. Due to this stressed socioeconomic situation, Milagros is identified as a Title I school district. A significant contribution of Title I funds make up the Free and Reduced Price Lunch Program. The Milagros district has a 100 percent participation in Arizona's Free and Reduced Price Lunch Program. This index traditionally represents the percentage of students that comes from economically stressed families.

Academically, the Milagros district has struggled to meet the standards established by NCLB and AZ LEARNS. On the federal level, Milagros has failed to meet AYP as a district for the past three years (2005, 2006, and 2007). Of the four schools in the district, one is currently in "School Improvement Status" and the other three schools are under official warning. Even more disturbing, approximately 40 percent of the students from the Milagros district do not finish high school. Underlying the achievement challenges facing the Milagros schools is the general theme of language. While implementing the guidelines of Proposition 203 within the Arizona Department of Education's assessment matrix might be feasible in some districts, the Milagros schools are faced with serving a high language-minority student population with limited resources. Considering that every qualifying language-minority student is required to receive (at least) one year of Structured English Immersion (SEI—the new name of the "Sheltered English Immersion" identified above), the reality of implementing such a program in a district in which more than 60 percent are (officially) classified as ELL is fraught with complications.

On the ground level, the district has a variety of specific methods for resolving discrepancies with the ADE. First, as required by the ADE, the district is proactive about making sure that all teachers are either endorsed in SEI or are taking the proper courses to earn their endorsement. This strategy allows them to report that *all* classes are considered SEI—regardless of the actual methods being used in the classrooms. Second, teachers are trained in the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol model for planning and implementing sheltered content lessons (for examples, see www.sioipinstitute.net). Finally, facing such a large number of students who are reclassified as ELL, the district offers a variety of compensatory education services (e.g., tutoring, after-school programs, and summer school).

Although this approach might seem to incorporate all of the requirements of Proposition 203, the actual application of these strategies varies greatly.

Moreover, claiming that every class is SEI assumes that every teacher is qualified to implement the appropriate methodology. On the contrary, even veteran teachers struggle with this responsibility. As reported by one teacher, “the only thing I’ve received from the district is my fifteen hours of SEI. I don’t feel that I’ve had any staff development in dealing with, or how to teach to, the ELL students.” Another teacher confessed, “I don’t think that, in order to meet the needs of my students that come from, you know, speaking a-whole-other language, I don’t think I’m qualified.” In addition to teachers feeling unprepared to meet the needs of their language-minority students, the implementation of SEI is neither monitored nor regulated by school administrators.

Responding to the SEI training, a well-respected Latino educator explained that “the teacher may take it [SEI training], but they’re not really enforcing it or implementing it in the classroom.” Without the financial resources and overall educational infrastructure (e.g., classrooms, more teachers, additional instructional assistants, and administrative guidance), it is seemingly impossible to adequately implement an effective SEI program in the Milagros district. The educators’ comments reflect the unsound nature of considering all classes as SEI classrooms. Most significantly, the district, administrators, and teachers are all under such an extreme amount of pressure to meet federal and state standards that they cannot afford to dedicate the appropriate amount of time to develop SEI lessons around the AIMS requirements.

Another way to see how NCLB and Proposition 203 have affected the everyday responsibilities of classroom teachers is to examine how things have changed since the law was passed in 2000. On a philosophical level, a school counselor commented:

There used to be an emphasis on the value of being biliterate and bilingual, being a true biliterate. The focus now is on let’s get these kids, you know, able to read English and function in English and take a test in English.

So, how is Proposition 203 implemented in the Milagros district? As far as maintaining English as the principal medium of instruction, it is adhering to the law. Unfortunately, though, the district does not have the resources to structure an adequate SEI system. With so many language-minority students, ensuring that all teachers are trained—or being trained—in SEI is the district’s *official* strategy for complying with Proposition 203. On the ground level, though, the most essential resource available to teachers is their students.

By far, the most common and consistently utilized linguistic resource in the Milagros district is the use of bilingual peers to translate and teach classroom materials to Spanish-speaking students. While having students help each other is common practice in education, the schools in the Milagros district have established the unofficial—but widespread—practice of “peerlingual education” to compensate for the lack of official language-based resources (Johnson 2008b). In this context, peerlingual education refers to all instances where language-minority students rely on peers to translate and/or teach classroom material to them—either

at the request of an educator or as an individual request. Applying this peerlingual education strategy has obvious benefits and is revered by many teachers as invaluable. When asked how they were able to communicate to students who do not understand English, all of the (non-Spanish-speaking) educators indicated relying on other students as peer assistants (or coaches, buddies, helpers, tutors, translators). While useful, this method does not take into consideration multiple educational factors (e.g., level of comprehension of the tutor or his or her ability to explain the material) or the interpersonal and social dynamics involved between different students. Unfortunately, the peerlingual tutors are placed in these situations without any type of formal training and are expected to simultaneously learn and teach. Essentially, untrained students—not trained teachers—are teaching students.

Regrettably, the overwhelming emphasis on standards-based instruction and assessment precludes a strategy to ensure that students are actually receiving adequate official services and/or the training for unofficial methods. Consequently, districts like Milagros are caught within the larger struggle for linguistic superiority and must scramble to meet decontextualized prescriptive expectations. Apparently, the architects of Proposition 203 did not foresee the intense complexity of implementing a program with such a narrow focus in a district with so many language-minority students (in spite of the high number of Spanish speakers in cities like Phoenix, Mesa, and Tucson).

Discussion

As cultural constructs, language policies are created, promoted, and implemented to accomplish ideologically motivated objectives (McCarty 2004; 2005). Unfortunately, many subtractive language policies have been successfully promoted behind a thin veil of good intentions. Whereas the individuals and agencies that promote these types of ethnocentric policies assert their sensitivity to cultural diversity, their underlying ideologies frequently surface in public discussions. Maria Mendoza, chairwoman of Arizona's branch of English for the Children, clearly articulated her language orientation by asking the voting public, "Why do they [proponents of bilingual services] want to keep them [minority students] as prisoners in their culture and their heritage?" (Gonzalez 2000). Obviously, these organizations clearly understand the direct link between language maintenance and the promotion of cultural diversity. It can be assumed, then, that language planning can essentially be reduced to "an extension of social policy aimed at behavior modification" (Williams 2003, 1).

While the general educational goals of policies like NCLB, AZ LEARNS, and Proposition 203 are not inherently bad (i.e., that students learn English so that they have access to dominant class social institutions), the harmful effects emerge out of how language use is characterized and treated in general. On the one hand, language policies set parameters for how language-minority students are supposed to use language in a school setting. On the other hand, students are rarely conscious of such policies. Instead, they are aware that their teachers do not want them to speak Spanish in the classroom, and they know that English is associated with education and success. Finally, they are very conscious of the current social

issues that surround them and their families: immigrants speak Spanish, and mainstream America supports the deportation of undocumented immigrants (Johnson 2008b).

There are two major features of language policies that deeply affect language-minority students. First, how these policies are understood and implemented by people in positions of power (e.g., educators) determines the way students view the value of languages. Speaking, teaching, and honoring English are all fine, but prohibiting, devaluing, and ignoring native-language abilities can be detrimental to a student's self-esteem and the development of his or her worldview. Instilling in students that Spanish is inferior shapes the way they view their families and communities. Second, the way the students' native-language abilities are treated determines the perception of their own proficiencies. Developing English proficiency and literacy skills without providing supplemental Spanish language development strategies relegates the students' native-language abilities to a lesser position. All of these issues are exacerbated when the English education services are mis-implemented, leaving students with English skills that are not valued on an academic level and Spanish skills that are not valued on a social level.

In the Milagros district, many students have achieved a high level of balanced oral bilingualism. While some advocates of SEI might look at this fact and tout the positive effects of Proposition 203, this linguistic trend actually stems from natural exposure to English-speaking educators and peers, as well as living in an English-dominant society over many years. Considering that Proposition 203 is not being implemented with any consistency in the Milagros district, it should not be seen as accelerating English acquisition. In reality, the Milagros context epitomizes how Proposition 203 severely limits the resources available to schools with a high number of language-minority students, ultimately resulting in high levels of academic underachievement founded on English literacy abilities. Even though administrators in the Milagros district permit the use of Spanish instruction and pull-out programs (in which students spend part of the school day in a mainstream classroom but are pulled out for a portion of each day to receive instruction in ESL), they do not have the funding to adequately develop such strategies.

Instead of considering native-language skills as a tool to help develop English competencies, Spanish is implicated in the overwhelming rate of academic underachievement in the Milagros district (Johnson 2008b). Blaming parents, students, and the community for academic failure ignores the significance of not using native-language abilities to develop academic literacy abilities in both languages. The social and cultural pressures surrounding the acquisition of second-language literacy skills for language-minority students are considerably more intense than for language-majority students (Cummins 1981; Bialystok 2001). Even though developing literacy in the native language first provides a solid cognitive platform for students to explore and acquire literacy skills in a second language (Bialystok 2001; Krashen 2003), educators in the Milagros district lack the adequate resources to implement this strategy. While many students in the Milagros district might develop high levels of oral proficiency in both languages, their academic literacy development is slowed by a lack of native language support. Without realizing this, educators become frustrated with their students' underachievement and

struggle to explain why the majority of seventh and eighth graders read at a third- or fourth-grade level.

Even in a context where language is such a dominant issue, the most overriding theme throughout the Milagros schools is meeting federal and state accountability standards. Since this is heavily influenced by high-stakes testing, the curricula are specifically designed around passing the AIMS test. In the face of punitive measures and harsh classifications by federal and state education agencies, language issues in the classroom have become a secondary concern—relegating language assistance to peerlingual approaches. Even though “there is no consistent evidence that high-stakes testing works to increase achievement,” such methods for assessing schools persist as a dominant force in the structure of public education under NCLB (Nichols, Glass, and Berliner 2005, 10). Additionally, the negative effects of standardized testing are more apparent in school districts like Milagros that service high poverty communities (Krashen 2002).

Not only are language-minority students in the Milagros district confronted with varying degrees of SEI implementation, inconsistent native-language support, impoverished home contexts, and social issues surrounding immigration, they are surrounded by educators who face unfair pressures from government education agencies. While all schools are held to the same standards, educators in the Milagros district are forced to deal with many social and linguistic issues that are absent in other schools. Furthermore, teachers in the Milagros district are amongst the lowest paid in Arizona. The combination of all of these factors has produced high teacher-turnover rates and schools that are seriously understaffed. At the center of this complex situation are students who sincerely want to go to high school, graduate, and achieve financial success to improve their living conditions. Instead of blaming language-minority students and communities for academic underachievement, it is time to focus on the policies and agencies that structure such failure.

Targeting schools as sites of assimilation while simultaneously limiting the necessary resources to accommodate a diverse student population places an immense burden on educators. When language competency and academic literacy skills are packaged as underachievement, students develop an identity intimately tied to failure. The process involved in negotiating such a rigid institutional structure has an indelible effect on the identity of language-minority students. Viewing identity as “an outcome of cultural semiotics that is accomplished through the production of contextually relevant sociopolitical relations of similarity and difference, authenticity and inauthenticity, and legitimacy and illegitimacy” underscores the vital role that language plays in the development of individual and group identities (Bucholtz and Hall 2004, 382). Speakers of minority languages are identified by their lack of knowledge of the majority language—and, thus, targeted for assimilation. When policies are aimed at controlling a language, the identities of speakers of that language are profoundly affected.

Language-minority students in schools like those in the Milagros district are caught in a complicated situation. They operate in spaces in which federal, state, and district standards intersect with ideologically promoted patterns of social interaction. Clearly, in Arizona and other immigrant-rich communities, politicians

and the voting public consider the regular use of languages other than English as a “problem” (Ruiz 1984). Instead of punishing schools, educators, or students, it is necessary to understand that the authority hierarchy in public schools reflects broader socio-ethnic power structures. Highlighting—rather than deprecating—the students’ cultural backgrounds enhances the potential for alternative educational accommodations. Until we, as a society, begin to celebrate language-minority students and the diversity that they bring to the classroom, schools will continue to be used as tools to perpetuate ethnic inequality and discrimination.

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Special Content

Featured Photographs

The *Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy* is proud to continue featuring creative work by Latino artists. This effort began in volume 19 as a way to visually represent the heterogeneity of Hispanic culture and to offer insight into the complex history and vast scope of political issues relevant to Latinos throughout the country.

The pictures depicting life on the Mexico-United States border were contributed by the Border Film Project. The Border Film Project is a collaborative art project giving disposable cameras to two groups on different sides of the border: undocumented migrants crossing the desert into the United States and American Minutemen trying to stop them. The pictures show the human face of immigration, and intend to challenge the viewer to question stereotypes and see through new and personal lenses. Migrant photographers were recruited through shelters and humanitarian organizations on the Mexican side of the border. Cameras were distributed to Minutemen volunteers at observation sites in Arizona, New Mexico, Texas and California.

This volume highlights life through Cuba, El Salvador, and Puerto Rico, as well as life on the Mexico/United States border. The pictures for Cuba, El Salvador, and Puerto Rico were contributed by students at the Harvard Kennedy School.

Mexico-U.S. Border



Camera #238 distributed in Agua Prieta, Sonora, Mexico.
Photographers: Armando, 38, and Javier, 24. Migrated from Mexico City and Hermosillo.
Crossed New Mexico desert on Christmas. Camera mailed from Deming, New Mexico.



Camera #375 distributed in Naco, Sonora, Mexico.
Photographer: anonymous. Man climbing over a fence.



Camera #210 distributed in Naco, Sonora, Mexico.
Photographer: anonymous. Migrant woman hitchhiking.



Camera #152 distributed in Naco, Sonora, Mexico.
Photographer: anonymous. The blistered feet of a woman unable to continue her journey across the border. Blisters are life-threatening in the desert.

Photos courtesy the Border Film Project.

Cuba



1950s American Cars continue to occupy Cuban Streets



Traditional Cuban Cigars



Plaza de Armas, Old Havana: vendors selling books prohibited in the U.S.



Havana: art decorating an alley

All by Josefina Delgado

El Salvador



La Libertad: Traditional wood burning stoves are still commonly used in rural parts of El Salvador.



Santa Ana: A Salvadoreño carrying grass for his cattle.



Sonsonate: Fishing boat.

All by Vanessa Yasmin Calderon

Puerto Rico



**Old San Juan:
Puerto Rican
folkloric dancing
during the Festival
of Saint Sebastian.**

**Old San Juan: typical
cobblestone street.**



**Old San Juan:
waterfront.**

All by Emerita Torres

by Yolanda Alaniz and Megan Cornish
***Viva la Raza: A History of Chicano Identity and
Resistance***

(Red Letter Press, 2008)

Reviewed by Gabriela Rico

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In an attempt to grapple with the Chicano struggle for political enfranchisement, equality, and social justice, *Viva la Raza: A History of Chicano Identity and Resistance* covers a broad spectrum of events in Mexican-American history beginning with the Spanish Conquest of Mexico and ending with the present-day Latino-led movement for immigrant rights. The purpose of the book is to document a history of Chicano militancy in the United States while unapologetically presenting a socialist feminist critique of major events in Mexican-American history. As two self-identified radical socialist feminists, authors Yolanda Alaniz and Megan Cornish take on the United States' complicity in vicious acts of colonization, dispossession, racism, and oppression, as well as the contradictions and shortcomings found in the Chicano movement itself. The authors believe that Chicanos suffer some aspects of national oppression and can be considered a racially exploited minority in the United States but should not be considered a nation. Cultural nationalism, therefore, is not the approach Chicanos should take toward achieving liberation. Instead, they claim that Chicanos should be part of a multiracial, working-class coalition in order to topple the hegemonic capitalist class structure in the United States.

Using a historical materialist approach toward the writing (some would claim rewriting) of Chicano history, Alaniz and Cornish survey the "canonical" texts in Mexican-American history by scholars who have undertaken similar projects in the past.¹ The authors also incorporate their own experiences, from the 1960s to present day, as activists committed to the Chicano causes. They primarily employ Marxist/Leninist theory to frame their contentions that Chicanos are subject to a racist capitalist system, while also invoking theories of race, ethnicity, and internal colonialism developed by scholars like Thomas Almaguer and Robert Allen to analyze whether Chicanos are an oppressed minority or a nation. They conclude that racism is at the core of Chicano oppression, exacerbated by forced assimilation. Alaniz and Cornish believe that the argument that Chicanos and Blacks should pursue cultural nationalism as a means to acquire land and political power was the greatest failing of civil rights movements. Cultural nationalism leads to

separatism and would not effectively further the Chicano cause. Instead, they argue, Chicanos should pursue a pan-ethnic, working-class movement that would strategically upend the White domination of the capitalist aristocracy.

Viva la Raza begins its overview of Chicano history at the Spanish Conquest, discussing both Mexican history and the racial mixing or *mestizaje* inherent to Mexican and Chicano consciousness, identity, and culture. Alaniz and Cornish present a prototypical overview of the Spanish Conquest, covering the enslavement, exploitation, and forced Catholicization of Mexico's Indian populations. Perhaps what is new about this account is the poignant analysis of Spain's 300-year economic exploitation of Mexico's resources (particularly its exportation of precious metals like gold and silver) as stunting the development of Mexico's economy and weakening its defense during the Mexican War of Independence and the Mexican-American War. Interestingly, Alaniz and Cornish compare English and Spanish colonialism. They conclude that the lack of exploitable resources in North America's Atlantic Coast is what motivated Britain's importation of slave labor and movement toward modern capitalism, while Mexico's natural wealth and more populous native population doomed it to Spanish looting and eventual impoverishment.

To support their claim that Chicanos are a super-exploited race, Alaniz and Cornish discuss the labor history of Chicanos in the United States, particularly industrial labor struggles in mining, crop irrigation, and the garment industries, where Chicanos were subject to discriminatory treatment and low wages. Understanding the stark inequality they endured in the workplace explains the extent of Chicano militancy in the industrial sector. The authors highlight the Empire Zinc strike, which began in 1951 in Silver City, New Mexico, and demanded equal wages and treatment of Chicano workers. The ultimately successful strike lasted a grueling seventeen months, demonstrating both the potential of Chicano unionism and the power of Chicana leadership. The miner's wives were heavily involved in the strike, demanding better housing conditions, running water, and improved sanitation.

Alaniz and Cornish go on to detail U.S. labor struggles in the agricultural industry, as Chicano leadership in unionizing farm workers is not only notable, but truly pioneering. By the early 20th century, Mexicans were the majority of farm workers in the southwest. Although farm workers had begun organizing strikes as early as 1903 with occasional support from the American Federation of Labor and the Communist Party, it wasn't until the 1960s that the United Farm Workers Union (UFW) emerged as a vanguard fighting for justice in the fields. Alaniz and Cornish argue that although the UFW fused the labor movement with the civil rights movement and won significant national victories for farm workers, it also suffered from internal conflict, ill-advised dealings with bourgeois politicians, and betrayal of immigrant workers. Although this account of the UFW's history is much like others written before, the authors emphasize the early involvement and leadership of women in the union and critique the UFW's organizing philosophy.

Alaniz and Cornish criticize the UFW's perceived lapses in internal conflict resolution and the systematic exclusion of undocumented immigrant farm workers. The authors claim that the UFW's nonviolent resistance strategy allowed the

growers to impede the movement's progress. Had the UFW implemented self-defense strategies, the authors claim, the growers' goons would have retreated and the strikes would have more effectively continued. Additionally, Alaniz and Cornish assert that the UFW's strong affiliation with the Catholic Church excluded non-Catholic Chicanos and eroded the union's potential for building a multiracial, intercultural coalition. Although these critiques could be valid, they are also contradictory to the UFW's success. Committing to nonviolence gave the farm-worker cause the higher moral ground, and the union proved able to garner multiracial support despite its loyalty to an overwhelmingly Catholic Mexican membership base.

Cornish and Alaniz believe that the UFW should have sought support from undocumented Mexican workers, their "logical allies," instead of ostracizing them. They accuse the UFW and its founder Cesar Chavez of "chauvinism" for supporting the persecution of immigrant farm workers; their analysis, however, gravely overlooks the fundamental causes of tension between Chicano workers attempting to unionize and Mexican immigrant workers who were often used as scabs. Additionally, the "chauvinist" label is not appropriate without a proper analysis of how patriarchy is implicated in the oppression of migrant farm workers—an analysis the authors don't engage in despite their continuous use of the term to delegitimize the UFW's actions. Finally, Alaniz and Cornish accuse the union of red-baiting organizers and volunteers with whom the leadership disagreed. Although this may be a valid claim, the authors once again fail to analyze the accusation within its historical context.

Alaniz and Cornish end their account of Chicano history by analyzing the emergence of Chicana feminism. They accurately root Chicanas' feminist heritage in pre-Columbian societies, which were typically matriarchal. Additionally, they recognize the inspiration that Chicanas gathered from figures like La Malinche and Las Adelitas and from fierce activists like Lucy Gonzalez Parsons and Emma Tenayuca, who won significant battles in the early 20th-century labor movement. In the 1960s and 1970s, Chicana feminists battled sexist Chicano activists; Chicana feminist students also confronted racist college administrators in the face of denied resources. Alaniz and Cornish present a very typical analysis of sexism in Raza culture, pinpointing Catholicism and Chicano nationalism as the principle culprits sustaining Mexican/Chicano machismo. Chicanas took a stance against the chauvinism in Chicano cultural nationalism as well as the racism in the women's movement by forming new organizations, including MUJER in the Pacific Northwest. Well-known Chicana lesbian activists like Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa pioneered theories on how the intersections of Chicana subjectivity—race, class, and gender—augmented the level of Chicana oppression.

Alaniz and Cornish attempt to discuss the contributions of Chicano gays and lesbians in a more comprehensive way than the majority of Chicano history books, which typically either ignore queer issues or tokenize queer voices. Alaniz and Cornish begin by briefly tracing the roots of gay Chicanos, which they find in Mesoamerican societies' acceptance—and in some cases, reverence—of homosexuality. They also emphasize the importance of recognizing queer involvement in Chicano struggles from the early 20th century to the UFW and the Chicano

movement of the 1960s. In their view, just because queer people were not “out of the closet” does not mean they weren’t actively organizing alongside Chicanos for Chicano labor and civil rights. Queer Chicanos formed national queer Latino networks as well as queer caucuses, which became integrated in the national Chicano/Latino civil rights organizations.

Alaniz and Cornish end the book by proposing a “Platform for Chicano Liberation” to eliminate cultural nationalism, “Stalinism,” sexism, and homophobia in the current Chicano movement and to seek collaborations with Chicanos’ “true allies”: women, people of color, sexual minorities, workers, radicals, intellectuals, and youth. Alaniz and Cornish call for a number of programmatic demands, including ending discrimination and restoring affirmative action; ensuring full rights to Chicano labor, including full labor protections and social benefits for immigrant workers; demanding economic, social, and political equality for Chicanos, including free, safe, bilingual, twenty-four-hour multicultural child care; ending police brutality and hate crimes against Chicanos; ensuring the right to self-defense and local control of resources for Chicano communities; establishing full voting rights for all U.S. residents, including noncitizens, prisoners, and felons; fully funding research and treatment of AIDS, diabetes, and breast cancer; heeding the guarantees of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which brought an official end to the Mexican-American War; ending repressive immigration laws; and ending U.S. intervention in Latin America in order to form the United Socialist States of the Americas. Alaniz and Cornish make a call to leftists, in general, to support the Chicano cause and to prioritize the movements and rights of people of color. They conclude that the Chicano struggle should awaken fully to the consciousness of its potential in order to pursue a “historically rooted vision of the road to liberation” (285).

Although *Viva la Raza* is quite similar to other volumes of Chicano history, the book as a whole centers the experiences of Chicanas within the Chicano historical record and voices a socialist feminist critique of Chicano historical events and leaders. However, the book carries a heavy and unapologetic agenda, which often contradicts the authors’ claim of theoretical “objectivity.” Certainly this is the case with the staunch critique of Chicano cultural nationalism. Alaniz and Cornish dismiss cultural nationalism early on, claiming that Chicanos cannot be defined as a nation because they do not meet Lenin’s theoretical constraints, which bind “nationhood” to owning territory and possessing an economic infrastructure. The authors quickly disregard the theoretical work undertaken by Black and Chicano nationalist activists, who formulated their own analysis of their communities’ oppressed conditions based on internal colonialism. Alaniz and Cornish claim that the internal colonialist critique of the state treated the colonial condition too abstractly because it overlooks the need for the existence of a geographically distinct metropolis separate from the colony. They also fail to address racism as the primary means of oppression affecting Blacks and Chicanos, contrary to critiques by activist-scholars such as Charles Pinderhughes that center race as a lens of analysis.² Claiming internal colonialism allowed Black nationalists to analyze how the colonial conditions of slavery displaced them, stripped them from land, exploited their labor, and gravely stunted their socio-political-economic

development as an ethnic community in the United States. The forms of colonialism that Blacks suffered differ little from colonies controlled by an external imperialist force. Similarly, Chicanos embraced cultural nationalism as a means to critique the dispossession, colonization, and racial oppression they suffered at the hands of the U.S. government after the U.S.-Mexican War. The very reason both groups lack land and an economic infrastructure is due to their status as internal colonies. Yet the authors ignore both the potential legitimacy of the “internal colony” theory and the strategic empowerment that cultural nationalism granted both communities during a time of gross inequality, hyper-segregation, and intense political repression. Legitimacy is solely granted to Lenin’s theory of nationhood, while the Black and Chicano activists who formulated their own theories to analyze the situations of people of color in the United States are discredited as “separatist.” According to the authors, cultural nationalism is always separatist and counterproductive because it deters the building of a multiracial coalition.

While this may be partially true, Alaniz and Cornish fail to analyze how America’s White supremacy has contributed to White cultural nationalism and to White separatism, which they document in the book. Although White cultural nationalism is not necessarily tagged as “separatist” because Whiteness in the United States is viewed as the norm, it is still a form of separatism that has been detrimental to people of color. But when people of color subscribe to cultural nationalism and demand land, the right to self-defense, control of resources, and the right to self-determination, they are dismissed as separatist and are told they aren’t a nation. Due to their persistent dismissal of cultural nationalism, Alaniz and Cornish do not credit the cultural nationalist wing of the civil rights movement—such as organizations like MEChA and the Black Panther Party—with any of their numerous accomplishments. The authors also do not acknowledge that these organizations were able to build the multiracial coalitions responsible for many of today’s civil rights gains, such as the establishment of ethnic studies programs.

The authors dismiss many of the early cultural nationalist demands (like the Chicano call for the return of the Southwest to Mexico) as too “idealist.” Yet many of their own programmatic demands are highly idealistic—if not completely unrealistic. What Alaniz and Cornish do get right in their proposal, however, is their urgent call for a multiracial/multicultural working-class movement to further the cause of the most destitute in the United States. This is particularly relevant in light of the current economic crisis. America saw the potential of such a movement in the overwhelmingly Mexican/Chicano-led mass mobilizations supporting immigrant rights in May 2006. This new movement bears further exploration. Chicanos should keep fighting for justice on community-specific issues. But the immigrant rights’ marches taught us that the world pays attention to people of diverse backgrounds standing up for one cause.

Endnotes

¹ See Acuña, Rodolfo. 2006. *Occupied America*. 6th edition. New York: Longman; Vargas, Zaragoza. 1998. *Major problems in Mexican American history*. Belmont: Wadsworth.

² Pinderhughes, Charles. 2008. African Americans and internal colonial theory. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, Sheraton Boston and the Boston Marriott Copley Place, Boston, MA, 31 July 2008.

HJHP's Internet Sites of Interest

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<http://www.aclu.org>

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Art by Latina Artists

<http://artbylatinaartists.com/>

An independent forum for Latinas to showcase their artwork.

California Community Foundation

<http://www.calfund.org/>

Founded in 1915 in Los Angeles. Focuses on grant writing and managing charitable funds in order to strengthen Los Angeles communities.

Center for the New Economy

<http://www.grupocne.org/>

A private, nonpartisan corporation that promotes economic development in Puerto Rico.

Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute

<http://www.chci.org/>

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Congressional Hispanic Leadership Institute

<http://www.chli.org/>

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<http://www.drclas.harvard.edu/>

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<http://foundationcenter.org/>

Founded in 1956 to connect grant writers and not-profit organizations with each other and other philanthropic resources.

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<http://www.govtrack.us/>

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Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy

<http://www.hks.harvard.edu/kssgorg/hjhp/>

Founded in 1985, *HJHP* is a non-partisan review that publishes interdisciplinary works on politics and policy making as these topics affect the Latino community in the United States.

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<http://www.nd.edu/~iuplr/>

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Latino Coalition

<http://www.thelatinocoalition.com/>

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<http://www.latinocollegedollars.org/>

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<http://www.lif.org/>

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Latino Policy Forum

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Latino USA

<http://www.latinousa.org/>

Latino USA is the only national radio journal of news and culture, in the English-language, produced from a Latino perspective.

Latin Vision

<http://www.latinvision.com/>

A Hispanic business and media network.

League of United Latin American Citizens

<http://www.lulac.org/>

The largest and oldest Hispanic Organization in the United States. LULAC advances the economic condition, educational attainment, political influence, health and civil rights of Hispanic Americans through community-based programs

MANA, A National Latina Organization

<http://www.hermana.org/>

A national advocacy organization that supports programs that work to empower Latinas through leadership development, community service, and advocacy.

Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund

<http://www.maldef.org/>

Founded in 1968 in Texas to support policies and litigation that protect the civil liberties of Latinos. Presently the nation's foremost not-for-profit organization devoted to Latino litigation and advocacy.

National Association of Hispanic Journalists

<http://www.nahj.org/>

Dedicated to the recognition and professional advancement of Hispanics in the news industry.

National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials

<http://www.naleo.org/>

NALEO is a 501(c)(4) nonpartisan membership organization whose constituency includes the nation's more than 6,000 elected and appointed Latino officials.

National Council of La Raza

<http://www.nclr.org/>

Private, non-profit, and non-partisan organization focused on reducing poverty and discrimination, and improving opportunities, for Hispanic Americans.

National Hispanic Cultural Center

<http://www.nhccnm.org/>

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National Hispanic Institute

<http://www.nhi-net.org/>

Organizes and supports programs that promote excellence in Latino students and encourages Latino community cohesion and pride.

On the Issues

<http://www.issues2000.org/>

A non-profit organization that provides non-partisan information on presidential candidates and other political figures.

Pew Hispanic Center

<http://www.pewhispanic.org/>

A non-partisan research organization dedicated to improving the understanding of the role of the Hispanic population in the United States.

Smithsonian Latino Center

<http://latino.si.edu/>

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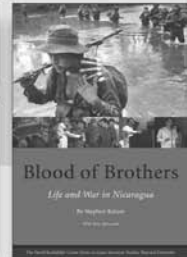
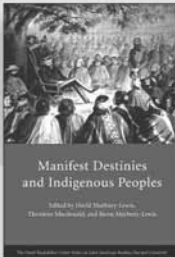
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IN MEMORIAM

William H. “Mo” Marumoto was a quiet, self-effacing man born in Long Beach, California. His life, however, would take him across the country and to the highest levels of power. We remember and honor him here for his work in advancing the Hispanic community in the United States. In 1970, Mr. Marumoto was appointed as a presidential aide responsible for filling Cabinet and sub-Cabinet members. He spent the next three years recruiting minorities into senior-level government jobs, including the Cabinet Committee on Opportunities for Spanish-Speaking People. In addition to serving on a number of other foundations catering to underrepresented minorities, Marumoto was a board member of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF). In this capacity, he helped advance MALDEF’s mission of developing public policies, laws, and programs to safeguard the civil rights of the millions of Latinos living in the United States. Mr. Marumoto died on 25 November 2008. He was seventy-three.



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