The Settlement Experience of Latinos in Chicago: Segregation, Speculation, and the Ecology Model

JOHN J. BETANCUR, University of Illinois at Chicago

Abstract

This article describes the process and characteristics of Latino settlement in Chicago. It identifies elements of segregation and discrimination associated with Latino status. The analysis disagrees with Massey's claim that Latino settlement is proceeding along the lines of the ecological model. It claims that, though descriptively relevant, the model is not very useful for explaining the Latino experience, particularly prejudices and practices related to the status of Latinos as a dominated group in the U.S. The author claims that a combined historical, qualitative, and quantitative analysis reveals crucial qualifications that statistical analyses often miss.

This article addresses Latino settlement in Chicago. It contends that this experience has been characterized by residential exclusion and speculation rather than by opportunity and mobility. The analysis disagrees with descriptions of Latino settlement based on the ecology model (Aguirre, Schwirian & LaGreca 1980; Massey 1987). It claims that the model, though descriptively relevant, is not very useful for explaining the Latino experience. The argument is specifically different from Massey's (1987) version, which contends that while the ecological model cannot explain black residential distribution, it is valid for Latinos. Statistical evidence may suggest the relevance of aspects of the model, but it misses key qualifications and elements suggested here.

The argument is constructed in four sections. The first argues that Latino immigration reflected U.S. domination of Latin America. The second examines ways in which the resulting vulnerability and status of Latinos allowed for real-estate speculation to exploit their quasi-racial status and highlights the resulting processes of residential exclusion. The third describes the settlement patterns of Latinos today and brings up additional evidence questioning the applicability of the ecological model to them. It concludes with a brief discussion of findings.

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The Ecological Model

The ecological model, either in its original form or in later versions, has dominated analyses of residential segregation. The initial version explained urban change in terms of competition and succession among land uses. In residential areas, one ethnic group succeeded another when the latter left. Alternatively, groups engaged in competition and displaced each other. Underlying this process was the assumption of mobility; as groups improved economically, they moved into better areas. Neighborhood change was then explained in terms of invasion, succession, and mobility (Park & Burgess 1921; Park, Burgess & McKenzie 1925). A more recent version of the ecological model, social area analysis, views residential differentiation as reflecting the increasing complexity associated with development. As development produces different groups, people of similar backgrounds seek to live with their kind and the result is social separation and segregation (Berry & Horton 1970; Berry & Kasarda 1977; Shevky & Bell 1955).

Along these lines, Massey (1987) proposed an updated version. In his view, ethnic segregation stems from “the interplay of the opposing forces of concentration and dispersion” (317). Concentration results from increasing spatial differentiation; dispersion from mobility and acculturation. Immigration is a case in point. Immigrants hold low-wage jobs and need to minimize costs. Migration chains lead them to low-rental ethnic areas, near work, relatives, and friends. If differences with current residents are too deep, a process of replacement follows. When they “reach a threshold of density” (318), they develop their own social infrastructure, their enclaves become the basis for solidarity, and more members join the group (concentration). As they acquire the language, culture, and values of the host society, they get better jobs and disperse into higher-income native areas with better services. Since, by that time, they have developed the values and status as natives, their move is not likely to produce a new process of replacement and succession but one of integration and assimilation.

Massey’s (1987) update provides a version that is more flexible, while getting rid of outdated elements (“a rigid biological analogy and a sentimental, ethnocentric view of ethnicity now discredited”) and introducing others left out by previous formulations (“larger processes of social change and economic development”). He removes one of the most controversial applications of the model by leaving blacks out of the equation. Studies of segregation, he claims, “suggest that black segregation stems more from white prejudice than from the socioeconomic processes specified by the ecological model” (316). Meanwhile, he includes Latinos as “ethnics” properly represented by the model (326-28). This decision, he argues, misses the significance of the Latino status. Not only have Latinos been discriminated against because they are Latino, but discrimination has been reflected in unique forms of manipulation and exploitation affecting their settlement and mobility in ways that differ significantly from those of European immigrants. Thus, while the literature refers to Latinos as ethnic, national, or racial groups, often without much attention to the implications of the chosen term, this article argues for the need to construct the term historical-ly. For this, the article engages in analysis that emphasizes the common bonding of subjugation of Latinos in the U.S. and its specific residential manifestations. The terms racialization and race, for instance, are used to highlight the application of prejudice and discriminatory practices in the housing market to them because they are Latino. Generally, however, the article uses the term Latino within the context of domination established in the next section.

Latino Importation or the Production of a New Urban Minority

The migration of Latinos to the U.S. and Chicago has been closely associated with economic exploitation and political domination of Latin America by the U.S. (Bach 1978; Betancur, Cordova & Torres 1993; Bonilla & Campos 1981; Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños 1979; Fernández Kelly 1983; Fortes and Walton 1981; Sassen 1988; Teitelbaum 1985). Along these lines, the experience of Latinos has been characterized by extreme forms of domination and exclusion because they are Latino (Acuña 1988; Fachón 1985; Padilla 1987). Employer abuses, labor segmentation and immobility, and segregation are clear manifestations of this (Barrera 1979; Blau 1969; Bullock & Manus 1990; Lane & Escobar 1987; Méndez 1988; Omil & Wintari 1986; Padilla 1987; Reisler 1976; Taylor 1972; Yinger 1985).

The presence of Latinos in the U.S. is largely the result of forceful annexation or purchase of Latin American territory and people by the U.S. (northern Mexico, Puerto Rico); use of migration as an escape valve for explosive social conditions (Puerto Rico, Central America); a strategy of the cold war (Cuba, Nicaragua, Dominican Republic); distortions related to U.S. investments in Latin America (Sassen 1988); or a convenient, temporary solution to so-called labor shortages (Kirstein 1977). These actions have followed from U.S. claims on the region as its sphere of influence.

Northern Mexico became part of the U.S. through conquest and purchase (1848). This is also true for Puerto Rico as a result of the U.S.-Spain colonial war of 1898. Migration to the U.S. resulted from the ensuing transformation of the island by U.S. interests (Sanchez-Korol 1993). Dependence development in Mexico led to massive displacement of peasants who were then imported by U.S. employers and turned into a dominated segment of disposable, cheap labor. Not only were they admitted under special arrangements (e.g., the Bracero Program of 1942-64 and the Temporary Admissions Program of World War II), but employers and government colluded to generate a stream of undocumented and unprotected workers (Corwin 1978; Kirstein 1977; Kiser & Kiser 1979).

A steady and large flow of Mexicans to Chicago resulted from their importation by railroad, steel, and other industries, as part of the industry's strategies of labor control (Año Nuevo Kerr 1976; Taylor 1932). These industries systematically subjected Mexicans to labor segmentation (Año Nuevo Kerr 1976; Lane & Escobar 1987; Taylor 1932). Large imports of temporary Mexican workers to Chicago and the Midwest took place in the periods 1916-28 and 1942-64. Many remained or came back as undocumented workers. Their
Importation encouraged others to follow and became the basis for chain and circular migration ever since. Mexicans have been employed and laid off at convenience, imported, deported, and prevented from competing for better jobs. The nativist debate of the 1920s portrayed them as "perhaps the worst element that comes into the U.S.," "salty, peon and slave types," "undesirable people," and "intransigent manpower" (Reisler 1976:210-205); the bitter repression of the 1921 and 1929 depressions; and the 1954 "wetback" and later operations of massive deportation speak to this. They testify to the framing of Mexicans as a cultural and racial threat, the justification of their use for unskilled physical work, and the claim that they were not worthy of full participation in U.S. society (Reisler 1976). Scapegoating of Mexicans has continued through the years.

Most recently, they are being lured into Chicago by minimum-wage jobs in sweatshop manufacturing and services. Employers in need of unskilled workers depend largely on them. As a result of the terms of their migration, the types of workers recruited, the jobs open to them, and chains tying previous entrants to new entrants, their immigration has been highly selective of poor, unskilled, uneducated Mexicans. These factors have led them to industries and occupations similar to those of their ancestors. The conditions and selectivity of their immigration led to communities with very little Mexican leadership or professional cadres.

The immigration of a large group of Puerto Ricans to Chicago started with importation of contract labor for service, farm, and manufacturing work after World War II, with the cooperation of authorities at both ends. These recruits became the nuclei and the impetus for further recruitment and chain migration. Workers were imported by employers unable to secure U.S. labor under the conditions and at the wages needed (Maldonado 1987; Padilla 1947). Once in Chicago, they faced highly exploitative conditions — wages below those prevailing for similar work; transfers without notice; long hours; deduction of recruiter fees and transportation costs from their paychecks; poor housing and lodging (Martinez 1989; Padilla 1947). Even though Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens, the terms and conditions of their importation and employment have been close to those of Mexicans. They have been categorized and treated as blacks (Padilla 1987). Unlike European ethnics, the terms of their importation produced a largely single-class group without the cadres required for the development of healthy communities.

Today, after more than a century in the U.S., the white-Latino gap has not improved (Bean & Tienda 1987; Morales & Bonilla 1993). Though equal to whites in the eyes of the law, Latinos have been consistently unequal politically and socioeconomically (Hero 1992). As Barrera (1979) argues, their condition has been shaped through a combination of conquest, arranged immigration, and other forms of domination amounting to internal colonization. Studies of both groups in the U.S. describe their experience as one of political domination and economic exploitation (Acuña 1988; Garcia 1988; Jennings & Rivera 1984; Sánchez-Korrol 1983). In Chicago, the income and occupational gap between Latinos and whites has been increasing (Betancur, Córdova & Torres 1993).

Hence, Mexicans and Puerto Ricans came into the U.S. under conditions that were essentially different from those of Europeans on whom the ecology model is based. Most Europeans did not undergo this process of manipulation and domination, received a permanent migrant status from the beginning, and were extended the opportunities of earlier white immigrants. In contrast, Latinos were shaped into an internally dominated labor segment, second-class citizens, indeed, a minority group largely along the lines of blacks. This condition has been reproduced over the years.

The Formation of Segregated Latino Areas

In Chicago, Mexicans were initially housed in bunkhouses or railroad camps or directed to boarding houses by the companies (Taylor 1932). This housing was generally temporary — as their job assignments were meant to be. With increases in their numbers and extension of their stay, they sought housing near the plants. Meanwhile, used to exploiting ethnic feelings, landlords found a new source of profit — Mexican origin — among the newcomers.

The landmark research of Taylor, Abbott, Hughes, Constable, Jones, Britton, and Redfield is extremely valuable here. According to them, landlords rented to Mexicans vacant, unhealthy, run-down property in pockets of deterioration where Europeans would not live (Hughes 1925, 1937; Jones 1928; 1971; Redfield 1924-25; Taylor 1932). They ended up in back parts, rear houses, and cellars (Britton & Constable quoted by Taylor 1932). Restriction to the poorest areas "largely among Negroes" (224), produced clusters of artificial scarcity that allowed landlords to charge Mexicans — and blacks — higher rents than they charged any other groups.

Taylor (1932) reports that while peer pressures forced landlords to exclude Mexicans from European ethnic — particularly resident homeowner — areas, profit interests motivated them to rent to Mexicans. Some dispersal to the fringes resulted from this. Meanwhile, opposition to Mexicans had a strong racial basis. Explanations about this rejection ranged from behavioral and cultural traits to color and national origin. Real-estate businesses claimed that Mexicans had a negative impact on property values. This is a clear racist factor: as Mexicans move into an area, whites no longer want to live there. Property values depreciate as a result. However, the industry managed to make up for this:

Since the Mexicans have come by, the real estate values have declined to almost nothing. But the rental value of the buildings goes up $10 to $15 per flat; the Mexicans can only get in a very few places, and they have to pay what is asked (a realtor quoted by Redfield in Taylor 1932:222).

Ethnic restrictions succeeded in clustering Mexicans in their own spaces (Taylor 1932). Latino origin facilitated this. The first Latino clusters were located in South Chicago-South Deering (next to the steel mills), the Hull House area (near the railroads and other central sources of employment), and in Back of the Yards (close to meatpacking houses; see Figure 1).

Available evidence suggests that clustering and speculation have been a constant for Latinos up to today. Analysis of the period 1930-70 points to the persistence and firm rooting of the initial Mexican clusters and the economic
position of Latinos vis-a-vis other groups (Año Nuevo Kerr 1976:12). Some dispersal was forced by fear of recognition and deportation in the 1930s; yet "continued residential restriction led to immobility" (25). A 1935 study of poverty concluded that racial prejudice, segregation, labor segmentation, and cultural distinctiveness plagued the Mexican population in Chicago (Hughes 1937). As a result, through the 1930s, Mexicans "experienced greater economic difficulties than any other ethnic groups in the city, except Blacks" (Año Nuevo Kerr 1976:82).

Conditions did not improve in the 1940s. The 1948 Report of the Mexican Sub-Committee of the Metropolitan Welfare Council (Faz 1948) indicated that segregation and isolation in the three initial clusters, discrimination, and poverty prevented the advance of the group. Moreover, new immigrants continued to settle in or around the clusters (Año Nuevo Kerr 1976). Evidence also points to residential mixing among Mexicans of different sociocultural statuses, educational levels, and generations from the early 1920s to the 1970s (Año Nuevo Kerr 1976).

In the 1950s, highway construction displaced many from the eastern and northern borders of the Hull House area. In the 1960s, most of the area was cleared for a university campus, forcing residents to relocate. Displaced Mexicans joined a new cluster that had been forming out of the Hull House Mexican cluster, to the south. More deteriorated than the previous one, this area — Lower West Side or Pilsen — soon became the first majority Mexican and Latino community in Chicago and the basis for organization of the group. Latino population also increased steadily in the other clusters after the 1960s (Latino Research Institute 1983). Along with population increases came public neglect, vandalism, and disinvestment. Negligible levels of Latino homeownership, overcrowding, arson, neglect, and high rents have characterized these areas in the last decades (Chicago Fact Book Consortium 1984).

Puerto Ricans also settled in small clusters according to their place of employment and the original housing provided by recruiters. They were first placed in cheap hotels, old passenger coaches, public housing, and similar housing. They then pushed their way into single-room-occupancy units and boardinghouses, shared quarters, and other run-down or vacant rental properties nearby. The gave a new lease on life to substandard housing. Initial clusters were located on the Near North Side and in Lincoln Park, Uptown, and Woodlawn (Martínez 1989; Padilla 1947; see Figure 1). Other groups settled later on the Near West Side; in West and East Garfield Park; and in Logan Square and along Division Street on the Near Northwest Side (Padilla 1987; see Figure 1). They were allowed in these areas because of vacancies generated by disinvestment and suburbanization. Blacks were also entering East and West Garfield Park and Woodlawn in large numbers at the time.

Like Mexicans, Puerto Ricans moved into rental housing in the most highly disinvested sections of these areas. Their stay in most of them was short. Highway construction and urban renewal displaced them in succession from the Near West and Near North sides and Lincoln Park (Jiménez 1974; Padilla 1987). Outnumbered by blacks, they also had to leave Woodlawn and East and West Garfield Park (Padilla 1987). Puerto Ricans, then, consolidated along Division Street, in the West Town and Humboldt Park communities. Unable to secure
white tenants, landlords reluctantly rented to them. Their conditions allowed very few to purchase. Owners, then, turned many units into rooming houses, kitchenettes, and other, often illegal, conversions for rent. Landlords speculated with the level of need and rejection of Puerto Ricans by limiting their choices through clustering and overcrowding in small, substandard, and unhealthy places with practically no maintenance or housing code compliance (Padilla 1987).

Discriminated against and displaced from their initial clusters, Puerto Ricans saw their move into the Division Street area as an opportunity to form a community they could call home away from home (Padilla 1987), one, indeed, from which they could not be so easily displaced. This became, then, the residence for Puerto Ricans of different occupations and economic and social status, with various generations living together. As in the case of Mexicans, Puerto Ricans faced housing discrimination from the beginning (Padilla 1987). Not only were they limited to clusters but “were forced to pay higher rents in those buildings that were open to them” (117). They suffered repeatedly from arson when landlords tried to recover their investment from insurance companies. One-third of the local housing was destroyed by abandonment, demolition, and fires between 1970 and 1978 (Padilla 1987).

Today, gentrification is forcing them out, into less accessible areas of recent disinvestment and “white flight” to the west and north. Higher-income groups — whites mostly — have been incrementally replacing Latinos who can no longer afford the gentrifying neighborhood. Meanwhile, Latinos are moving into adjacent areas of disinvestment that had become less desirable from their closeness to Latino concentrations and to white flight.

In short, the experience of Puerto Ricans has been one of clustering, displacement, and reconsolidation. Also, Mexicans expanded out of their initial clusters or were displaced to reconsolidate nearby. Both were forced into this by the combined forces of real-estate speculation — illustrated here — and racism rather than as a result of upward mobility or integration. Mobility was largely horizontal. Forced and continuous moves also made many of them live in permanent transition. They have not displaced other ethnic groups. Latino-related speculation has been dictating the terms, rather than assimilation, choice, competition, and mobility. Latino solidarity has been maintained. Indeed, reinforced, by exclusion, segregation, and discrimination (Padilla 1987). In spite of some dispersal present since the beginning but largely restricted to the fringes of Latino concentrations (Taylor 1932 and our own research), movement out of these clusters has never had the massive character of European ethnic groups’ dispersal.

From Arranged Immigration to Housing Discrimination and Segregation

The previous analysis has linked labor segmentation and residential clustering to the condition of being Latino. The present section summarizes other activities of the real-estate industry exemplifying this and further establishing its relationship with Latino settlement patterns. In particular, it agrees with the claim that Latinos became a quasi-racial segment within a dual residential market system (Bradford 1991; Dennis & Pottinger 1988).

As early as 1933, in his ranking of groups by their impact on property values from positive to negative, Hoyt (1933) placed Mexicans last, behind blacks. The negative impact of these two groups on property values has always been assumed in real-estate theory and practice. This assumption has its roots in racist views that the presence of these groups makes an area undesirable or less desirable for whites. It, in fact, has resulted in the rating of Latino and black areas as highly risky and in the disinvestment associated with such an assessment (Bradford 1991). It has facilitated group-based neighborhood change in Chicago and elsewhere as speculators use these groups to destabilize and turn around white areas (Boyer 1973; Bradford & Rubinowitz 1975; Bradford, Rubinowitz & McGowan 1975; Feins 1976). Finally, it has produced numerous racist schemes including steering, redlining, protective covenants, and segregation.

Before the 1949 Supreme Court decision that made restrictive housing covenants illegal, even public documents stressed separation and protective covenants as a condition for stability in land values (US FHA 1938, 1947). Practices of the industry did not change much after this decision (Berry 1979; Bradford 1991) or after the Fair Housing Act of 1968 (Kushner 1992). This was reflected in FHA maps circling minority areas to indicate that they were excluded from lending (Kushner 1992). Redlining of minority areas of residence in Chicago has been widely documented by the Woodstock Institute and others (Squires, DeWolfe & DeWolfe 1975). Using the data of the Institute, Gilley (1987) established that the higher the proportion of Latinos and blacks in an area, the lower the number of conventional loans. Steering of minorities to selected areas has been demonstrated in Chicago particularly through Fair Housing Audits (Austin Turner 1992; Galet 1992; Urban Institute 1991). Other mechanisms perpetuating housing discrimination and segregation have been identified in audits and other research in Chicago and elsewhere. They include withdrawal of conventional loans from Latino and black areas paired with the increase and abuse of FHA/VA-insured loans (Boyer 1973; Bradford, Rubinowitz & McGowan 1975; Feins 1976; Peterman & Sarasli 1991); speculative schemes associated with racial change (Boyer 1973; Bradford & Rubinowitz 1975); unequal outcomes in the search for housing compared to whites with the same incomes (Galet 1992); unequal treatment in housing transactions (Austin Turner 1992); failure to serve minorities adequately (Wenz 1992); discrimination in terms and conditions for rental housing, sales and marketing of property, and financial assistance for home buyers (Austin Turner 1992); minority purchases with cash or on contract (Bradford 1991); poor law enforcement (Dedman 1988; Kushner 1992); and discrimination in housing availability (Downs 1992).

Wachtler and Megbolugbe (1992) relate discrimination against Latinos and blacks in housing to discrimination in labor markets via income. Similarly, Alba and Logan (1993) have established that even in the suburbs blacks and Latinos, in that order, exhibit a great deal of separation from whites. They also concluded that whites with distinguishing characteristics are much more likely to live together than with blacks or Latinos with similar nonwhite characteristics. Studies of segregation have repeatedly demonstrated that blacks and Latinos
have the highest rates of segregation (Massey & Denton 1987). While less segregated than blacks (White 1987), Latinos have consistently undergone extreme segregation in Chicago (Ofiield & Gaebler 1991).

Two other factors suggest that the above trends will carry into the future: the first is a behavior-and-expectations mechanism and the second is the increasing saliency of discriminatory practices. A long history of discrimination and segregation has produced expectations and beliefs that keep groups in their place. Fears are internalized and turned into behavior that perpetuates the status quo. Practices become tenant "constraints" in the settlement of groups. Second, discrimination and segregation take place today under an appearance of neutrality that the industry has been perfecting over the years. Control of listings, targeted marketing, claims of affordability, minimum loan amounts, higher closing points for smaller loans or risky areas, restrictions on financing of older houses or homes in racially mixed areas, informal covenants, poor enforcement of regulations, restrictions on children, claims that an apartment was just rented or that a house is under contract are good examples of practices often used to disguise discrimination (Austin Turner 1992; Berry 1975; Bradfield 1991; Luttell 1970).

In short, the condition of Latinos has been exploited and perpetuated by the real-estate industry in Chicago and elsewhere. It has been used to destabilize white areas or produce so-called white flight, to extract exorbitant profits from residential change, to create artificial pockets of scarcity by limiting the areas and types of housing available to Latinos, to devalorize areas and to maintain segregation (Squires et al. 1987; Suttles 1972). These factors, in turn, lead to segregation in areas of disinvestment and white flight, and clustering and re-clustering in areas of investment. Public and private efforts to develop clusters of investment in the residential market.

Recent Settlement Trends and Housing Conditions of Latinos in Chicago

This section completes the story of Latino concentration and segregation in Chicago with the introduction of relevant statistics and other current evidence. It also argues that initial, supposedly temporary situations have become permanent for Latinos in the city. Similarly, it shows that, overall, their housing situation is very similar to that of blacks in the city. This analysis draws on statistics from the U.S. Census of Population and information from other studies. It profits from the author's knowledge of Latino areas in Chicago, from formal and informal field observations over the last fifteen years, and from multiple conversations with persons in the real-estate industry, Latinos, and others.

With the exception of South Chicago, the traditional areas of Mexican and Puerto Rican concentration have increased their Latino population in recent decades (see Table 1). Additional Latino settlement has taken place in the original clusters or has spilled over into their surrounding areas (Figure 2). Latino population increases have often been accompanied by increases of blacks; these, in turn, have led to decreases of Latinos next. The process of disinvestment and white flight slowly opened the West Town, Humboldt Park, and...
Logan Square areas to blacks.\textsuperscript{23} With the exception of the Hull House area, Latino concentrations, thus, expand today out of the original cores established in the 1910s and 1920s by Mexicans and in the 1960s and 1970s by Puerto Ricans (Figure 2 and Table 1). In Pilsen, Mexicans moved southwest into South Lawndale\textsuperscript{24} to reach 83% of the area in 1990. They expanded further into the adjacent suburbs of Cicero and Berwyn to the south and west. Latinos have been moving east of South Chicago into the East Side\textsuperscript{25} and into the suburbs. Blacks have followed Latinos into the East Side. While no blacks were registered on the East Side by the 1990 census, an increasing number of them has been entering since.

Similarly, Latinos expanded southwest from Back of the Yards into neighboring areas such as Brighton Park, McKinley Park, Bridgeport (with 0% blacks), and Gage Park\textsuperscript{26} (1% black in 1980 and 5% in 1990). Not only are Latinos increasing their share in these white areas, but they are forming a buffer zone between whites to the west and blacks to the east. The Division Street core in the near northwest has also been expanding into adjacent areas to the west and to the north including Hermosa, Avondale, Albany Park, North Center, Lincoln Square, Belmont-Cragin, and Irving Park.\textsuperscript{27} Expansion has reached into nearby older suburbs such as Addison and Melrose Park. These communities had no or less than 3% blacks in 1990. West Town, Hermosa, and Belmont-Cragin separate the black West Side from white and mixed — while, Latino, and Asian — areas to the north and west. Gentrification in Uptown, Lakeview, and West Town has also pushed many Latinos into these areas.

Other Latinos have been entering Mexican and Puerto Rican areas since the late 1950s. These two groups also lived with each other in South Chicago (with the recruitment of Puerto Ricans for work in the steel mills after World War II) and in West Town (where Mexicans started moving in such numbers since the 1960s that, by 1990, they had surpassed Puerto Ricans). Even though areas such as the near southwest and sections of the near northwest are identified as Mexican and Puerto Rican respectively, Latino neighborhoods are becoming increasingly mixed, sharing experiences and problems with nationals from other Latin American countries.

As mentioned before, some areas have been losing Latinos to gentrification\textsuperscript{28} since the 1970s, but particularly in the 1980s and 1990s. Such is the case of the east end of Pilsen, which has gained whites while losing Latinos. Latino clusters are near extinction in gentrified Lakeview — adjacent to Lincoln Park — particularly in the middle of the community. In West Town, gentrification has been advancing steadily in Wicker Park, Bucktown, and the southeast sections with substantial reductions of Latinos. Similar displacements have been taking place in Logan Square and Uptown.

Currently, 83% of Latinos are concentrated in three main contiguous areas, namely the near to mid northwest, the near to mid southwest, and the far southeast (see Figure 2). The northwest area includes 11 communities with populations that are 20% or more Latino — Latinos are 20% of the population of Chicago — which comprise 45.1% of the city's Latino population. The southwest area includes 8 communities and comprises 33.3% of the Latinos in Chicago. And the far southeast includes 3 communities with 5% of the city's Latinos. Added to these is an area in the far north end, Rogers Park, with 2.2%,
for a total of 85% of Latinos concentrated in 23 communities out of the 77 communities that comprise the city (Table 1).

The areas of concentration of Latinos and, more specifically, the subareas of Latino clustering are among the most deteriorated and oldest in Chicago. Out of 41,667 housing units lost by the city to deterioration between 1980 and 1993, 45% are located in the 23 communities of highest Latino concentration, particularly in their Latino and black subsections (Puente & Vásquez 1989). Considered parts of entry or lower-income communities, all of them have lower mean household incomes than the city and all but three have per capita incomes below those of Chicago. In each of them, Latinos have lower per capita incomes and more persons per room than the total population.

Latinos are not integrated with other groups in these areas. They tend to live in subclusters within census tracts, particularly in rental sections. They are less segregated than blacks in the sense that they live interspersed with other groups, particularly in areas in transition. Yet their clustering in specific blocks, buildings, or subelements of communities is visible to anyone. This is reflected in Figure 3, which shows a core of high concentration in or near their original clusters surrounded by contiguous census tracts with less concentration.

Ten percent more non-Latino households live in owner-occupied units in these areas than Latino households (Table 2). In other words, not only do Latinos live in the worst housing, but in rental housing. Notice that these are low-income areas. Hence, Latinos continue having the worst conditions even in the low-income areas in which they are concentrated in Chicago. This may also reflect the transitional nature of many such areas.

An examination by census tract shows that in 1990 Latinos paid more rent than non-Latinos in 360 of the 764 census tracts in the city. The average difference was $69 or 26% more than the rest. In contrast, they paid less rent in 404 tracts. The difference here was lower, at an average of $43 or 15%, suggesting that those who paid less were closer to the average than those who paid more. Nearly half of the tracts (49.4%) in which Latinos paid more rent were located in areas with 50% or more Latinos compared to 34% of those in which they paid less. Higher rents in areas of clustering may be associated with local scarcity resulting from concentration or from adjustments to Latino-related losses in housing prices. Lower rents in areas of lesser Latino presence may be related to the lower condition of housing rented to Latinos. As suggested by a study of the Chicago Reporter ("Hispanics and Asians" 1990), Latino and Asian areas are also the hardest hit in the city by rent increases.

A few citywide indicators help complete this picture. The percentage of owner-occupied housing units in 1993 was 31.4 for Latinos, compared to 33.8 for blacks and 48.8% for whites. A total of 90% of Latinos, 65% of blacks, and 61% of all households lived in housing built before 1939 (Puente & Vásquez 1989). Eighteen percent of Latinos lived in overcrowded housing in 1993 compared to only 10% of blacks and 7% of the total population (Puente & Vásquez 1989). While 58% of Latino households moved between 1980 and 1993, the figure for both blacks and all households was only 38%. A remarkable 71% of Latino renters moved in the period, compared to 50% of blacks and 55% of all renters (Puente & Vásquez 1989). More than 42% of Latino renters qualified for public housing in 1993 — compared to 53% of blacks and 23% of all renters. Only 1.7%
of all public housing units were occupied by Latinos, 85.9% by blacks, and 11.9% by whites (Puente & Vázquez 1999). In that same year, only 2% of Latino renters lived in subsidized housing in the city compared to 20% of all blacks and 10% of all renters. In the 10 communities with the highest Latino percentages in 1980 and 60% of the Latino population of the city, only two out of ten households were occupied by Latino homeowners (Puente & Vázquez 1989).

Hence, Latinos were concentrated in the oldest areas and housing stock in the city, had the lowest homeownership rates, the highest concentration in midsize, multifamily rental buildings, the lowest value homes, and the highest levels of overcrowding and residential mobility among all groups. They also paid a higher share of their income in rents and mortgages than whites.

This analysis and these findings are from within the city limits of Chicago, and we need also to examine the details from the suburbs. From an aggregate analysis, Massey and Denton (1988) argue that the levels of segregation in the suburbs are lower for all groups; while the segregation of blacks is still high, that of Latinos and Asians ranges from low to moderate. Examining this situation in detail for the suburbs of Chicago is beyond the scope of this article. Our preliminary assessment, however, suggests the possibility that many of the situations described for Chicago hold there as well.

First, large suburban Latino concentrations are often expansions of clusters established around World Wars I and II. Their process of formation is similar to the one described for Chicago. In fact, they resulted from the direct importation of workers by railroad and manufacturing employers (Afo Nuevo Kerr 1976). Second, Latinos have taken place particularly in old suburbs of white flight, disinvestment, and deindustrialization. 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 (Latino Institute 1993). Third, Latino concentrations may not be easily captured by analyses at the census-track level because they are often located in smaller enclaves around multifamily rental housing or because their suburban growth is too recent to show definite patterns. Many of their enclaves have become important reserves of low-wage labor for the suburban economy. Preliminary research in the suburbs of the northwest points to the clustering of Latinos there (Tobin & Roy 1992). Our own analysis shows, in nine of the ten suburbs with the largest Latino populations, concentrations in a few census tracts far above the overall Latino percentage. In eight of them (Addison, Aurora, Blue Island, Chicago Heights, Cicero, Joliet, Melrose Park, and Waukegan), with Latino populations ranging from 13% to 37%, between 30% and 74% of Latinos are concentrated in three, mostly contiguous, census tracts. Then, in the suburb of West Chicago, 30% Latino, 61% of the Latino population is clustered in one single tract.

Fourth, some of the most dramatic growth has taken place in suburbs immediately contiguous to the city. In fact, they continue the expansion of current Latino concentrations in Chicago. Fifth, incidents of discrimination seem to be growing with increases in the population and concentration of Latinos. The cases of Cicero, Hodgkins, Waukegan, and Addison where Latino groups are challenging efforts by these municipalities to displace them through renewal and code enforcement in their areas of residence illustrate this. A study by the Chicago Reporter ("Suburban Housing" 1995) of six suburbs where the Latino population doubled in the 1980s concluded that Latinos were getting a disproportionate share of code enforcement efforts in these suburbs. Sixth, many suburbs with significant Latino populations have large and growing black concentrations, often bordering Latino clusters. Seventh, the trend in some suburbs is toward a Latino majority in the near future. In short, this evidence calls for analyses of the suburbs at a disaggregated and qualitative level to identify elements of segregation and discrimination that cannot be captured by the indexes and other aggregate analyses used in support of the ecological model.

Conclusion

This analysis has identified many elements of discrimination in the Latino residential experience in Chicago. It suggested the existence of a "Latino rent" and a high level of manipulation of their settlement process. It illustrated the extreme vulnerability and instability of Latino communities associated with their status in the U.S. and the resulting "racialization" of their settlement. It argued that Latino status is a source of segregation and speculation in the city’s housing market. As Latino settlement intensifies or expands, adjacent white areas become less desirable and are progressively disinvested and thus opened up to Latinos. Once Latinos enter them in large numbers, they are also opened to blacks and the process of transition and disinvestment intensifies. Along the way, Latinos often become a buffer between blacks and whites. They provide owners with the opportunity to recover their investment, in fact, to engage in
discriminatory speculation based on the Latino condition. From this perspective, it could be argued that Latinos end up facilitating, if not financing, white flight. On these bases, the article questions Massey’s claim that Latinos are “ethnic” properly represented by the ecological model.

Our research also suggests that clustering has been strongly associated with Latino status in Chicago. While choice and common characteristics are important factors, exclusion associated with a Latino status has intensified and perpetuated it. Similarly, the article suggests that dispersal is not followed by assimilation as in the ecological model but by reorientation. It is the result of displacement, disinvestment, overcrowding, and the instability associated with low ownership, immigration status, and third migration, and unstable unemployment related to Latino status. Residential mobility, then, is largely horizontal. Higher-income Latinos often move to the fringes of Latino areas while maintaining a close association with their clusters of origin. Like blacks, others may be able to move into white areas individually. As their numbers increase, however, their presence is increasingly resented and may set up the process of white flight.

This article linked the condition of Latinos to the terms of their immigration and the domination associated with their origin and minority status. While generally, European ethnocentrism has high levels of mobility within and between industries and occupations leading to socioeconomic mobility, Latinos were segmented into marginal, unskilled jobs that froze them at the bottom. In the model, residential and socioeconomic mobility are closely related. In contrast, suburbanization and “citizenization” have denied Latinos substantial economic assimilation and have subjected them to multiple forms of segregation unaccounted for in the ecological model.

Our research points to the importance of qualitative analysis for identification of explanations and elements that statistical tests often miss. It, in fact, suggests interpretations of Latino settlement different from those of the ecological model. While the levels of Latino segregation are lower than those of blacks (Massey & Denton 1987, 1993), this may be the result of the higher mobility and instability discussed rather than of the integration and mobility implied by the model. “Integration” may be a phenomenon of an area’s transition. The high resilience of original Latino clusters may be related to anti-Latino prejudice and exclusion. Displacement into adjacent white areas is often the beginning of the turnover process. Higher-income Latinos may be the ones moving first, as they have the choice of homeownership and provide whites with the opportunity to exit areas adjacent to Latino clusters. As this movement to the fringes intensifies, more whites leave and rent to Latinos. In fact, a high correlation between socioeconomic status and mobility away from Latino cores may result from the pioneer role of higher-income Latinos (Aguirre, Schwirian & La Greca 1980; Jackson 1981; Massey 1979; Valdez & Jones 1985).

Thus, the settlement of Latinos in Chicago differs in significant ways from the pattern and assumptions of the ecology model. Unlike Europeans, Latinos bear a permanent minority condition that has translated into exclusion, economic immobility, and marginalization. This is reflected in a settlement process deeply colored by discrimination. U.S. society has extended racism to Latinos; their settlement reflects this. Moreover, ongoing national economic restructuring pointing to a shrinking of middle classes and opportunities, to a highly polarized labor market, and to the intensification of the disadvantages of minorities (Harrison & Bluestone 1988) casts further doubt on the future applicability of the ecological model to Latinos.

Meanwhile, the dynamics of racism have separated Latinos from other minorities. Once excluded, Latinos and blacks have turned their segregated communities into a basis for struggle, often to the exclusion of each other. As a result, the pattern of separation is intensified. As disinvestment destroys black areas, blacks start pushing outside their borders and entering areas frequently opened first to Latinos. It is not as much a matter of choice and succession as a matter of segregation and market manipulation. We should not equate these dynamics to “ethnic” succession and upward mobility.

The continuous influx of Latino may feed into their areas of first settlement and reinforce their concentration. This factor needs to be examined in detail. Evidence suggests that in nearly a century of Latino immigration to Chicago, patterns of segregation and dispersion have been continuous. Residential assimilation has never been close to the levels of European immigrants. Tension and real-estate speculation related to Latino status may be fed by new entrants. Low levels of tension associated with recent or continued European influx, though, points to prejudice in the case of Latinos. This prejudice, indeed, extends to middle-class and U.S.-born Latinos and is reflected in the reaction to increases in the proportion of Latinos in white areas. Suburbanization of Latinos may conceally fill the model. Limited evidence available for the Chicago suburbs, however, suggests that the suburbs are experiencing the same general trends of clustering, segregation, and dispersion as the central city. Detailed testing of these claims is necessary to gain a complete understanding of the settlement experience of Latinos in Chicago. Finally, other models must be developed or further examined for alternative explanations of the Latino experience.

Notes

1. Discrimination against Latinos has ranged from subtle forms of exclusion to more open ones of labor segmentation (Meléndez 1986; Pedroza & Rodriguez & Figueroa 1991) and immigration status (Krisen 1977; Kiser & Kiser 1979). While some of them have been documented, most others have not. In fact, research on Latinos in the U.S. has far behind that of blacks and European immigrants.

2. Little attention has been paid to the relationship between U.S. domination of Latin America, the terms of migration, and the conditions of Latinos in the U.S. Latin Americans are aware of the use of migration as a tool in the domination of the region. Analysis of the Latino experience in the U.S. know about the coalition of the U.S. government and employers for importation of Latinos on terms leading to their labor segmentation and overexploitation. The combination of their actions has produced a highly vulnerable Latino population with conditions, status, and treatment similar to those of American Indians and blacks.

3. We focus on Puerto Ricans and Mexicans because they are 65 and 23% respectively of the Latino population in Chicago. We are aware, however, that the individual cases of other Latino subgroups need to be examined in detail, as their experiences may differ from the experience identified here.

4. These were nonunion, labor-intensive industries relying heavily on immigrant labor. Latinos not only were assigned unskilled jobs but had minimal mobility through the ranks (Rosales &
Settlement Experience of Latinos in Chicago / 1319

Medicano stabilized and started reversing the decline. Today, it is among the oldest and most overcrowded areas of the city. Slightly over half of its units are overcrowded, compared to 22.4% for Chicago as a whole. Three-fifths of the residents are elderly. Even though Latinos were nearly four-fifths of residents in 1960, they owned under half the owner-occupied units.

15. As blacks gained control, they "marked these communities off" as their "exclusive domain" (Parsons 1967:255). Puerto Ricans felt that "Blacks would never voluntarily yield any of the benefits of community living with Blacks resulting in the movement of Puerto Ricans from these areas" (S6).

16. Again, Puerto Ricans had lived on the Near North Side, close to downtown. With urban renewal, they were pushed west into the adjacent communities of West Town, Humboldt Park, and Logan Square. As the South Side and East Side areas they originally lived in became black, in the 1970s they joined the cluster on the Northwest Side in large numbers to form their own neighborhood.

17. Promoters of gentrification in Wicker Park, a subsection of West Town, explain that they acted to save the architectural and historical value of the area from the deterioration associated with Puerto Rican residents.

18. Our fieldwork indicates that former homeowners were able to buy in adjacent areas because of the "high prices" obtained from their properties. Often, however, they purchased smaller houses. Whites had to double or triple up with relatives to buy. Tenants reported moving many times near their original quarters, often having to double up because of the higher rental price of the new units. The result of this has been increased overcrowding in subsections of adjacent areas.

19. As Latinos move in, the value of housing decreases along with the desirability of the area. Disinvestment intensifies or follows, further deteriorating the area. Devalorization may then create a negative social pecking order between the rent currently realized and the one that could be realized through reinvestment (Smith 1979).

20. In Pilsen, Latinos went from 55% of the residents in 1970 to 88% in 1990. In Back of the Yards from 13% to 39%; in South Chicago from 26.1% to 33%; in West Town from 39.1% to 62%; in Logan Square from 17.8% to 66%; and in Humboldt Park from 19.5% to 43%.

21. In Back of the Yards, blacks surpassed Latinos in the period 1980-90, growing from 22 to 41%. In South Deering, they went from 54% to 59% (Latino increased by a mere 1% during this period). Blacks in Back of the Yards went from 23.9% in 1970 to 41% in 1980, and in 1990, surpassing the declining Latino population. South Chicago lost 5,576, or 12.8% of its population in the same period.

22. Blacks, in fact, went from 35% to 49% in Humboldt Park between 1980 and 1990 to equal the Latino population in 1990. They remained stable at 5% in West Town and went from 3% to 5% in Logan Square. This expansion is related to the increasing deterioration of black communities to the south -- the West Side of Chicago.

23. South Lawndale has one of the oldest housing stock in Chicago. Having achieved majority in Pilsen, Latinos moved southwest into South Lawndale to become 31.8% in 1970, 74% in 1990, and 85% in 1990. South Lawndale is also predominantly a rental community with only 34% of its units owner occupied, over half of them (57%) owned by Latinos in 1980. Pilsen and South Lawndale have among the lowest vacancy rates and the highest rates of overcrowding in the city.

24. Traditionally, a stable white working-class area, in which "homes are handed down from generation to generation" (Chicago Sun-Times 1984:128), the East Side has become increasingly Latino (from 13% in 1980 to 69% in 1990).

25. Latinos are highly concentrated in subsections of these areas, forming a continuum with other Latino areas or with subsections of adjacent clusters. Typical resident-owner areas, Brighton Park, McKinley Park, Bridgeport, and Gage Park have been increasing their rental housing as whites move out. Traditionally closed to nonwhites and the scenario of many racial conflicts, the last two areas have opened up as the combined result of white decline, disinvestment in the city and the growth of the Latino population.

26. However, Avondale, Albany, North Center, Lincoln Square, Belmont-Cragin, and Irving Park are all adjacent, traditionally white communities. As Updown, the east and Logan Square and Humboldt Park to the south increased their Latino and black populations, whites started leaving and opening the door to others. With the exception of Belmont-Cragin, all those
areas are largely rental. Albany and North Center have an extensive stock of multifamily buildings. The others have a mix with a predominance of small two- to four-unit buildings. Latinos are concentrated in rental units, usually in the most deteriorated sections. 

Settlement Experience of Latinos in Chicago / 1321


Hoyt, Homer. 1933. *One Hundred Years of Land Values in Chicago*. University of Chicago Press.


Settlement Experience of Latinos in Chicago / 1323


