

Latino neighborhoods and Latino neighborhood poverty.

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In this article, I use 1980 and 1990 US census tracts that were 50% or more Latino to present a socioeconomic portrait of Latino neighborhoods and to investigate the determinants of poverty and the factors behind the poverty increase of Latinos in these neighborhoods. Results show that Latinos in Latino tracts rank worse than US Latinos on virtually all socioeconomic measures. Recent immigrants raise Latino neighborhood poverty, while long-term immigrants reduce it. The 1979 to 1989 increase in poverty in Latino neighborhoods can be explained better by changes in the payoffs of the characteristics that affect poverty than by changes in the value of these characteristics. Changes in the industrial composition of employment had a relatively large poverty-increasing effect.

Data from the 1980 and 1990 Population Censuses were used to develop a socioeconomic profile of Latino neighborhoods and to examine the causes of poverty in these neighborhoods. The findings revealed that Latino residents of Latino neighborhoods ranked lower in nearly all measures of economic distress than Latinos in non-Latino communities. The worsening poverty rate in Latino neighborhoods between 1979 and 1989 was attributed to changes in the payoffs of the factors that affect poverty.

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In this article, I present a socioeconomic portrait of Latino neighborhoods and investigate the determinants of poverty in Latino neighborhoods and the factors behind the increase in poverty between 1979 and 1989. I use census tracts that were 50% or more Latino as a proxy for Latino neighborhoods.

There is a growing interest in neighborhoods as relevant units for poverty analysis. Research has shown that living in a poor neighborhood reduces educational attainment and employment, increases teenage childbearing, and impedes successful child development (Brooks-Gunn et al., 1993; Corcoran et al., 1992; Crane, 1991; Mayer, 1991). Wilson (1987) articulated how neighborhood poverty results in an exodus of resources that only exacerbates poor economic performance. The underclass framework, of primary importance in the poverty literature of the 1980s, focuses on neighborhoods as the foundation for poverty production and reproduction.

The main reason for analyzing poverty from a neighborhood perspective is that a neighborhood is a spatial organizer of social and economic opportunity. Neighborhoods organize opportunity mainly through the externalities that cohesion and interactions of residents and shared facilities produce (Tienda, 1991). Due to neighborhood externalities, the behavior of the individual and the neighbor are not independent of each other even when daily transactions of individuals may not reveal this interaction (White, 1987). Externalities surpass individual relationships and have no analog at the individual level. Because of data limitations and the fact that people make choices about where to live, neighborhood effects on individuals are difficult to identify and interpret (Tienda, 1991). Individual level analysis of poverty is polluted by these externalities or neighborhood effects (Jencks & Mayer, 1990; Tienda, 1991).

Most studies of poor neighborhoods and urban poverty have analyzed African-Americans (Anderson, 1990; Jargowsky, 1994; Massey & Gross, 1993; Rosenbaum & Popkin, 1991; Wilson, 1987). Latinos are not only a growing component of the US population, but a growing component of the urban poor population as well. Like African-Americans, Latinos living in poverty face high levels of ethnic and economic segregation (Massey & Denton, 1987). Yet we know relatively little about Latino neighborhoods and about Latino poverty from a neighborhood perspective. Some information about Latino neighborhoods has surfaced from ethnographic studies of selected areas (Moore, 1989; Moore & Pinderhughes, 1993; Morales, 1986; Rivera, 1984), but a national portrayal of Latino neighborhoods and an understanding of the forces driving Latino poverty at the neighborhood level are lacking.

In the analysis carried out in this article, I stress the neighborhood-level interpretation of Latino poverty. The neighborhood is particularly relevant for Latinos. The neighborhood, or *el barrio*, is commonly thought of as pivotal in the process of economic achievement of Latinos. Latino neighborhoods contain institutions that are crucial for the economic and social mobility of Latinos and that advance cohesiveness across families of different arrival and immigrant generations.

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I classify explanations for Latino neighborhood poverty in five groups: demographics, economic structure, skills, self-reliance, and neighborhood wealth. Many of the relationships investigated in this article have not been examined before in the literature, and their definite effect on Latino poverty needs confirmation from future research. Among the demographic variables, immigration is of interest. Researchers of Latino poverty argue that the exodus of human capital that produces deterioration and poverty concentration in African-American neighborhoods, as that proposed by Wilson (1987), is absent in Latino neighborhoods because the vigor of new immigrants substitutes for the population that leaves (Melendez, 1992; Moore, 1989) and because immigrants form strong neighborhood institutions. Others, however, have suggested that the increase in poverty among Latinos is due to immigration because immigrants have higher poverty rates than natives (Acs & Danziger, 1993). In this article, I try to ascertain the relationship between poverty and immigration at the neighborhood level.

Among the variables affecting poverty and related to economic structure, industrial restructuring is of special interest. Research on Latinos has produced mixed results about the effect of metropolitan-level economic structure on Latino economic status (Eggers & Massey, 1991; Galster & Mincy, 1993; Santiago & Wilder, 1991). The neighborhood-level analysis might be better able to capture neighborhood structural forces that affect poverty.

The poverty of Latinos also could be related to their low skill levels because a high proportion of Latinos do not have a high school diploma. However, despite their low educational level, Latinos are very attached to the labor market, have built vibrant neighborhoods, and are praised by employers for their positive work attitudes (Kirshchenman & Neckerman, 1991). Neighborhood-based job networks and economic enclaves are important sources of employment for low-skilled Latinos, reducing the impact of low levels of skills.

I pursue two objectives in this article. The first is to present a portrayal of Latino neighborhoods based on census tracts that are 50% or more Latino. This is done by describing Latinos' socioeconomic status in indicators related to poverty and the 1979-1989 changes in poverty rates and poverty concentration. The second objective is to investigate both the determinants of poverty in these Latino neighborhoods and the factors behind the poverty increase using a model that combines five different explanations of poverty: demographics, skills, economic structure, neighborhood wealth, and self-reliance.

DATA

The data used in this article come from the Urban Institute's Underclass Data Base (Tobin, 1993). The Underclass Data Base contains more than 1,000 tract-level variables from the 1970, 1980, and 1990 Population Censuses. In this article, I use 1980 and 1990 data and exclude tracts that were 50% or more college students, armed forces, institutional, or elderly population.

Not all tract-level data are reported for Latinos, and only population counts are reported for major Latino subgroups. For instance, in the public use tract-level data, there is no information on the self-employment rate of Latinos, the percentage of Latino families without a car, the Latino foreign-born population, or the Latino foreign-born poverty rates. However, there is information on total foreign-born, total self-employment, the percentage of Latinos with less than a high school diploma, the percentage of Latino families headed by women, and Latino labor force status. Data are also limited in terms of information for Latino subgroups. Only population counts for Latino subgroups are available. For this reason, as well as because of the small number of Puerto Rican, Cuban and Other Latino tracts (those tracts in which non-Mexican, non-Puerto Rican, and non-Cuban Latinos comprise 50% or more of the tract population), group-specific analysis is not performed.

In this study, a census tract is considered Latino if the majority of the population is Latino, that is, if 50% or more of the population is of Hispanic origin. In Latino subgroup neighborhoods, the particular subgroup must also be at least 50% of the tract population. "Mixed Latino" neighborhoods are defined as Latino neighborhoods where no single Latino subgroup (Mexicans, Cubans, Puerto Ricans, and Other Latinos) accounts for 50% of the population.

The choice of a cutoff is inherently arbitrary. However, the 50% cutoff is also supported by data. In 1990, 39% of all Latinos in the US and 46% of all poor Latinos lived in neighborhoods where at least 50% of the population was Latino. The largest share of Latinos, 48%, lived in tracts where less than 36% of the population was of Latino ethnicity. In 1990, there were 381 tracts where 44% to 49% of the population was of Latino ethnicity. However, these tracts account only for

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5% of the overall Latino population. That is, the Latino population cutoff would have to be dropped significantly to achieve a substantial increase in the percentage of the Latino population covered in this analysis. The Latino poverty rate in tracts where Latinos are less than 50% was 17.4% in 1989 and 33% in tracts that were majority Latino.

The data analyzed in this article contain 1,981 tracts that were Latino in 1990. Of these, 1,065 were Mexican, 123 Puerto Rican, 58 Cuban, 31 Central/South American, and 704 Mixed Latino. On average, 70% of the population in these tracts was Latino. In 1980, there were 1,400 Latino tracts.

The degree to which Latinos live in neighborhoods dominated by their own compatriots varies by Latino subgroup. A third of all Cuban-Americans lived in a Cuban-American neighborhood, and 30% of all Mexican-Americans lived in a Mexican-American neighborhood in 1990. In contrast, only 9% of all Puerto Ricans in the US lived in Puerto Rican neighborhoods. However, 52% of Cuban-Americans, 39% of Mexican-Americans, and 28% of Puerto Ricans lived in a neighborhood that was 50% or more Latino.

By restricting the analysis to Latino tracts, a significant portion of the Latino population is excluded. The relationships between poverty and poverty correlates identified in the following analysis may not hold for the overall Latino population. This will be especially true if there is a strong process of self-selection in who lives in neighborhoods that are 50% or more Latino. The interest in this article is how these relationships reveal themselves in Latino neighborhoods. Inferences beyond that unit of analysis, although useful, should be done with caution. Analysis of Latino neighborhoods involves deciding what a Latino neighborhood is and most often this involves a cutoff with respect to the population that is Latino. The richness of neighborhood units for the analysis of Latino poverty and the need to characterize Latino neighborhoods overcome some of the limitations of the analysis.

A MODEL OF LATINO NEIGHBORHOOD POVERTY

Research on determinants of Latino poverty, as well as overall poverty research, has emphasized the role of structural changes and skill factors (Eggers & Massey, 1991; Galster & Mincy, 1993; Santiago & Wilder, 1991). However, the dichotomous typology of skills versus structure is too limited to encompass recent discussions on poverty in general and the economic experience of Latinos in the US in particular. Next to skills and economic structure, much of the recent discussion on poverty flows around the role of the increased proportion of female-headed households in poverty and the circumstances that lead to their impoverishment (Bane, 1986; Smith, 1988). Others see poverty as the failure of individuals to activate their own resources to push themselves out of poverty (Mead, 1992). The spatial dimensions of neighborhoods, such as dilapidated housing, vacant units, and distance from jobs (Ihlandfeldt & Sgoquist, 1990; Jargowsky & Bane, 1991) trigger an exodus of resources from the neighborhood that results in rising poverty levels.

These likely complementary poverty explanations are often addressed independently of each other, rather than placing them together in a model of poverty. Most of the work on urban poverty has focused on African-Americans, and hypotheses about the effects of restructuring, family structure, neighborhood characteristics, mismatch, and self-sufficiency have dealt with this population. Although there is some focus on industrial restructuring and skills among Latinos (Eggers & Massey, 1991; Santiago & Wilder, 1991), much less work has been done on other factors that could explain Latino poverty. In addition, there is very little empirical research assessing the quantitative impact of these variables at the neighborhood level.

Latino poverty can be understood better as the result of five forces combining the different explanations of poverty proposed in the research: skills, demographics, self-reliance, economic structure, and neighborhood wealth. Following is a discussion of how each one of the set of variables mentioned above relates to neighborhood poverty considering individual-level and neighborhood-level effects.

Demographics

A demographic factor of utmost importance for Latinos is immigration. Immigration is defined as entry to the US by individuals whose original citizenship is that of another country. Accordingly, all individuals born in the US, born in its territories (including Puerto Rico), or born abroad of American parents are considered US natives; all others are foreign-born, or immigrants. In 1990, 36% of all Latinos in the US were born outside the country, and 10% arrived in the US between 1985 and 1990 (Enchautegui, 1995). The immigration effect on poverty collects human capital effects and

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neighborhood effects, but these may work in opposite directions and may vary according to length of residence in the US. Immigrants have less US-specific human capital than otherwise comparable natives, but there are differences according to length of residence in the US. Upon entry, immigrants' earnings are below those of comparable natives, but with time in the US the earnings of immigrants catch up and eventually outpace the earnings of natives (Chiswick, 1978). Therefore, from a human capital perspective, I expect the neighborhood poverty rate to increase with the proportion of recent immigrants in the tract population. The effect of long-term immigrants on poverty is ambiguous because it depends on the rate at which their earnings mirror the earnings of natives.

Immigration also produces neighborhood-level effects that may reduce poverty and, as with human capital, the neighborhood effect of immigration may vary by length of residence in the US. Immigrants have higher self-employment rates than natives, and their self-employment rate increases with time spent in the US (Borjas, 1986). Immigrants also tend to form ethnic enclaves that are significant sources of employment for ethnic fellows (Portes & Bach, 1985; Portes & Rumbaut, 1990). The ethnic networks of immigrants are also sources of employment outside the enclave. Long-term immigrants are crucial in the economic mobility of Latino neighborhoods because they are more likely to be self-employed and, by virtue of being settled, they provide employment and housing to the newcomers. In addition, the continuous influx of immigrants may help in maintaining a housing demand and in preventing the neighborhood housing stock from deteriorating (Moore & Pinderhughes, 1993). All of these forces combined tend to reduce neighborhood poverty.

It is difficult to determine, however, whether the human capital effects or the neighborhood effects will prevail. If human capital effects prevail, recent immigrants will increase poverty and long-term immigrants may not have any effect on poverty. If neighborhood effects prevail, both types of immigrants, but especially long-term immigrants, will reduce poverty.

Another demographic variable of interest is the proportion of households in the neighborhood headed by a women. Due to the low pay generated by many female heads of households and the small number of workers in these households, households headed by women cannot generate enough income to raise families out of poverty. Work of the female householder is often impaired by other time-demanding roles, such as taking care of children.

From a neighborhood perspective, female-headed households affect poverty because their high participation on welfare may promote dependence, the lack of family networks in the household may result in lack of job networks for their children, and the lack of labor force involvement of female heads of households may weaken the work ethic. Therefore, the neighborhood poverty rate is expected to be positively associated with the rate of female headship in the neighborhood.

Another factor in the demography of Latino poverty is the young age structure. By virtue of their relatively recent arrival in the US, the Latino population is younger than the non-Latino population. Also contributing to the young age structure of Latinos are their high fertility rates (Bean & Tienda, 1987). From an individual perspective, age represents the life cycle stage of productivity and earnings. Children and the old are mostly out of the labor force, whereas young adults earn low wages while investing in training and acquiring more experience. From a neighborhood perspective, the age structure is representative of the ratio of dependency. Across the world, high dependency ratios are associated with higher poverty rates because children are an immediate drain on resources as the costs of investing in them cannot be recovered until far in the future. As a demographic variable representing age structure, I use the percentage of the neighborhood population aged 0 to 14. The higher this proportion, the higher the poverty rate is expected to be.

Four demographic variables are expected to affect Latino neighborhood poverty: (1) the proportion of households in the tract where a women was identified as the householder, (2) the proportion of the population in the tract that was living outside the US in 1985 (recent immigrants, defined as all individuals living abroad in 1985 regardless of citizenship or nativity, who were residing outside the official borders of the US or in Puerto Rico), (3) the proportion of the population in the tract that is foreign-born and arrived in the US before 1985 (long-term immigrants), and (4) the proportion of the population in the tract aged 0 to 14.

Skills

Educational attainment is among the most important determinants of income and, hence, poverty. Latinos are more likely to be high school dropouts than non-Latinos. The high proportion of high school dropouts among Latinos explains a large

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part of the Latino versus non-Latino income differential (Reimers, 1985). The low level of education of Latinos was a larger liability in the 1980s when increased returns to education placed workers with low levels of education further below those with high levels of education (Blackburn et al., 1990). In California, the incomes of Latinos lagged behind due to their inability to take advantage of increasing returns to high levels of education (Reimers, 1994). For Latinos, skills and payoffs for those skills take on broader dimensions. Many Latinos are educated abroad, and their education may be less valued than an education of equal duration acquired in the US.

At the neighborhood level, the conglomerate of well-educated individuals produces positive externalities. Well-educated individuals can command (and finance) resources for their neighborhoods that poorly educated individuals cannot. For instance, well-educated parents tend to be more involved in the education of their children than poorly educated parents. This in turn translates into better quality of neighborhood schools and, therefore, into better labor market status. Well-educated individuals also attract businesses that can provide employment for neighborhood residents. The well educated can also provide job networks in growing employment sectors, increasing labor force involvement in the neighborhood. However, economic enclaves and neighborhood-based job networks may provide low-educated Latinos with employment opportunities, thus reducing the negative impacts of low education.

Another important skill variable in considering Latino poverty is the ability to speak English fluently. The lack of English fluency of many Latinos, natives and immigrants alike, limits their employment and earnings outcomes (Bean & Tienda, 1987). Research has shown that for Latinos, the penalties for not speaking English fluently increased during the 1980s (Sorensen & Enchautegui, 1994). From a neighborhood perspective, lacking the ability to speak English fluently can isolate residents from the broader society. On the other hand, the inability to manage the language of a receiving country may also produce ethnic economic enclaves that ameliorate the negative effect of lacking English language abilities in the labor market. The ability of immigrant groups to cater to ethnic fellows with limited English proficiency gives the immigrant entrepreneurs an edge in conducting business in immigrant neighborhoods.

Economic Structure

Economic structure refers to incentives and opportunities not under the control of the individual or neighborhood. Individuals and communities are reactors to their opportunity structure. Research on poverty has emphasized the effects of a changing economic structure on income. This changing economic structure includes change in the industrial composition of metropolitan areas and the conditions of labor demand.

The economic structure variables investigated in this analysis include neighborhood-level and metropolitan-level variables. Metropolitan-level variables are included to capture the wider economic structure and economic opportunities available to Latinos. The neighborhood-level variables are included to capture enclave effects or employment opportunities defined at the neighborhood level. The economic structure variables are: (1) tract percentage of the Latino male labor force that is unemployed, (2) tract percentage of the Latino female labor force that is unemployed, (3) the percentage of the metropolitan work force in manufacturing, transportation, and public administration (MATRANSPA), and (4) the percentage of the metropolitan-area population that are white non-Latinos

Changes in industrial distribution are represented by the proportion of metropolitan employment in MATRANSPA. These sectors employ a large proportion of the blue-collar labor and historically have been important employment niches for low-skilled and minority workers. These sectors also experienced abrupt changes in employment in the last two decades. The effect of declining manufacturing employment on African-Americans is well-documented (Eggers & Massey, 1991; Galster & Mincy, 1993). Also well documented is the importance of public sector employment in the economic fortunes of black Americans (Carrington et al., 1996; Zipp, 1994). Latinos rely more than African-Americans on manufacturing as a source of employment. In 1979, 27% of Latinos but only 23% of African-Americans were employed in manufacturing. Nevertheless, research results on the effect of manufacturing employment on the income of Latinos are mixed (Eggers & Massey, 1991; Gaster & Mincy, 1993; Santiago & Wilder, 1991). Latinos; rely less on transportation and public administration jobs than African-Americans. Transportation/ public utilities and public administration employed 15% of African-Americans and 11% of Latinos in 1979. In neighborhoods where the population was 50% or more Latino, the proportion in MATRANSPA dropped from 29% in 1979 to 24% in 1989.

The percentage of white non-Latinos in the metropolitan area is an indicator of a pool of resources, such as better schools and better local government services. Availability of this pool of resources may generate benefits for the Latino population.

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On the other hand, a larger presence of the majority group may result in domination of the minority group and in a racial and ethnic polarization that prevents the minority group from accessing resources. Thus, the presence of white non-Latinos in the labor market may increase or decrease Latino neighborhood poverty.

Self-reliance

This hypothesis contends that individuals act in their own best interests and that individuals can push themselves out of poverty by engaging in productive activities. This hypothesis posits that commitment to the labor force and work are fundamental to reduce poverty: A poorly paying job can eventually lead to a better paying job through connections and job experience, while no job or withdrawal from the labor force guarantees persistent poverty.

The concept of self-reliance in the poverty discourse has focused almost exclusively on its individual dimensions. The self-reliance hypothesis finds some anecdotal evidence in immigrants' economic outcomes. Immigrants are often praised for their self-reliance amidst adversity, and employers praise immigrants for their work discipline (Kirschenman & Neckerman, 1991; Waldinger, 1993). Accounts of recent immigrants are brimming with stories of success against all odds (Caplan et al., 1992; Portes & Rumbaut, 1990).

Self-reliance also has a neighborhood component. Self-reliance could be based on the tendency to rely on the community. Child care services, financial assistance, affordable housing, and employment in the ethnic enclave are examples of how members of neighborhoods rely on each other for activities that promote work and reduce poverty. Residents also rely on neighbors to enforce values and moral codes on children and young adults that can lead them to live more productive lives.

One difficulty with assessing the importance of the self-reliance hypothesis is the lack of empirical measures of self-reliance. Motivation, risk-taking behavior, work discipline, and neighborhood exchanges are difficult to measure. Furthermore, it is difficult to attest whether these characteristics are exogenous or are influenced by other structural forces that affect poverty such as discrimination, job scarcity, and poor education. The tendency for neighbors to rely on each other for work-related activities and value enforcement is also related to the level of dislocation of poor communities. Exchanges between neighbors are unlikely in communities infected with crime and where discrimination has prevented formation of businesses.

I identify three variables as indicators of self-reliance: the percentage of Latino males ages 16 or more in the tract that are in the labor force, the percentage of Latino females ages 16 or more in the tract that are in the labor force, and the percentage of households in the tract with self-employment income. The labor force participation measures (once unemployment has been accounted for) are included to capture the idea that commitment to work is fundamental to be out of poverty net of unemployment effects. The self-employment variable reflects self-reliance as individuals search for work alternatives to the poor opportunities in the wage/salaried sector.

Neighborhood Wealth

Under this hypothesis, neighborhood poverty is affected by neighborhood institutions and resources that form the social wealth of a community (Jencks & Mayer, 1990; Wilson, 1987). These institutions and resources are direct and indirect conduits of economic opportunity. The scarcity of neighborhood resources in many minority neighborhoods has been traced to the absence of a middle class that attracts and financially maintains these resources (Wilson, 1987). Although the effects of neighborhood characteristics on individual outcomes have been analyzed by various researchers (Brooks-Gunn et al., 1993; Corcoran et al., 1992; Crane, 1991; Mayer, 1991), there has been little emphasis on neighborhood resources such as business, youth services, and family-oriented institutions.

Since data on these neighborhood resources are not available in the data set used in this research, I use variables related to assets and the housing stock as indicators for these resources. I use the percentage of housing units that are vacant, the percentage of housing units that are rented, the percentage of housing units that are detached single-family homes, and the percentage of families that do not own a car as indicators of neighborhood wealth. A high vacancy rate reflects neighborhood decline as it relates to inability to attract residents. Vacant units also provide a physical space for criminal activity (Sullivan, 1989). Residents of rental units are more mobile and may be less committed to the neighborhood than homeowners. Consequently, communities dominated by rental units may have fewer neighborhood institutions. Detached

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single-family units tend to be occupied by families with children. Such family units attract family-oriented neighborhood institutions that ameliorate poverty. Lacking a car is an indicator of neighborhood wealth because it reflects the degree of isolation of a community and the inability of its people to access resources that are geographically distant.

SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF LATINO NEIGHBORHOODS

To present a national portrayal of Latino neighborhoods, I document the growth and maturity of Latino neighborhoods; their socioeconomic characteristics related to demographics, skills, economic structure, self-reliance, and neighborhood wealth; and the 1980-1990 changes in poverty rates and poverty concentration. Socioeconomic characteristics are presented for all Latino tracts and for Latino subgroup tracts. Information is also presented for all Latinos in the US in order to assess how Latino tracts compare with the overall Latino population.

Growth and Maturity of Latino Neighborhoods

Information about maturity of a neighborhood can be obtained from the population transition experienced between 1980 and 1990. Neighborhoods that were Latino in 1980 but not in 1990 are referred to as "eliminated" neighborhoods; those that were Latino in 1990 but not in 1980 are "new" neighborhoods; and those that remained Latino are "established" neighborhoods. Information about neighborhood maturity is presented in Table 1.

[TABULAR DATA 1 NOT REPRODUCIBLE IN ASCII]

During the 1980s, the number of new Latino tracts skyrocketed. In 1990, 1,981 tracts in the US were majority Latino. Of these, 34% (or 670) were newly formed neighborhoods. The elimination rate was low. In 1980, there were 1,400 Latino tracts, and 6.3% of these tracts ceased to be Latino by 1990.

The degree of neighborhood formation and elimination varies by Latino subgroup. Mixed-Latino neighborhoods have the highest rate of neighborhood formation. More than two-thirds of these neighborhoods were new in 1990. Puerto Ricans have the highest rate of neighborhood elimination. In 1980, there were 161 tracts that were 50% or more Puerto Rican. By 1990, 45% of these tracts had been eliminated. Cuban neighborhoods are more likely than all other neighborhoods to be established.

Figures on population growth presented on Table 1 suggest that the new Latino neighborhoods were formed through immigration. Latino neighborhoods experienced sizable growth in their foreign-born population and declines in their native-born population. The average total population growth in Latino neighborhoods was 26%. This growth was due to the influx of immigrants. The foreign-born population grew by 100% between 1980 and 1990, while the native population declined by 11%. This pattern of population growth more or less characterizes each Latino subgroup with the exception of Puerto Ricans. The solid population growth in Mexican, Cuban, Other Latino, and Mixed Latino neighborhoods contrasts with the almost 0% growth of Puerto Rican neighborhoods.

Socioeconomic Characteristics

In virtually all indicators of socioeconomic distress, the population in Latino neighborhoods ranks worse than the overall Latino population. The poverty rate of Latinos residing in Latino tracts is over 7 percentage points higher than the poverty rate of US Latinos. Latino tracts also lag behind the Latino population in indicators correlated with poverty. Latino households headed by women account for 22% of all Latino households, but 33% of households in Latino tracts. Latinos in Latino neighborhoods lag behind US Latinos in terms of educational attainment. In 1990, 50% of US Latinos, but 54% of Latinos in Latino neighborhoods, did not have a high school diploma. Latino female labor force participation is lower and unemployment rates are higher within Latino tracts than outside Latino tracts. Latinos outside Latino tracts are also more likely to own their homes and more likely to own a car.

Latino neighborhoods are often portrayed as the points of entry for new immigrants. However, the immigrant population is underrepresented in Latino neighborhoods. The percentage foreign-born is 36% in the overall Latino population and 33% in the average Latino census tract. The higher representation of the foreign-born in the US Latino population versus Latino tracts is in part attributed to new immigration. On average, 7.6% of the population in Latino tracts arrived from a foreign country or from outlying areas within the last five years, while 9.6% of US Latinos arrived during that period. It seems that

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the larger representation of Latinos outside Latino tracts is not only due to a process of outmigration of earlier immigrants toward non-Latino neighborhoods, but also to the location of recent immigrants in non-Latino tracts.

Of all tracts, the Puerto Rican tracts are the poorest, with 48% of the Latino population living in poverty. Puerto Rican tracts have lower male and female labor force participation than other Latino tracts, and more than half of the households in Puerto Rican tracts are headed by women. The neighborhood wealth variables also place Puerto Rican neighborhoods below other Latino neighborhoods. Puerto Rican neighborhoods are more likely to contain rental and vacant units, and their households are less likely to own a car than other Latino neighborhoods.

Changes in Poverty and Poverty Concentration

Table 2 examines 1979 and 1989 poverty rates and poverty concentration in Latino neighborhoods. The poverty rates used in this table refer to the overall neighborhood population not only the Latino population. In census data, the income measures refer to the year prior to the census, while other characteristics are measured as of the date of census data collection. Poverty-concentrated tracts are defined as tracts where 40% or more of its residents are poor. The 40% cutoff has been commonly used as an indicator of extreme poverty (Green, 1991; Jargowsky & Bane, 1991; Wilson 1987), and it is based on empirical observation that as the neighborhood reaches a 40% and over poverty rate, the tract looks like a "ghetto" neighborhood in terms of its housing conditions (Jargowsky & Bane, 1991). In this table, the entry "Latino in 1980" refers to all tracts that were 50% or more Latino in 1980, regardless of whether or not they were Latino in 1990. Similarly, "Latino in 1990" are tracts that were Latino in 1990, regardless of their status in 1980. Again, "Established" refers to tracts that were Latino in 1980 and in 1990.

TABLE 2 Trends in Poverty and Poverty Concentration In Latino Neighborhoods, by Latino Sub-groups: 1979 and 1989

Type of Neighborhood	Percentage Persons in Poor Families	
	1979	1989
Latino in '80 (n=1 400)	28.2	31.1
Latino in '90 (n=1981)	25.8	29.9
Established in '90 (n=1311)	28.0	31.6
Mexican in '80 (n=746)	26.4	31.6
Mexican in '90 (n=1065)	24.4	29.6
Established in '90 (n=701)	26.4	31.7
Puerto Rican in '80 (n=160)	45.3	41.9
Puerto Rican in '90 (n=123)	43.8	44.8
Established in '90 (n=87)	45.6	46.4
Mixed Latino in '80 (n=413)	26.7	27.9
Mixed Latino in '90 (n=704)	26.3	28.9
Established in '90 (n=232)	27.9	29.5
Cuban in '80 (n=57)	15.6	20.6
Cuban in '90 (n=58)	12.5	17.4
Other Latino in '90 (n=31)	26.6	30.1

Type of Neighborhood	Percentage Tracts in Concentrated Poverty	
	1979	1989
Latino in '80 (n=1 400)	20.1	24.8
Latino in '90 (n=1981)	15.4	21.8
Established in '90 (n=1311)	19.2	25.5
Mexican in '80 (n=746)	13.4	23.7
Mexican in '90 (n=1065)	9.8	18.8
Established in '90 (n=701)	12.9	23.9

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Puerto Rican in '80 (n=160)	72.5	58.7
Puerto Rican in '90 (n=123)	67.4	69.9
Established in '90 (n=87)	75.8	75.8
Mixed Latino in '80 (n=413)	15.9	17.6
Mixed Latino in '90 (n=704)	16.7	19.8
Established in '90 (n=232)	17.2	20.2
Cuban in '80 (n=57)	15.6	5.1
Cuban in '90 (n=58)	0.0	1.7
Other Latino in '90 (n=31)	3.2	12.9

Note: Concentrated poverty tracts are those where 40% or more of all families live in poverty. A Latino tract in 1990 is a tract where 50% or more of the population is Latino. Mixed Latino refers to a tract where no single Latino group accounts for 501/6 or more of the population. The poverty rates are for the total neighborhood population.

Source: Urban Institute Underclass Data Base

Table 2 shows longitudinal information on poverty for each type of neighborhood. To illustrate, of the tracts that were Latino in 1980, 20.1% were in poverty concentration in 1979, and 24.8% of these same tracts were in poverty concentration in 1989. Table 2 also provides cross-sectional information on poverty. For instance, the poverty rate of Mexican neighborhoods was 26.4% in 1979 and 29.6% in 1989.

The rising poverty rates of Latinos are evident in Latino neighborhoods. The decennial changes in the poverty rates of Latinos in Latino tracts parallel those of US Latinos. The poverty rate in Latino tracts increased by 1.7 percentage points, from 28.2% in 1979 to 29.9% in 1989. The Latino poverty rate in Latino tracts in 1989 was higher, 33%, and the increase was 2 percentage points (not in table).

Changes in the percentage of tracts that are areas of concentrated poverty (40% or more of the families are poor) vary according to the maturity of the tract. Most of the increase in poverty concentration occurred in established neighborhoods. In 1989, 21.8% of all Latino tracts were areas of concentrated poverty, 1.7 percentage points higher than the 1979 figure. The small increase in concentrated poverty tracts has to do with the formation of new neighborhoods because a lower proportion of them are in concentrated poverty. The percentage of established Latino tracts in concentrated poverty increased from 19% to 25%.

Changes in poverty rates and poverty concentration also vary by Latino ethnicity. Mexican-American poverty increased by more than 3 percentage points and by more than 5 percentage points in established neighborhoods. Growth in concentrated poverty areas was enormous, particularly in established Mexican neighborhoods, where the proportion in concentrated poverty almost doubled from 13% to 24%. Poverty concentration is the norm in Puerto Rican neighborhoods. More than two-thirds of all Puerto Rican neighborhoods and three-quarters of the established neighborhoods were in concentrated poverty in 1989. In mixed neighborhoods, the poverty rate increased from 26.7% to 28.9%, and the proportion of tracts in concentrated poverty increased by 4 percentage points. Poverty concentration of tracts categorized as "Other Latino" in 1990 increased from 3.2% in 1979 to 12.9% in 1989.

MULTIVARIATE ANALYSIS OF NEIGHBORHOOD POVERTY

In this section, I investigate the determinants of Latino neighborhood poverty. I specify a regression model in which the dependent variable is the percentage of Latinos in the tract living in poverty. Explanatory variables are classified in five groups: demographics, skills, economic structure, self-reliance, and neighborhood wealth. Similar analyses are conducted for 1979 and 1989 to perform a decomposition analysis of the change in poverty.

Immigration and skills are closely related because immigrants have poor English ability and low levels of education. To better discern the mechanisms by which immigration relates to poverty, the poverty rate models are estimated in incremental steps, trying to discern the change in the coefficients of immigration variables as other variables are added to the model. Three control variables were added to the multivariate analysis: a dummy variable for WEST if the tract is located in the Western region, a dummy variable for SOUTH if the tract is located in the Southern region, and median age. I use the Census Bureau's definition of region. Under this definition, Texas, which sometimes is treated by historians as part of the West, is included in the Southern region. Dummies for ethnicity of the neighborhood were not included because

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they were highly correlated with the regional dummies. Dummies for Mexican, Puerto Rican, and Mixed Latinos; were statistically insignificant when the regional variables were in the equation. These variables were statistically significant when regional variables were not in the equation. The regional dummies can thus be interpreted as regional effects or as ethnic effects. Mean age was added as a control to parcel out the age effects of recent immigration as recent immigrants tend to be younger than both natives and long-term immigrants.

In the model of poverty rates, the variables are measured in levels and contemporaneously with the dependent variable. I investigated the validity of a change model rather than a level model. The change model eliminates unmeasured fixed effects, invariant across time, which might produce misleading relationships between the dependent and the independent variables. One disadvantage of the change model is that it assumes that the structure determining poverty was the same in 1979 as in 1989. The change model was rejected because the analysis shows important changes in coefficients between 1979 and 1989. I also estimated a model in which the poverty rate in 1989 is a function of the 1980 values of the correlates. Results for this model are in Table 3, but I focus my discussion on the contemporaneous model presented in the next section.

TABLE 3 Ordinary Least Squares Estimates of Latino Neighborhood Poverty in 1989, with 1980 Explanatory Variables

	Coefficient	Standard Error
Demographics		
% Long-term foreign-born	-0.2310	0.0270
% Abroad 5 yrs ago	-0.1251	0.0462
% Latino female-headed households	0.1489	0.0219
% Population 0-14 yrs old	0.4755	0.0846
Skills		
% Poor English speaking ability	0.1106	0.0376
% Latino education < 12 yrs	0.2169	0.0211
Economic Structure		
% Latino male unemployment	0.1462	0.0342
% Latino female unemployment	0.0082	0.0270
% in Manuf., Trans., & Pub. Admn. (MSA)	-0.2179	0.0423
% Anglo (MSA)	-0.0029	0.0167
Self-Reliance		
% Households with self-emp. income	0.1936	0.0538
% Latino males in labor force	-0.0746	0.0267
% Latino females in labor force	-0.0932	0.0238
Neighborhood Wealth		
% Single detached units	-0.1152	0.1953
% Rental units	0.0846	0.0229
% Vacant units	0.2983	0.0437
% Lack car		
Controls		
Mexican-American	0.0003	0.0061
Puerto Rican	-0.0519	0.0107
Mixed Latino	-0.0087	0.0060
Constant	-0.0881	0.0814
Adjusted R-squared	0.603	

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Source: Urban Underclass Data Base.

Determinants of Neighborhood Poverty

Table 4 presents results for a regression equation in which the only explanatory variables are immigration variables and the dependent variable is the Latino poverty rate in the tract in 1989. There is support for the contention that immigrants increase poverty. Recent immigrants (immigrants that entered between 1985 and 1990) produce significant increases in poverty: for every one percentage point (.01) increase in the proportion of recent immigrants, there is an increase in poverty of .007 percentage points (.01*.72). However, long-term immigrants reduce poverty, although their effects are smaller than the effects of recent immigrants. A one percentage point increase in the proportion of the population that are long-term immigrants leads to a .005 points decline in poverty. These results suggest that the poverty-increasing effects of immigration are transitory and that eventually a higher proportion of immigrants in the tract population produces declines in poverty.

[TABULAR DATA 4 NOT REPRODUCIBLE IN ASCII]

To determine if the immigration effects on poverty occur through skills, I add skill variables to the basic model. Model 2 of Table 4 shows the effects of recent immigration and long-term immigration, controlling for education and poor English. The coefficient of percentage long-term foreign-born is more negative (moving from -.49 to -.64), and the coefficient of percentage recent immigrant is less positive (moving from .72 to .33) than in the initial regression equation. Nonetheless, the poverty-increasing effect of recent immigrants and the poverty-reducing effect of long-term immigrants remain. Part of the immigration effects on poverty operate through skills. A large portion of the effect of immigration on poverty occurs because immigrants have lower educational levels and poorer English-language abilities than natives. However, not all the effect of immigrants on poverty can be attributed to lower skill levels.

These results support the hypothesis that immigration has both positive and negative effects on neighborhood poverty as discussed previously. On one hand, Latino neighborhoods absorb a large portion of recent immigrants, and recent immigrants are placed at the bottom of the economic ladder. On the other hand, with time spent in the US, immigrants start having anti-poverty effects on neighborhoods, after controlling for human capital.

Two other intermediate models are estimated before moving to the full model. Model 3 adds family and age structure variables, and model 4 is the full model without region and age controls. The effects of immigration persist in these models. Model 5 is the full model in which five sets of variables (demographics, skills, economic structure, self-reliance, and neighborhood wealth) and regional and age controls are included.

The effect of lacking English language skills disappears in models 4 and 5 while the effect of dropping out of high school remains. In describing the effect of lacking English language skills, I posited that the effect of this variable could not be determined a priori because lacking English language skills may promote economic enclaves that reduce poverty. The indeterminate effect of this variable agrees with this contention.

The largest effect (as measured by the size of the coefficient) corresponds to the demographic variable percentage of tract population in the ages 0 to 14, which increases poverty by half of a percentage point. The second largest effect corresponds to the neighborhood wealth variable "vacant housing," which increases poverty. The third largest effect corresponds to recent immigration. Industrial employment is fourth, with a coefficient of -.28.

It is worth noting that skill variables and family structure do not stand out as principal determinants of Latino poverty in 1989, in spite of the fact that these variables are those most often considered in discussions of Latino poverty. Also, the penalties for male unemployment are twice as large as the penalties for female unemployment, consistent with the presumption that men are better paid than women. Labor force participation effects persist despite inclusion of unemployment rates. Possibly, people who remain in the labor force even if unemployed are more likely to find ways to reduce poverty than people out of the labor force, suggesting self-reliance. Finally, self-employment increases poverty. It is possible that self-employment of residents in Latino neighborhoods is concentrated in low-paying activities. This result calls into question whether self-employment vis-a-vis wage/salaried jobs is a way out of poverty for Latino neighborhoods.

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Explaining 1979-1989 Changes in Neighborhood Poverty

The full model presented in model 5 of Table 4 explains cross-sectional variations in poverty rates of Latinos in 1989. This cross-sectional analysis would have been sufficient to characterize changes in poverty between 1979 and 1989 if the structure determining the relationship between the variables on the right and the dependent variable had not changed between 1979 and 1989. However, comparison of the 1979 model (model 6, Table 4) with the 1989 model reveals important changes in coefficients, especially in the demographic variables of age structure and immigration.

To identify the factors that drove the poverty level of Latino neighborhoods up between 1979 and 1989, I analyze regression equations for 1979 and 1989 and decompose the total change in poverty in two parts: the change due to means in characteristics that determine poverty, and the change due to change in the coefficients of those characteristics. The decomposition is represented by the following equation:

[MATHEMATICAL EXPRESSION NOT REPRODUCIBLE IN ASCII]

The changes in means analysis tell what the poverty rate of Latinos would have been in 1989 if the characteristics of Latino tracts had been the same as in 1979, assuming the coefficients of 1989. The analysis of changes in coefficients tells what the poverty rates would have been if the coefficients of 1989 were the same as those in 1979, assuming the characteristics were those of 1979. In this decomposition, one can point out those factors whose changes in means or coefficients affected poverty the most. Table 5 shows results for the earnings decomposition analysis equation. Due to interactions between changes in means and changes in coefficients, the decomposition analysis presented here can only be taken as an approximation of the true effects of changes in means and changes in coefficients (Acs & Danziger, 1993).

TABLE 5

Decomposition of the Change In Latino Neighborhood
Poverty Rate: 1979-1989

Total change	0.020
Change due to coefficients	0.034
Change due to means	-0.014
Demographics	-0.013
Skills	-0.013
Economic Structure	0.022
Self-Reliance	-0.012
Neighborhood Wealth	0.001
Controls:	0.001

Source: Tabulations by the author based on regression results in Table 3, last two columns.

Changes in coefficients of the variables that affect poverty had larger effects on poverty than changes in means. Practically the entire poverty increase between 1979 and 1989 should be attributed to changes in coefficients. If there had been no offsetting changes in the means of variables that affect poverty, the poverty rates of Latinos would have increased by 3.4 percentage points, rather than by 2 percentage points.

Changes in means of the variables that affect poverty tended to decrease poverty by 1.4 percentage points. Of the five sets of variables considered, economic structure (percentage in manufacturing, transportation, and public administration jobs [MATRANSPA], unemployment rates, and percentage Anglo) accounts for most of the increase in poverty. The reduction in MATRANSPA jobs from 29% to 24% had the largest poverty-increasing effect, increasing poverty by 1.3 percentage points. Other changes in characteristics tended to bring poverty down. The 6 percentage point increase in the proportion that are long-term immigrants, the 6 percentage point reduction in the proportion with fewer than 12 years of education, and the 6 percentage point increase in female labor force participation each reduced poverty by 1.1 to 1.3 percentage points. The self-reliance hypothesis cannot explain the 1979-1989 growth in Latino poverty since changes in the means of self-reliance variables actually reduced poverty.

The change in the proportion of the tract population that are recent immigrants did not contribute to the poverty increase experienced by Latinos. This reflects the fact that the mean in this variable only went from .073 to .078 between 1979 and

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1989. The effect of recent immigration in explaining the poverty increase occurred through changes in coefficients. In 1979, a one percentage point increase in the percentage that are recent immigrants drove poverty up by one-tenth of a percentage point. In 1989, it drove poverty up by one-third of a percentage point (see Table 4, model 5 for 1979 and 1989). Another variable whose effect on increasing poverty operated through changes in returns is the proportion that are in the ages 0 to 14. The change in mean of this variable was trivial, but the change in coefficient was large, from .36 to .55 (see Table 4, model 5 for 1979 and 1989).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Between 1980 and 1990, the number of Latino neighborhoods skyrocketed. A total of 670 new census tracts where Latinos account for the majority of the population appeared on the urban landscape. Neighborhoods were created by a large immigration of Mexicans, Cubans, and Other Latinos. Although there was an exodus of native population, it was small in comparison to the entrance of Latinos. In sharp contrast to other neighborhoods stand the Puerto Rican neighborhoods because they experienced the largest rate of neighborhood elimination between 1980 and 1990, and their population growth was minimal. Latinos residing in Latino neighborhoods rank worse in virtually all indicators of economic distress than Latinos outside Latino neighborhoods.

Based on census tracts where Latinos accounted for 50% or more of the population, it was found that the factors having the largest effects on poverty in 1989 included the proportion of the population aged 0 to 14, the proportion of housing units that are vacant, and the proportion of recent immigrants in the population. Changes in poverty between 1979 and 1989, however, should be attributed to changes in the structure that determines poverty. The changes in the determinants of poverty were especially noted in the much larger poverty-increasing effects of recent immigration and proportion in the ages 0 to 14.

The analysis performed in this article underscores the importance of considering neighborhood effects in the analysis of Latino poverty. As posited previously, the neighborhood is pivotal in the incorporation of Latinos into society and the labor market. Low levels of skills are less important if there are jobs in the metropolitan area and in the neighborhood that can absorb the low skilled. Long-term immigrants in general have less human capital than natives, but they reduce poverty by bringing neighborhood-based enclave economies. Housing vacancies signal neighborhood decay and deter people and business from moving into these neighborhoods. Children increase poverty because by being a dependent population, they are a drain in neighborhood resources.

Changes in means, holding the 1989 coefficient constant, tended to reduce poverty. Changes in the economic structure variables (metropolitan area percentage in manufacturing, transportation, and public administration; percentage Anglo; and tract level unemployment rates) had large poverty-increasing effects. In summary, analysis of determinants of neighborhood poverty rates and of changes in Latino poverty revealed the importance of demographic variables (age structure and immigration) and economic structure on Latino poverty. Skills, family structure, neighborhood wealth, and self-reliance were only secondary.

A question of interest in this article is the role of immigration on Latino neighborhood poverty. There is consistent evidence that neighborhoods with a larger proportion of recent immigrants have higher poverty rates, net of human capital characteristics. In addition, the poverty rate associated with recent immigration went up, indicating that the incorporation of recent immigrants became more difficult during the 1980s. The effects of immigrants on poverty, however, seem to be temporary because long-term immigrants reduce poverty possibly through vibrant immigrant-led neighborhood economies and organizations. However, the continuous entrance of recent immigrants among Latinos may prevent the poverty rate from falling and may actually increase it. Most important, the future contribution of recent immigration to Latino poverty depends on how future waves of Latino immigrants are absorbed into the labor market.

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