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Community Policing and the New Immigrants: Latinos in Chicago

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The face of the nation is changing. New immigration and shifts in birth rates have had a visible effect on the composition of the American population. Between 1990 and 2000 alone, the Hispanic population in the United States grew by an estimated 58 percent and the Asian population by 73 percent. Especially in larger cities, the traditional concepts of "majorities" and "minorities" no longer apply demographically or, increasingly, politically. Chicago mirrors these national trends. Long an entrepôt, Chicago is the third most popular destination city for new immigrants. Since the 1990 Census, the city has become home to tens of thousands of newly arrived immigrants from Mexico, along with smaller numbers from the Middle East, the Philippines, and Poland. The city's traditional Chinatown neighborhood is expanding in every direction, and refugees from Southeast Asia have formed new communities of their own. Each group arrives with established ways of life, and faces the task of adapting themselves to this new environment and America's big-city problems.

This paper examines the fate of the city's large and growing Latino population. Latinos began to make their mark on the City of Chicago during the 1980s, and by 2000 they totaled almost 754,000. Illinois is among the five states with the largest Latino populations, and Chicago is home to half of the state's total. Like African-Americans in an earlier era, the Latino community is fed by an immigrant stream, one that is now helping drive up their numbers at a dramatic rate. They are principally from Mexico. In 1990, 65 percent of the city's Latinos were of Mexican origin; by 2000 it was 70 percent of a much larger group. Puerto Rican migration to Chicago began later, and the proportion of Puerto Ricans in the city declined between 1990 and 2000, from 22 percent of the Latino total to 15 percent. The fraction who were of Cuban origin remained in the 1–2 percent range, and the remainder came from a variety of points in Central and South America and the Caribbean.

The research reported here was conducted as part of an evaluation of Chicago's community policing program. The Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS) was inaugurated in April 1993, and became a citywide program in 1995. CAPS features extensive community involvement, an orientation toward problem-solving that emphasizes collaboration between police and other city service agencies, and organizational decentralization.[1] The program has registered many successes, especially

among African-Americans. Crime, social disorder, physical decay, and fear improved substantially during the course of the 1990s in predominately African-American neighborhoods. Their involvement in the program has been extensive, and black Chicagoans are CAPS' biggest boosters.

The program has not made much headway among Latinos, on the other hand, and by some measures they *lost* ground during this period. Surveys and analyses of archival and Census data indicate that things have been getting worse, not better, for Chicago's Latinos, especially among the burgeoning immigrant population.

This paper describes some of the main findings of the evaluation. It relies heavily on the most recent surveys, although some trend lines are drawn to illustrate the increasing gravity of the situation. It also draws extensively on fieldwork that was conducted during the summer of 2003 in 15 predominately Latino police beats. Home to about 220,000 people, these beats represented port-of-entry immigrant areas and the areas where the city's more long-established second and third generation Latinos are concentrated. The paper presents more description than prescription, because the problems it addresses simply have not been resolved. We have watched—and advised—as the Chicago Police Department has struggled to address them, but there is little evidence that things have turned around. It is important that they succeed, for I project that during 2004 Latinos passed whites, to become the second-largest group in the city. If present trends persist—which is a much shakier extrapolation—Latinos could surpass African-American in numbers by about 2012, and cold, windy Chicago would become a predominately Mexican city.

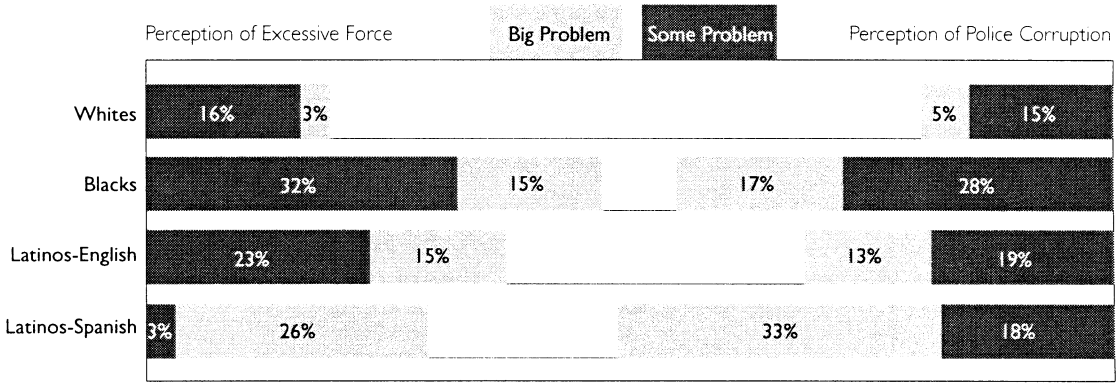
THERE IS WIDESPREAD BELIEF THAT POLICE ARE BRUTAL AND CORRUPT, AND BEST AVOIDED

The surveys and fieldwork reveal that the expectations that Latino newcomers bring with them are twofold—that the police are corrupt and potentially abusive. When it comes to fear of police brutality an activist in the Latino community put it this way:

Latinos that arrive from their own country are petrified of the police because of the treatment they used to receive in their homeland. Both the Latinos and the Polish are afraid of the police, and this inhibits any relationship-building that could take place.

There is also an expectation that police are corrupt. A community outreach worker for a health care institution in a port-of-entry beat observed, "Culturally we [Mexicans] don't ask anything from the police. They [the police] are corrupt in Mexico, as bad as thieves. We bring this assumption over and believe the police are part of the problem, not the solution." A priest serving the area noted, "in Mexico people pay bribes or mordidas to the police. Here [in the United States] personal relationships [with the police] and bribes do not matter." (The Spanish word "mordida" literally translates as "bite," but in Mexico it also means "payoff.") A priest in a port-of-entry beat thinks that most people do not trust the police. "Residents think that the police are in the same league

Figure 1
Perceptions of Excessive Force and Police Corruption, 2003



with drug dealers and gangs. Residents cannot speak due to fear of retaliation. Whenever there's a police scandal people say, 'See!' " A third priest noted, "In Mexico the police abuse people, and they are thieves. Mexicans who come here think the police here are the same. The police suffer because of this ignorance." A professional community organizer in Little Village said that she "spoke to gang members who said that some police officers have ties to gangs. Unless they change the police, the police and gangs are united."

The depth of some of these concerns is illustrated in Figure 1. It presents the results of questions that were included in our 2003 citywide survey. The survey was conducted by telephone in English and Spanish, and respondents were selected at random among adults living in sample households. A total of 3,140 Chicagoans were interviewed. They were asked "how big a problem" was presented by police use of excessive force ("being verbally or physically abusive") and police corruption (which was described as including "police taking bribes or getting involved in the drug business") in their neighborhood. The left side of Figure 1 charts the percentage of respondents rating excessive force and corruption as either some problem or a big problem (rather than "no problem"), and the right side the percentage rating police corruption as some or a big problem. Figure 1 presents the percentage of respondents indicating that these are "big problems" in the upper portion of each bar. It distinguishes Spanish-speakers from others; these are respondents who had to be interviewed in Spanish rather than English, and in 2003 that was 60 percent of all Latino respondents.

At least two issues of relevance are apparent in Figure 1. One finding is not surprising: the big gap between white Chicagoans and others on these two measures of perceived police misconduct. Compared to whites, all other groups are unhappy, but Figure 1 documents the very high level of dissatisfaction

reported in particular by Spanish-speaking Latinos. They are almost twice as likely as African-Americans or English-speaking Latinos to think that excessive force is a big problem in their neighborhood, and twice as likely to suspect big corruption problems. The corruption responses are interesting, because close observers inside and outside of the Chicago Police Department do not think that it is particularly corrupt, and there is no simple localized explanation for the distinctive views of Spanish-speakers. For the twin issues of excessive force and (especially) corruption, the gap between Spanish-speakers and others is very large, confirming the fears of our informants about the cultural baggage that the city's newest immigrants bring with them.

These views have a number of consequences. One is that the city's growing Spanish-speaking immigrant population is avoiding contact with the police and other municipal service agencies. Our surveys indicate Chicago's newest immigrants more often do not report crimes to the police and they avoid using the city's 911 emergency number. As a consequence, official rates of crime—which depend upon ordinary citizens contacting the police to make official reports—do not adequately reflect the problems facing those living in the city's heavily Spanish-speaking areas. Among other things, this means that they are underrepresented when police make decisions about the allocation of resources, when they assign units for special missions, and when they (and I) try to evaluate the effectiveness of programs. Over the course of the evaluation (1993–2004) recorded crime rates dropped significantly in predominately Latino areas, as they did virtually everywhere else in the city, but this pattern of non-reporting makes it difficult to interpret exactly what was going on there. Spanish-speaking Latinos are also *much* less likely than others to try to use the city's 311 non-emergency services hotline, which is now the principal way that residents are supposed to secure needed services from the city In the 2003 survey, only 22 percent reported using 311 (which is amply staffed by Spanish-speakers), compared to 49 percent of Latinos we interviewed in English. This while their needs are actually increasing; as I shall show below, survey measures of the extent of neighborhood problems facing Spanish-speakers trended for the worse during the 1990s and early 2000s.

The non-reporting problem also extends to involving the police in responding to neighborhood social disorder and the broad range of physical decay problems that fall within the purview of the department's problem solving model. Spanish-speaking Latinos are heavily overrepresented in areas plagued by gang violence, street drug markets, public drinking, auto theft and other serious problems. If I categorize Chicagoans by the seriousness with which they rate the neighborhood problems they face, only 10 percent of whites live in areas having severe problems; 26 percent of African-Americans placed themselves in the highest-problem category; and for English-speaking Latinos it was 22 percent. But among Spanish-speakers, *66 percent* rated their neighborhood in the most problem-ridden category. They thus suffer a double disadvantage: while plagued by the worst neighborhood conditions, they are very reluctant to involve the police in their

problems. The dramatic differences in the rate at which English- and Spanish-speaking Latinos initiated encounters with the police suggests that language and immigration factors play a very large role in shaping the relationship between the city's newcomers and institutions of government.

Language barriers are certainly part of the problem. Some of our informants lamented the limited linguistic capability of the Chicago force. Police Department records indicate that perhaps 800 officers speak Spanish, but the Department's approach to personnel assignments in the Patrol Division does not allow this to be taken into account in determining where they serve. Things may also not be as bad as our informants think, when you look at it objectively. During a 2002 analysis of beat meetings we observed and surveyed officers and residents who attended. The representation of Latino police officers at the meetings was quite high, especially in light of their numbers in the department as a whole. Across the eight port-of-entry beats included in the study, 53 percent of police officers surveyed indicated that they were Latino in background. Observers attending meetings in the area guessed that somewhat fewer were Latinos (42 percent), but between the two studies it appears that "about half" of officers attending beat meetings in the area were Latinos. Given the difficulty of actually assigning officers in the Patrol Division based on their language skills, this is a significant achievement.

In addition to their expectations and communication problems, many of those we interviewed feared that *legal* issues divide the police and community residents. The most elemental fear of many newcomers is that contact with the police will somehow threaten their status in the United States. This is one issue that divides Chicago's Puerto Rican community from others. As a priest put it,

> Puerto Ricans do not fear the police that much because they are citizens. In Pilsen [one of our port-of-entry areas], people confuse police with Iamigra or Immigration [officials]. Residents of Pilsen are afraid that the police will ask for their papers like they do in Mexico when drivers get pulled over. Hence, another obstacle is the fear of police. The biggest obstacle to CAPS participation is not a language barrier, but where the person was born. Long-time residents of Chicago learn the system. They're not too afraid of culture and not afraid of the police. Undocumented children may know English but are still afraid. It doesn't mean police are bad. People are afraid of the uniform. For effective community and police relationships residents must know that the police are not seeking to deport them. We tell people in church that you don't have to answer questions about immigration [when you get pulled over].

While newcomers from Puerto Rico may struggle with cultural and language barriers, their Commonwealth status means that they do not face many of the legal and bureaucratic issues facing other people from Latin America. However, their numbers are small in Chicago and only one percent of the residents of our port-of-entry study beats claimed Puerto Rican birth in the 2000 Census. During the 1990s, the absolute number of Puerto Ricans actually declined, despite the overall growth of the city's Latino population. The growth of the Latino community in Chicago, with all of its attendant problems, is driven by conditions in Mexico, and this fact in turn determines

the fears and concerns of those who come here. Because undocumented immigrants in particular flock to areas of ethnic concentration, the neighborhoods represented in this study are home to many of them. These are neighborhoods where they can find work and keep a low profile. Their numbers are unknown—estimates of the number of illegal immigrants may be the most shaky number published by the federal government—but everyone we talked to knew they are there. Remaining anonymous is somewhat easier than in the past, for the Immigration and Naturalization Service (and its post-9/11 successor agency) has not conducted aggressive raids of workplaces around Chicago in some time, but undocumented immigrants certainly continue to avoid attracting attention to themselves.

This certainly affects their involvement in community policing. A senior police manager observed that one reason residents in his area avoid contact with police is the fear that their immigration status might be revealed. "They fear that police would be 'agents of deportation,' they are afraid to jeopardize their legal status, and have difficulty communicating with the police." As a long-time resident of Pilsen put it, "Latinos have a feeling that by going to the Police Department they are turning themselves in." He switched to Spanish and said, "I'm from Mexico. I don't have papers—I don't go to the Police Department." A Pilsen activist advised, "The police need to make it clear that they are not here to deport people. The police need to reassure people that involvement in CAPS won't impact negatively their lives and also to create confidence in people to participate." An important corollary to the reluctance of people to get involved in CAPS or report crimes to the police is that it can be concern about the status of their *family members,* not just the personal vulnerability of individuals, that leads them to shy away from involving the police in their problems. This multiplies the influence of immigration-related concerns, further expanding the network of people for whom "the protection of the law" is elusive.

In this post-September 11 era, the relationship between the police and people who are concerned about the legality of their resident status is a sensitive issue. However, Executive Order 88 issued under the Harold Washington administration (and now superceded by other policies) protects persons who have not committed a felony from much investigation by local police. The current set of rules is described in the Chicago Police Department's "Procedures for Responding to Incidents Involving Illegal Aliens." It points out that ". . . enforcement of immigration law rests with the Immigration and Naturalization Service and not with state and local police." Under the City of Chicago's general rules, all employees, including police, are instructed not to routinely inquire about the citizenship status of persons they deal with. The police in particular ". . . *will not* (emphasis in the original) stop-and-question, detain, arrest, or place an immigration hold on any person that is not suspected of committing a crime or based solely on the grounds that the person may be an alien subject to deportation." Officers are further instructed to not request information about,

or otherwise investigate or assist in the investigation of the citizenship or residency status of any person, without explicit statutory authorization. Further, their supervisors are not to contact the INS unless a suspect in a crime exhibits some positive sign of being an illegal alien. I frequently quiz senior commanders and others in the department about whether they have felt new pressure at the operational level to investigate or make use of people's immigration status to hold them, and they indicate that they have not.

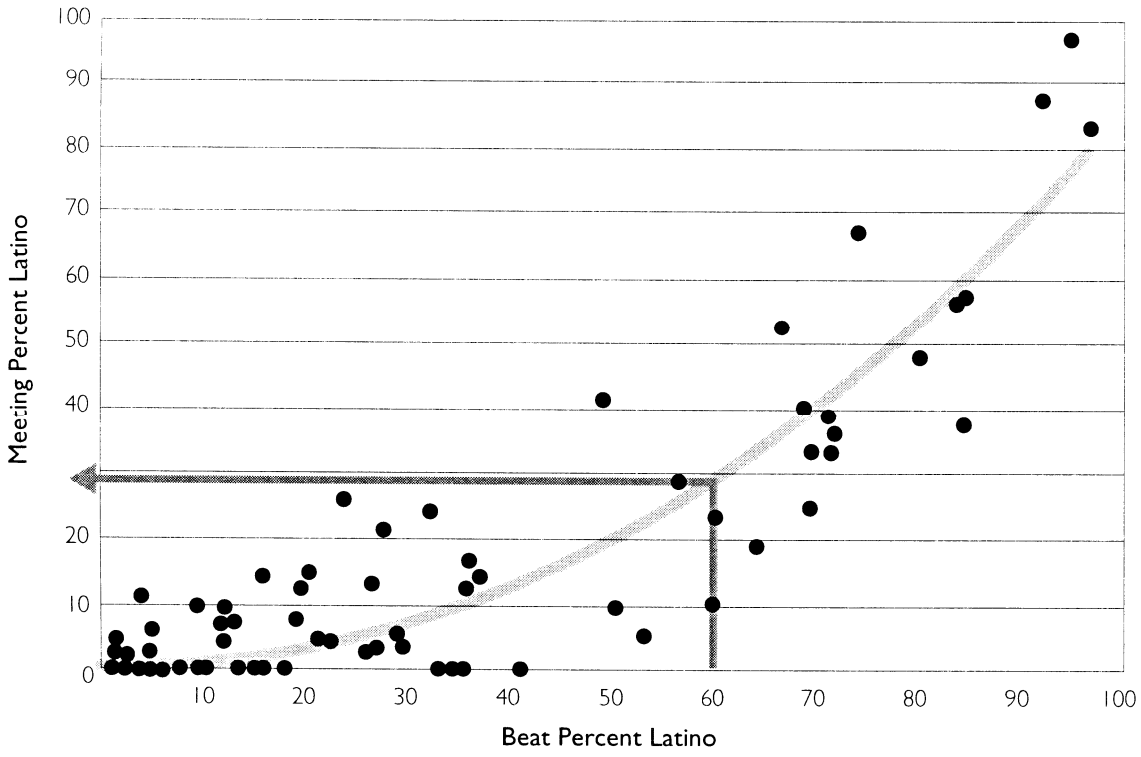
These real restrictions on police investigations and cooperation with immigration authorities are widely known among activists and service providers in the Latino community, but they are perhaps not so widely recognized in less sophisticated circles. As a sergeant in an established beat noted, "The CAPS program and Police Department have to do a better job of addressing the fears that many Latino residents have around the issue of immigration. They need to be reminded that they shouldn't fear immigration when dealing with the police." Of course, while the problem may require some public education, the message has to be crafted delicately. Taking out ads announcing "We ignore immigration laws!" is probably not a good idea politically. It is also the case that *other* law enforcement agencies are at work around the city that are *not* bound by these restrictions, including the Illinois State Police, the FBI, the DEA and the INS. Many of those impacted by immigration requirements may not make fine distinctions between the various flavors of officialdom at work in their neighborhoods.

LATINOS ARE DISTINCTIVELY DISCONNECTED FROM COMMUNITY POLICING

This is, in part, another of the consequences of the troubling view of the police held by many of the city's most recent immigrants. Latinos are generally under-represented in CAPS, despite the fact (this will be described below) that by the early 21st century things were getting worse instead of better in the areas where they are concentrated. Our surveys find that Latinos are least aware of the CAPS program and of beat meetings, and their awareness has been *falling* since the late 1990s. In general, involvement in beat meetings is driven by concern about crime and disorder, and attendance rates are highest in high-crime areas, but Latinos do not turn out in expected numbers They are particularly under-represented at beat meetings in diverse areas where their proportion of the population is relatively small, and the Hispanic community lacks representation by the loyal participants who keep coming back again month after month. Latinos are also under-represented on the District Advisory Committees that meet regularly with police commanders, despite the fact that committee members are appointed by the Police Department. In virtually every instance, these problems intersect with language. Members of the city's large and growing Spanish-language community report more neighborhood problems, fewer contacts with the police lower levels of CAPS awareness involvement, and higher levels of fear of crime than do their English-speaking counterparts.

CAPS awareness grew swiftly once the program became a citywide one in 1995. It

Figure 2
Latino Representation at Beat Meetings, 2002



reached its peak in the late 1990s and then leveled off a bit. Awareness among whites has stood at about 80 percent for some time, while it continues to grow a bit among the city's African-Americans. In 2003 fully 89 percent of African-Americans knew about CAPS. Awareness was lower and grew more slowly among Latinos, among whom it peaked at 73 percent in 1999; it is now dropping. CAPS awareness has dropped most among Latinos who prefer to be interviewed in Spanish rather than in English. CAPS awareness in this group dropped by a full 12 percentage points, from 68 percent in 1999 to 56 percent in 2003. By contrast, awareness among Latinos who in 2003 were interviewed in English stood at 86 percent.

Latinos are severely under represented at beat meetings, which are one of the most important and unique features of CAPS. Meetings between community residents and the police who work in their neighborhood have been a regular feature of CAPS since 1993. Beat meetings were first held in the experimental areas where CAPS was developed, and in 1995 they spread to the remainder of the city. The meetings have several purposes: they provide a forum at which police and residents can exchange information and prioritize local concerns. As they have evolved, beat community meetings have become venues for regular reports by police to the public on what they have done since the last meeting

in response to problems that were discussed. They can also be a vehicle for residents to organize their own problem-solving efforts. Finally, the meetings provide an opportunity for police and residents to get acquainted, and to build mutual respect and trust. The average beat meets ten times per year, about 250 beat meetings are held each month across the city, and in the recent period about 66,000 people have attended each year.

Figure 2 illustrates the magnitude of their under-representation. It describes the relationship between the demographic composition of beats and the background of those who attend meetings held there. Information about beat residents is based on Census data for 2000. The contrasting data on beat meeting participants is drawn from questionnaires distributed by observers who attended beat meetings during the summer of 2002. A total of 3,656 residents responded to the questionnaire in those beats.

Figure 2 examines the match between the percentages of beat residents and meeting participants who were Latinos. If Latinos turned out in numbers approximating their percentages in the population, the line that describes the data in Figure 2 would be a straight line running from zero–zero to 100–100. Instead, Latino participation tends to be low except in beats where a "critical mass" of them live. There it skyrockets, as illustrated by the rapidly accelerating regression line. But there are relatively few concentrated Latino beats in the city above the "takeoff" point, so gross under-representation of Latinos is the norm. As Figure 2 illustrates, even when beats are about 60 percent Latino, the proportion of Latinos at beat meetings is less than 30 percent.

Beat meetings over-represent other groups as well. One cleavage is around education. In the average beat 70 percent of residents were high school graduates, but an average of 88 percent of meeting participants had at least a high school degree. Older neighborhood residents are also over-represented. The areas examined here averaged 11 percent over age 65, but the beat meeting average was 24 percent—more than double the population figure. On many dimensions the representation provided by Chicago's beat meetings demonstrates a strong "establishment" bias. As in many social programs that rely on volunteers, better-off and more established members of the community are quickest to get involved and contribute to the effort. Research on involvement in neighborhood anti-crime organizations finds that higher income, more educated, homeowning and long-term area residents more frequently know of opportunities to participate and are more likely to get involved when they have the opportunity. In the case of beat meetings, Latinos were the most under-represented racial group.

Chicago has certainly made efforts to involve Latinos more deeply in its community policing effort. Publicizing CAPS is the responsibility of the civilian-staffed CAPS Implementation Office. In the past, this has been carried out via promotional spots on radio and television, ads in local newspapers, posters at rapid transit stops and high traffic areas, refrigerator magnets and pens with the CAPS logo; and information booths at city events and neigh-

borhood festivals staffed by Implementation Office. Most materials are prepared in both English and Spanish, and ads have appeared on Spanish-language radio and TV stations. The media component includes paid promotional announcements and a police-staffed talk show on Spanish-language radio. Spanish-speaking community organizers from the Implementation Office work to generate involvement in beat meetings, marches, and problem-solving projects. The city's emergency communication system is staffed to handle foreign-language calls, and the Police Department itself has about 800 Spanish-speaking officers. The Department's cadet diversity training includes some role-playing exercises revolving around linguistic issues. But despite these efforts, integration of the city's Latino residents into CAPS has proven difficult.

At the same time, the 2002 study found that relatively few beat meetings are conducted in foreign languages. Two percent of the 291 meetings we attended were conducted primarily in English but featured some Spanish translation, and another two percent were truly bilingual in character. (One meeting featured some translation into Polish, the second most frequently requested foreign language by those calling the city's 911 and 311 service hotlines.) Translators at the meetings were all police officers or resident amateurs and the meetings ran at a slow pace. No one likes this, so translation is discouraged. A North Side community organizer noted, "The beat facilitator should not make statements like 'Nobody needs translation here, do they?' because that automatically intimidates many people or they think that it sets them apart for asking for help." Spanish-language meetings are being held at the district level. These are intended to match officers and residents who can most effectively collaborate in Spanish. However, when we attended a session that was billed as a "Spanish-speaking district wide meeting," none of the police officers spoke Spanish at all. Community leaders and aldermanic representatives occasionally shared with them the gist of what was going on at this standing-room-only meeting.

It is important to note that one of the most significant barriers to CAPS involvement among Latinos relates to demography. Age is among the most significant barriers. In every community in Chicago, beat meeting attendance—and especially frequent attendance—is higher among older residents, and Latinos are the youngest of Chicago's large demographic groups. In the 2003 city survey only 6 percent of Latinos—as compared to 25 percent of African-Americans and 21 percent of whites—were in the age 65 and older category Chicago's Latinos also move frequently, and the length of time that people have invested in a neighborhood is also a powerful predictor of CAPS involvement. Latinos are the most likely to both be in the labor force *and* to have children living at home—two competing demands for their time. Among Latinos as a whole, 66 percent reported having children at home in our 2003 survey, compared to 43 percent for African-Americans and 22 percent of whites. For Spanish-speaking Latinos the figure was 72 percent. More than 70 percent of Latinos were also working at the time they were interviewed. As a North Side community organizer noted, "Parents

have limited [financial] resources so they have to work one or two jobs in order to survive. Since they have to work so many hours, they are unable to attend either because they are at work or because they aren't able to leave their children with someone so that they can attend the CAPS meetings." All of these demographic disadvantages are redoubled among the city's Spanish-speaking Latinos. They are even more likely to be young, poor, less educated and renters than are their English-speaking counterparts. On the other hand, it is not to be forgotten that Latino culture builds on many important strengths. As a priest in Pilsen put it, "They have great faith, family life, lots of kids, willingness to believe, spirit of survival, industriousness and craftsmanship."

The tremendous gulf between Spanish speakers and the police that we observed in Figure 1 will continue to be a barrier, however. Many of our informants emphasized the importance of personal relationships in mobilizing the Latino community. As a social service agency staff member in Little Village [another port-of-entry community in our study] put it, "Latinos tend to put a face to programs." He said that face-to-face interactions between CAPS liaisons and residents would be essential to reach Spanish-speaking Latinos. One of our staff researchers summarized what she learned from a summer of interviewing:

> One of the essential cultural characteristics of the Latino culture is the importance placed on relationships and friendships. CAPS representatives must meet people face-to-face and personally invite them to come out to beat meetings. This summer I often heard people say, "I never got personally invited" to attend beat meetings."

During the course of the study, we also found that interviewees were more likely to talk with *us* when we had a connection to someone they knew. In interviews, the desire for police to put forth effort to really get to know Latinos in the community was strongly expressed. As one North Side community activist put it,

> "The Police Department needs to inform the community in another manner, like door knocking. Beat officers need to be out there interacting with the people. They may be afraid at first, but they need to start the relationship building somewhere. Officers need to get out of their cars and talk directly to the people about the CAPS program. It means a lot to people when they see that."

A priest in Little Village reiterated this theme.

> It's not enough to just see beat officers at the beat meetings every month. The officers need to park their cars and walk through the neighborhoods. I think this would work because Latinos are very relational. They might begin to trust the officers if they see some effort in connecting with them.

Many interviewees proposed personal contact through door-to-door efforts, street interaction or face-to-face follow-up after other strategies (like flyer distribution). A North Side youth services coordinator stated that, "officers should be community organizing too! They should be in plain clothes, mingling with the residents, talking to them, like in 'un café'—building relationships and getting to know what's really going on in the area first hand." Some felt the police were not targeting the right places for publicity and recommended flyers and posters in area businesses, such as grocery stores, highly frequented by Spanish-speaking Latinos. Speaking of turnout

efforts in his area, a priest working in Little Village noted,

> This needs to be done in areas where the majority of the people hang out. It is okay to advertise in the libraries, but not everyone goes to the library. I'd like to see more advertisements at the supermarkets, which is where adults go. People stop to read the bulletin board before or after leaving the store.

LATINOS FACE DISTINCTIVE NEIGHBORHOOD PROBLEMS

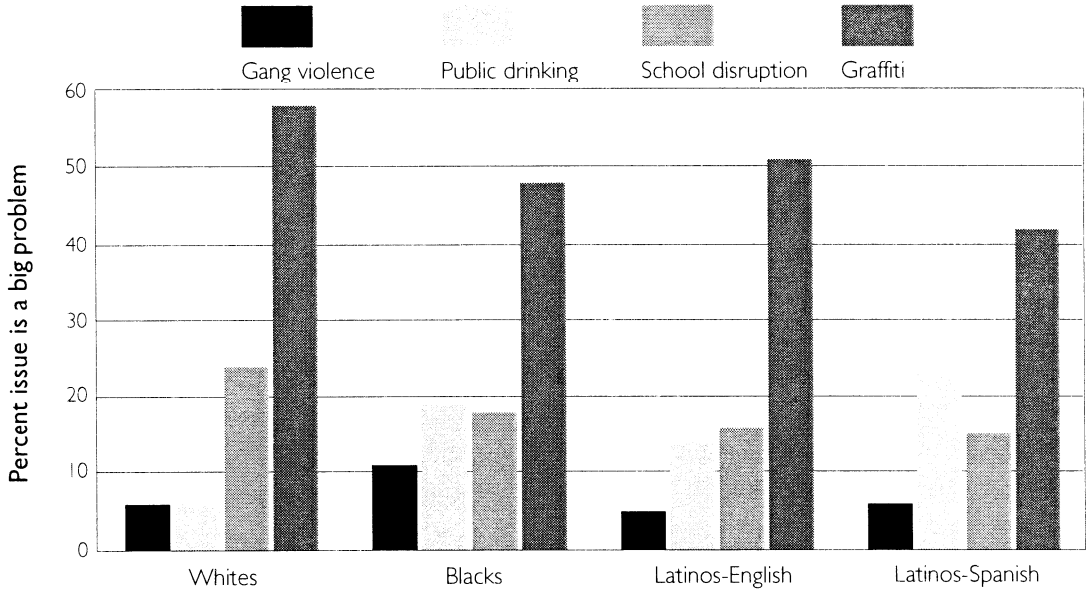
Four of the most distinctive problems identified by Latinos in the surveys are described in Figure 3. It depicts the racial and linguistic distribution of concern about gang violence, public drinking, graffiti and school disruption among Chicago residents. Respondents were asked to rate these and other issues as a big problem, some problem or no problem in their neighborhood.

Gangs. In our 2003 study areas, concern about gangs manifested itself in many aspects of residents' lives. In their view, recruitment of new members begins in school, and at an early age. As one experienced community organizer described it, "Gangs are present at elementary and high schools. Recruitment starts early around fifth grade. By sixth or seventh grade the kid is already within a gang." During an interview with a local school official, our interviewer noted, "He said there has been an increase in the number of 'crews' or gangs inside the school. He said they emulate other gang members and are 'wanna-bes.' Most recently he identified three crews at school made up of fourth, fifth and sixth graders. According to Mr. ____, second grade students are already talking about gangs." A CAPS worked explained, "Gangs are in all the schools. They are always looking for people to join. Latino youths are easy targets of gangs. When kids disengage from parents and do not listen to parents, gangs offer an alternative lifestyle and family. They [Latino youths] are vulnerable to this [gang] lifestyle. Kids want to fit in."

There is concern that gangs and the symbols associated with them have become part of the youth culture in these communities. In their attitudes, dress and even pretensions, Latino youths emulated even gangs they were not actually associated with. An experienced youth worker said that they are "saturated" with gang-related paraphernalia, such as logos. "The first thing kids do is 'put their colors on' as they walk out of school." He recalled that recently in an after-school drawing class a girl who was not affiliated with any gangs drew a picture of a playboy bunny (symbol of the "Two Sixers," a leading gang in our port-of-entry study area) walking a dog with a crown (symbol of the Latin Kings, another leading gang). To him, her picture signified Two Sixers' domination of Latin Kings, though she was not a member of either.

Fear of gangs greatly circumscribes the lives of young people in these areas. One of our interviewers summarized it this way: "The neighborhood is divided into two zones. Little Village is controlled by Two Sixers on one side, and by Latin Kings on the other. Youths have limited movements. Even if they're not gang members, they're scared to go to the other side of their neighborhood for fear of being mistaken for a gang member." It can be very

Figure 3
Concern About Selected Latino Problems, 2003



dangerous to be on the wrong side of a gang's boundaries and have to cross over it. If young men become associated with a gang that does not include their school in its turf, they may have to drop out; it will be too dangerous to continue to attend there.

Aggressive efforts to counter gangs potentially put police in conflict with neighborhood youths who do not count themselves as gang numbers. As the coordinator of an anti-crime program in our established area put it,

> The relationship between them is tense and hostile. The police do a lot of stereotyping of the youths. Many kids may appear to be in a gang because of their "look"—that is, the way they dress and behave. So this leads to harassment by the police all the time. The youths are angry because they can't dress the way they want to and not be harassed, or they can't hang out in groups because anything more than two looks suspiciously like "gang activity" to the police. The youths engaging in these behaviors are stopped and searched without any real provocation.

Aggressive police action can backfire when gangs find ways to retaliate. A youth worker in Little Village described it this way: "The gang members that Mr. _____ works with told him that when the police rough them up they [gang members] just get more pissed off. They have to redeem themselves after getting slapped by the police. This usually leads to more violence in the area."

Adults face the risk of gang retaliation as well; it is not just other youths who are at risk. As one resident put it, "It's like we're in our own little jails that we can't leave. There isn't an uninfested place nearby." For some, fear of gangs and retaliation for speaking out against them can be overpowering. Describing

the gangs active in one port-of-entry area, a respondent noted "They are all over the place and vicious. They start recruiting kids when they are nine, 10, 11 years old. They disregard the age of the victim. They terrorize a lot of people here. Residents know who is spray-painting their garage but won't tell because they will burn down their car. Gangs bring drugs, guns and violence."

Fear of retaliation extends to participation in beat meetings. Gang members reportedly go to beat meetings to "stake out who is there. Gang members threaten those who attend beat meetings." As one business leader described it, "The place is infested with gangs. People can't go and speak [at beat meetings]. [By speaking] they can bring problems to their families." He said that relatives of gang members go to beat meetings just to find out who is talking about gangs. A long-time community activist shared her thoughts regarding meetings held in her beat. "She stated that the people don't feel safe having the meeting at _____ because of the gang-bangers that hang around. She stated that previously it was located in two other places; they moved it from _____ Church to _____ School to ____ Park, primarily for the same reasons: residents fearing the gangbangers that were hanging around." A nun working in Little Village described it this way:

> There's a fear factor of the gangs retaliating against the person and his or her family. There's also the belief that CAPS is in cahoots with the gangs. I heard a rumor from a CAPS attendee at _____. People had gone in good faith to talk about a homicide that took place. When they arrived they immediately recognized the beat facilitator as a close relative of the gang member that was responsible for the killing, and they noticed his lack of interest in the matter.

School Disruption. Given the locus of gang recruitment and the visibility of gang culture in schools, it is not surprising that concern about disruption in and around schools is a highly rated problem among the city's Latinos. School disruption is also a relevant issue for Latinos because they are the group with the most children. Our informants were well aware of the problem of violence in their neighborhood schools, and in the 2003 survey more than 50 percent of Spanish-speaking Latinos thought it was a big problem in their neighborhood. One resident noted that "gangs are present nearby at _____ School. They wait outside. They intimidate children who are going to and returning from school." A local school official described where she finally turned for help with the problem: "Police officers came to the school earlier to escort students who were afraid to walk out of school for fear of rival gangs. They were respectful and did not go to classrooms without my permission... They escorted students...They are always roaming around the area." A school official in a North Side beat indicated that while there is potential for trouble in schools, the biggest problems are just outside. "There's lots of trouble with gangs inside the school. Gang activity happens both inside and outside of school. We control it inside. We have cameras and security. We have fights among gangs. The problem is once they leave school, especially if they live on the other side of the boundary."

Our informants voiced a litany of related concerns about schools. According to them, the schools are overcrowded, and new schools are needed. Dropout rates are very high among Latino youths. A city employee commented that, "the city suffers from substandard education, with many kids dropping out of school, causing the cycle to repeat. Also, teen pregnancy is another problem. They are younger than ever before." As a priest in Little Village describes it, "children dropping out of school is really affecting the community. There are many bad schools in this neighborhood. Only four percent of kids can read at their grade level." The pastor gave an example of a sixth grader in the after school program who did not know her vowels. "When you can't read, there's a whole world closed to you. So you turn to gangs and drugs."

Public Drinking. In the 2003 survey, 48 percent of Spanish-speaking Latinos reported that public drinking was a big problem in their neighborhood. There is a particularly high concentration of problems associated with establishments selling alcohol in the port-of-entry beats we studied. As one civilian CAPS employee observed,

> The Little Village area does have problems with night clubs. Both the larger venues and smaller corner bars that get packed with people getting drunk, cruising the neighborhoods and potentially getting in trouble because of drunk driving. The bars are also selling liquor to minors.

But bands of men can also be observed drinking along the commercial arterials and in residential areas. One port-of-entry District Advisory Committee thought ". . . public drinking might be something cultural, since people in Pilsen tend to drink outside rather than inside a bar." Another DAC representative indicated that "drinking on the public way, urinating on people's property, and gambling on the corners (shooting craps) are all main problems in the neighborhood." Another city CAPS worker referred to public drinking as a social issue: "Once [men] have drinks they'll leave glasses outside and, in their buzzed condition they'll be intolerant of the spouse and kids," adding that such scenarios could lead to domestic violence.

Graffiti. In recent surveys the largest gap between Latinos and others in their views of neighborhood problems was for graffiti. Chicago has attacked graffiti aggressively, and concern about it among whites and African-Americans dropped steadily over time. In our surveys, graffiti now appears primarily to be a problem plaguing Latino neighborhoods. Graffiti is importantly a gang phenomenon. In the port-of-entry beats the most important gangs are the Latin Kings, the Two Sixers, the Bishops and the Ambrose. As a top police official described it, gangs in the Little Village area are strongly territorial. While they all are involved in the drug trade, they still retain the tradition of fighting for control of turf, over women and to act out their "machismo" self image. Gang violence starts with the marking of territory with graffiti, then enforcing the boundary if crossed by a member of another gang—by a drive-by shooting, if necessary.

Residents read the emergence of new graffiti carefully, pondering its significance for the community. One activist in our North

Side study area described her routine after she noticed gang symbols that had not been around before:

> I do rounds through the area, taking note of where new graffiti has popped up and reporting it to the police, as well as following up with the Graffiti Blasters [the city has teams of them]. I do this once every week without fail. Even if it's not my property I'll call and wait for the Graffiti Blasters to show up.

Graffiti can also appear as a reaction to police enforcement efforts. A community organizer on the north side commented, "Sometimes cops agitate them. A cop will search and humiliate a gang member. Once a kid is humiliated, the kid is angry. [The kid] is gonna go off, get high and turn against the cop. His reaction will be graffiti or something else."

LATINOS FACE *WORSENING* NEIGHBORHOOD CONDITIONS

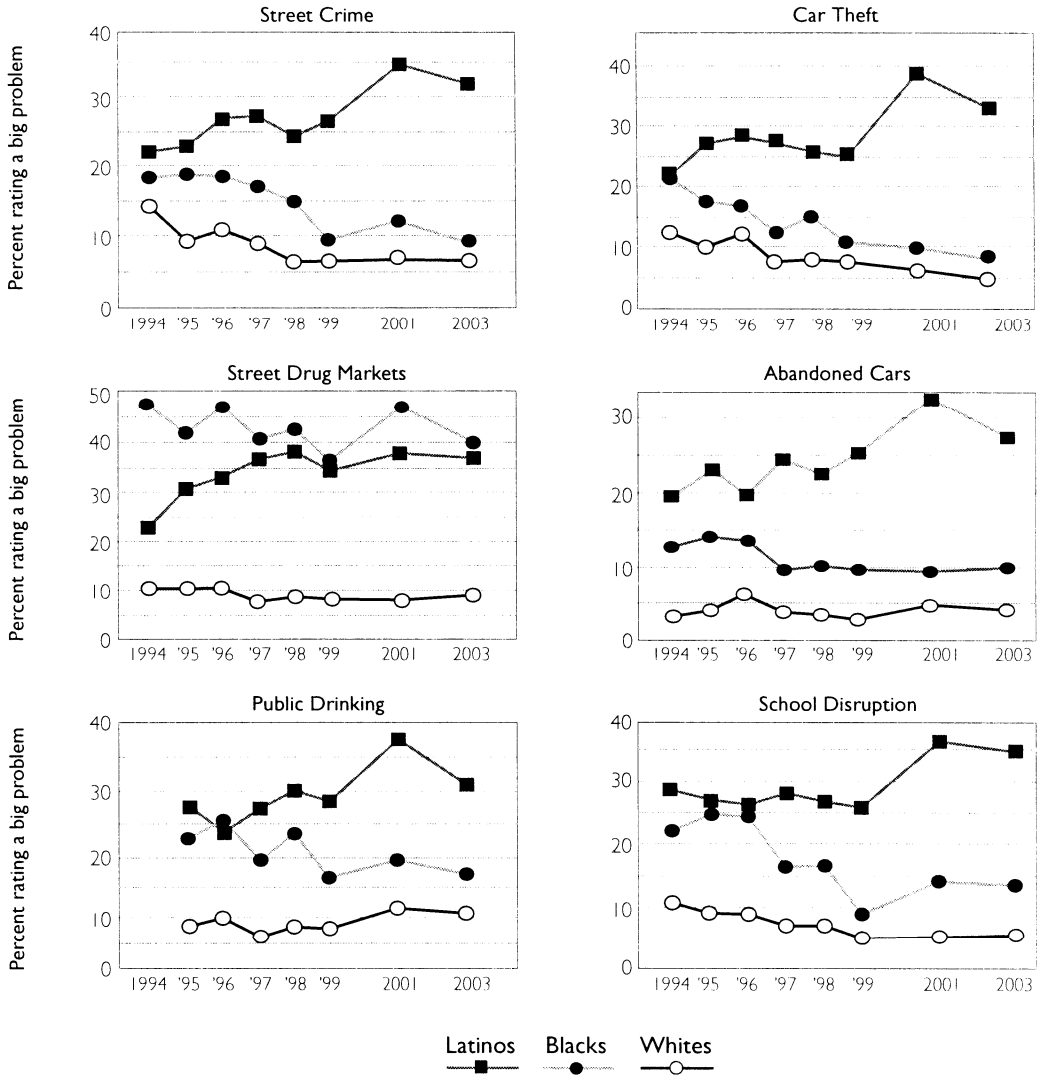
By many measures things got better in Chicago during the 1990s, at least for a majority of the population. To generalize, whites began with few serious concerns, but things got a bit better for them. African-Americans began with many serious problems, but they reported substantial improvements in neighborhood conditions over time. The city's Latinos, on the other hand, began with serious problems and saw little improvement over the course of a decade. By 2003, whites and African-Americans were in the most agreement about improvements in their neighborhoods—although blacks certainly still had a way to go before they could claim parity. Not much improved for Latinos, and in their eyes some problems even grew worse.

Figure 4 presents trends over time in survey measures of neighborhood problems, including some of those discussed earlier. The surveys were conducted yearly between 1994 and 1999, and then again in 2001 and 2003.[2] The Figure presents trends in selected measures of crime, social disorder and physical decay problems. Skogan and Steiner (2004a and 2004b) present the findings for many more measures in each of those categories.

Figure 4 depicts trends in perceived street crime and auto theft problems, but they serve as examples of virtually every measure of crime in the evaluation surveys. In the early 1990s African-Americans and Latinos reported about the same level of concern about crime. Then, during the course of the 1990s, the experiences of African-Americans and Latinos diverged. Over time, more and more African-Americans reported that things were not so bad. By 2003, many of their views had converged with those of whites, and they expressed relatively low levels of concern about both personal and property crime. But there was little good news in the 1990s for the city's growing Latino population. In the first survey they reported about the same level of crime problems as did African-Americans, but reports of concern by Latinos did not decline during the 1990s. Worse, their ratings jumped to new highs during the early 2000s. By 2003, the city's Latinos were *three times* more likely than whites *and* African-Americans to report that street crime, burglary and auto theft were big problems in their community.

The current concentration of drug problems in Latino and African-American areas is apparent

Figure 4
Trends in Neighborhood Conditions, 1994–2003



in Figure 4, but it too is the result of differential changes in reports of crime problems by Chicagoans. In 1994, almost half of African-Americans and 23 percent of Latinos rated street drug markets a big problem, compared to about 10 percent of whites. Drugs fund the operation of the large and powerful gangs dominating the city's African-American beats. Outbursts of gang violence there are frequently tied to conflict over control of street drug markets and illegal arms sales. Turf wars easily escalate into shootouts with semiautomatic weapons that put everyone in the neighborhood at risk. Residents speak at

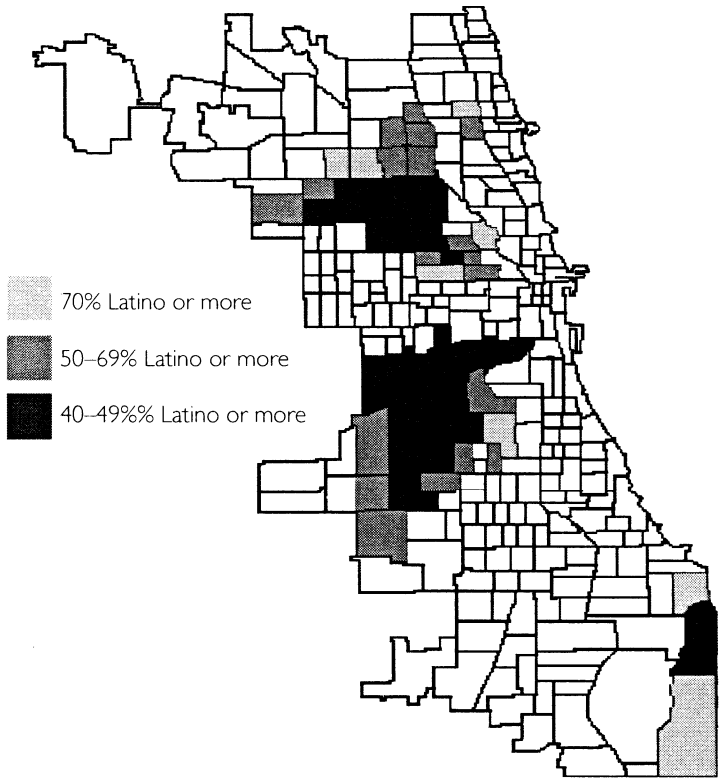
meetings with police about sleeping on the floor and away from the windows to avoid stray bullets, and many know families that have lost members to drug-related gang violence. During the course of the 1990s concern about street drug markets dropped from almost 50 percent to about 35 percent among the city's African-Americans. Like trends in many problems, these declines slowed or came to a halt in the early 2000s, but levels of concern continued to hover at their lowest point. Trends among Latinos are another story. The percentage of Latinos rating street drug markets a big problem rose steadily during the 1990s and then spiked upward in 2001 before receding to its 1999 high.

Likewise, whites began in the early 1990s with few serious concerns about physical decay in their neighborhood, and things did not change much for them. African-Americans began with many serious problems, but they reported improvements in neighborhood conditions over time. Figure 4 illustrates these trends using reports of abandoned car problems, which declined modestly. Concern among African-Americans about abandoned buildings dropped by half, from 22 percent to 11 percent, and concern about refuse-filled lots and graffiti declined by about 10 percentage points. The city's Latinos, on the other hand, began with serious problems and saw little improvement over the course of a decade. By 2003, it was whites and African-Americans who were in the most agreement about improvements in their neighborhoods—although blacks certainly still had a way to go. None of our measures of concern about physical decay improved for Latinos, and some grew worse.

The surveys also included measures of a range of social disorder questions that are represented in Figure 4 by concern about public drinking and disruption in and around schools. The bulk of improvements in the city were registered by African-Americans. They expressed substantial concern about social disorder during the early years of CAPS. In 1994, about 22 percent of blacks thought school disruption was a big problem in their neighborhood; the figure was the same for public drinking. Over time they reported improving in neighborhood conditions. The percentage of African-Americans expressing concern about disruption in and around schools dropped to only eight percent in 1999, before rebounding a bit to 14 percent in 2003. Concern about public drinking was also down a bit, before leveling off in the 2000s. On the other hand, Latinos saw few gains over the period. In 1994 and 1995, African-Americans and Latinos reported about the same level of concern about social disorder. But by 1999, the experiences of the two groups diverged dramatically, with Latinos being the most likely to report deteriorated conditions.

What is happening to the Latino community in Chicago? The Chicago story is that Latinos and African-Americans began the 1990s living in about the same conditions. Latinos and African-Americans gave their neighborhoods comparable ratings on many measures of social disorder, physical decay, and crime. But as the decade progressed the story became more complex as the views of the two groups diverged. Clear reasons for this can be found in demographic and survey data for these groups. In brief, the Latino community is

Figure 5
Areas of Latino Concentration, 2003



under pressure from immigration and internal growth, and in response it has cleaved apart. Things have gotten better for established, English-speaking Latinos living in diverse areas. They have grown worse for Spanish-speakers concentrated in the city's developing, heavily Latino barrios. Trend lines for English speakers in fact closely resemble those for blue-collar whites; it is the reports of Spanish speakers that account for the divergent trends depicted for Latinos in Figure 4. Because the number of barrio-dwellers is growing faster than the number of their counterparts, as a group Chicago's Latinos have found themselves progressively worse off. By contrast, the city's African-American community is not expanding. Its numbers are static, and there is not much immigration from the American South or elsewhere. While they are differentiated by class, trends in Chicago's African-American areas have been much more uniform—and things have gotten more uniformly better—during this nine-year period.[3]

The effects of immigration on the composition of the Latino population can be seen in the surveys. Because they arrive without much formal education—and, in fact, many are illiterate

even in Spanish—immigrants have had the effect of pushing down average levels of education for the group as a whole. In our 1994 survey, 71 percent of those identified as Latinos reported having a high school degree; by 1999 that figure had dropped to 54 percent. The Spanish-language version of the survey included questions designed to reflect the educational experiences of persons from Mexico, but responses to these questions can also be combined with U.S. educational categories The effects of immigration from Mexico reflect the national pattern. Immigrants from Mexico and Central America bring with them low levels of educational attainment, even in comparison to immigrants from South America or the Caribbean.

The results of continued immigration can also be read in respondents' language of choice in the surveys. Spanish-speaking interviewers screened and interviewed the randomly selected respondents when they preferred to be interviewed in Spanish. Using this indicator of linguistic preference, about one-third of Latino respondents were classed as "Spanish-speakers" in the 1994 survey; in 1997 that figure was 49 percent, and by 1999 it was 61 percent, a tremendous demographic change.

A final key point about demographic change among Chicago's Latinos is that during the course of the 1990s they became more geographically concentrated. Between the 1990 and 2000 censuses, Chicago's Latino population grew from 546,000 to 754,000, and most of this growth was concentrated in a growing number of heavily Latino neighborhoods on the city's West and Near North sides. Figure 5 maps areas of Latino concentration in 2003, based on our population estimates. Between 1990 and 2000, the number of Latinos living in beats that were at least 50 percent Latino in composition in 1990 rose from 290,400 to 491,600, a 69 percent increase. By contrast, the number of Latinos living in beats that were less than 50 percent Latino in 1990 grew by only two percent. By 2000, two-thirds of all Chicago's Latinos lived in majority-Latino police beats.

Statistically, concentration, language and poverty in these emerging barrios explained most of the negative trends revealed in the surveys. Spanish-speakers have always reported more problems, but over time the two groups have begun to report more divergent experiences. One reason for this divergence was the increasing concentration of poorer incoming Latinos in beats that were heavily populated by Spanish-speakers. Latinos living in heavily Latino beats report worse problems of all kinds; the effects are non-linear, for reports of problems jump sharply along Latinos where their neighborhood is more than about 60 percent Latino.

The improving fortune of Chicago's African-Americans was, by contrast, a relatively widespread trend. Changes for the better in reports of both decay and disorder problems ran in parallel for subgroups within the black population. African-Americans were divided by social class. The largest split was between home owners and renters, who differed by about 10 percentage points on levels of social disorder, and seven percentage points on physical decay. More-educated African-Ameri-

cans reported fewer neighborhood problems than did less-educated African-Americans, and there were parallel differences by income as well. But although poor and better-off African-Americans began with different *levels* of problems, trend lines for these groups dropped in unison between 1994 and 1999, then leveled off in the new century.

PROGNOSIS

The trends I present here are certainly well known to the police and civic officials. I have briefed them all on several occasions, and they have been surprisingly thorough consumers of all of our research reports. We have worked together on the beat meeting attendance problem, including trying Saturday meetings and Spanish-only meetings. The police have made good use of their close connections with the Catholic church to place announcements in Sunday church bulletins and church social halls, and their civilian community organizers include a number of experienced and effective Spanish-speakers. They have no particular solution on the horizon for their relatively bad image except to provide good service and focus their media dollars more intensively on the city's Latinos. Using our surveys we have monitored the effectiveness of their mass media campaign advertising CAPS and calling for participation. For example, our research findings mirror those of studies of political involvement—we found that television does nothing to encourage turnout, and as a result, they have spent their media dollars in other, perhaps more effective ways. However, awareness of the program seems stalled at present levels, and we have not found any media effects on the image of the police, either. We have also pressed them on the issue of the representativeness of their district advisory committees. Sustaining an effective committee is one of the responsibilities of district commanders, but despite being in their hands these committees are almost as unrepresentative of Latinos as beat meetings. As for trends in neighborhood problems, the strong tendency for the city's most recent immigrants to lay low, not reporting crimes and not involving the police in resolving the local issues that concern them, means that the divergent trends presented above do not appear on the police department's radar screen. These unwelcome trends come to light only through analysis of our independently collected data and our detailed analyses of city service delivery data, 311 calls, and other archival data sources. While the police enjoy access to deep, sophisticated databases on crimes and arrests, much of what matters in the city's neighborhoods is not measures by their information systems, and largely escapes notice when resources are allocated and operational decisions are made.

However, the issues reviewed here are significant in part because of the very large numbers of people involved. As noted above, Latinos are now the second largest group in Chicago, and along with a smaller number of Asians they are the only ones that are growing. As the electoral significance of this shift becomes apparent and their political representatives gain a larger place at the table, these issues almost certainly will matter.

Notes

1. More details about the program can be found in Skogan and Hartnett, 1997, and Skogan, et al, 1999. The most recent evaluation report is Skogan and Steiner, 2004a.

2. No surveys were conducted in 2000 and 2002 to save money, for it seemed more important to extend the over-all length of the timeseries by moving to an every-other-year format. During 1994–96 the surveys included 1,300 to 1,800 respondents. During 1997–99 they involved 2,800 to 3,000 respondents. In 2001 just over 2,500 individuals were interviewed, and 3,140 participated in 2003. The most conservative response rates for the surveys ranged between 35 and 60 percent, declining somewhat over time. A small 1993 survey was conducted only in English and did not include the neighborhood problem questions.

3. For the statistical analysis lying behind this section, and detailed trend lines by language and ethnic concentration, see Skogan and Steiner, 2004b.

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Justice and Safety in America's Immigrant Communities

CONFERENCE SERIES REPORT

Martha King, Editor

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