INTRODUCTION

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The last three decades of the 20th century marked the beginning of epochal socio-economic transformation of US society. The economic reverberations of these changes have continued through the first decade of the 21st century where the income and wealth gap continues to widen. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the cities and urban areas of the United States where the damaging effects of the deep recession on the living standards of working class, low-and middle-income American workers and their families are felt the greatest.

In addition to macroeconomic trends, immigration and population shifts have exerted a tremendous economic impact on US cities. Recent national protests in major cities across the United States against several proposed changes in US immigration policy and citizenship status has once again brought attention to big cities where the much of precipitous growth of the immigrant populations has occurred.

On March 24th 2010 the US Census Bureau announced an estimated is 50.5 million Latinos lived in the United States making people of “Latino origin” the nation's largest ethnic minority group. Latinos constitute 16 percent of the nation's total population of nearly 308.7 million. It is also projected that this population will grow to nearly 132.8 million by July 1, 2050. According to this projection, Latinos men, women and their children will constitute 30 percent of the nation's population in 2050. Currently the Mexican American population constitutes 66 percent of the 48.4 million, with Puerto Ricans another 9 percent and Cubans and Salvadorans with each group representing 3.4 percent. The remainder was of some other Central American and South American origin.
More important than the sheer numbers is the fact that Latina/o men and women and their families are a growing sector of the U.S. working class and a fragile first generation middle class. Equally significant, Latino men and women are increasingly concentrated in the very industries that have been most influenced by the economic restructuring of the United States. Trapped in low-wage jobs in an economy that is producing far too few living-wage jobs needed for the increasing number of workers entering the labor market and to sustain a robust and democratic economy.

Principles of critical urbanism will guide the reader through the volume in an attempt to examine “Latinos” within the context of the changing role of cities in a market-driven and racialized environment. First there is the practical reality that a growing portion of the world’s population lives and works in the cities. So, the knowledge of how cities develop and function is a critical component of a planner’s intellectual “tool kit.” Understanding how cities are affected by socio-economic change, other major areas of urban theory will enhance the ability of planners to develop appropriate policy measures. In addition, the dramatic social changes that are re-shaping the terrain of planning politics are predominantly urban phenomena. The characteristics of contemporary cities increasing diversity, “globalization” of production and consumption, new sources of inequality and uneven development are creating different terrains for the policy actions that constitute the heart of the study of urbanism in late capitalism.

The contributors to this book represent a diverse group of scholars attempting to link their own unique theoretical interpretations and approaches to political and policy interventions in the spaces and cultures of Latino everyday life. It matters how cities are theorized as this underpins the ideological and political design and the policy frameworks adopted. Given the gaps between explanatory and normative concepts underlying urban planning and the radical changes in the
U.S., as well as global economies, political systems, and information technologies, many subject areas must be considered experimentally. Thus, no amount of literature in a book of this sort will fully circumscribe all the nuances and subtleties of these dynamic relationships—Latinos in changing cities.

On a range of levels, urban environmental crises are traceable to racism and market-driven forces. The latest iteration, situated in a false claims of a “new” or a “smart” approach to envisioning the future of the city, is nothing less than a charade baldly attempting to cloak over an irrational legacy of capitalist planning. When Bullard, Johnson and Torres denounced planning’s main production in the modern era, sprawl as ‘stupid growth’ (Bullard et al. n.d.), and this statement implicitly exposed a profession that had unilaterally cast its dubious history within the contours of failed suburbia (Ibid; Diaz 2005). This race to envelope planning practice in a new ideology is a shallow and intellectually dishonest evasion of a thorough and painful acknowledgment of institutional and intellectual failure. Euro-centrists, who continue to exert control and dominance over the educational and administrative functions of planning, are reluctant, derelict and evasive in placing credit due where credit exists, especially in the necessary discourse over why the suburban model and the promise of federally funded revitalization in the Post WW II era continue systemic irrationalities within the intersection of planning, public policy and the environment.

The hierarchy that persists is not ‘new’, nor will spinning the construction of a ‘new ideology’ shield either society or planning from a history of failed urban policy. On a multitude of levels, the project of planning continues to rely on a rote comprehension within the rational-functional mantra (Taylor 1998) that is reified within an elitist, Eurocentric arena which has proven resistant to critique from ethnic communities decrying a legacy of recycling failed policy.
Innumerable planning graduate programs maintain token minority representation, with the University of California system being among the worst. One of the editors of this edited book is one such token faculty member in a planning department. The levels of power in the profession, both public and private sectors, remain sequestered in a narrowly defined, ethnicity cleansed, cloistered enclave. Yet, when this system of dominance is challenged, the tried and true class based defense emerges, technical knowledge, public ignorance, professional experience, managerial proficiency, bureaucratic power relations and/or privileged educational attainment.

The structural economic, psychological and environmental suburban related crises (Beatley 2000; Deleage 1994; Barry 2005; Booth 2004) confronting planning were created and defended by this very hierarchy. Contradictions and irrationalities, readily apparent in current planning discourse are not ‘new’, ‘recent’ nor ‘smart, they are admission of the fundamental failure of Eurocentric control over planning education and practice for over two generations. Thus, any claim toward enlighten discourse will only be initiated by addressing who was (and is) most responsible for the failures of planning into the current era. Only after this historical and critical approach to planning is achieved, invariably incorporating the voices of excluded ethnic others, will planning create the potential space for meaningful transformations and, potentially egalitarian transitions in both practice and urban social change.

This analysis necessarily confronts a legacy of racism in planning. On multi-levels, planning education, the “training” of students, private and public sector practice, the blatant manipulation of redistributive federal programs and planning ideology, the profession has yet to fundamentally address its regressive past. Thus, any attention of barrio spatial relations in the current era remains shrouded in a failure to address this problematic history as an initial stage in restructuring both a pro-active barrio urban strategy and to engage Latina/o community
leadership in an inclusionary and egalitarian manner. The urban writings of Ernesto Galarza are a good example of a progressive public intellectual serving in a pro-active strategic manner in the Mexican American community. He was a prolific writer and acute observer of the Mexican American urban condition. His wide-ranging and groundbreaking work in urban politics and human geography has not been given attention by the planning community as well as Latino urban scholars. A key challenge to planning, in all its manifestations, is will the boorish racism and especially the embedded intellectual parochialism in planning education and practice ever end?

*Situating ‘El Barrio’ in planning discourse: Lessons from the front line*

Latina/o urbanism has a rich and eclectic history that both informs current trends in planning and exhibits the critically central role of the Ciudadano in civic society. Barrio everyday life within, granted a historically segregated and discriminated urbanism, has maintained a vitality and sense of place that validates the importance of the urban, in the midst of a decentralized, sprawl logic the permeates planning. The power of Latina/o culture is a fundamental characteristic of barrio urbanism, a symbolic resistance to racism and a celebration of culturally situated social practices. Interwoven into this urban milieu is an internally defended concept of the importance of the social, in what Alain Touraine articulates, that agency and ‘return of the social actor’, has not been lost in the rush to a postmodern explanation to all things urban (Touraine 1988).

The concept of the Ciudadano, situated in everyday life and urban culture, celebrates the most mundane and fundamental of the social, the act of walking. Beyond a simple exercise in basic activity, within barrios it encapsulates the richness of social knowledge and the incorporation of the totality of space. This practice is embedded with the long-term evolution of
friendship, personal acknowledgment, communication, communal sharing and civic entitlement. Visually, it lends itself to an appreciation of jardines, color, calles, arbols, tiendas, arte publico y la vida de la calle. Culturally, this activity has offered an historic respite from a repressive, discriminatory society that has traditionally marginalized everyday life as viciously as ethnic difference. The art of walking through el barrio, generational, practical and pleasure is an aesthetic that only recently planning has lamely attempted to reclaim.

One of the underlying social disconnects in relation to ethnic difference and barrios, is a history of pathetic Eurocentric fear of the other (Doob 1999; Bowser and Hunt 1996). El barrio has been stereotyped as a mysterious, dangerous and threatening space. In this sense, racism creates a series of irrational myths that assume the characteristic of the real. Thus, unreal assumptions, which are reinforced by racist ideology over time, become symbolic reality. El ciudadano caminando por la calle, in this context, is considered a fearful opposite that should be controlled and dominated. Everyday cultural practices are perceived as sinister resistance to mainstream society that demands subservience to a suburban anti-city ideology. Cloaked in mystery, barrio culture has been ignored and totally misunderstood by planning. This has lead to one of the most racist, Eurocentric hypocrisies in modern planning; the false claim that New Urbanism is something new to the city.

Historically, environmental and sustainable urbanism is fundamental to spatial relations within el barrio. On four key levels, mixed uses, dense housing patterns, public transit and active use of public streets, barrio social practices have been in the vanguard of sustainable urban policy. In relation to maximizing the utilization of space, due to segregation and failed recreational policies, the concept of public space and interactive user space has been reconstructed within barrios. *La tierra es pars los ninos*, whether a side or front yard of
neighbors, the street or running over and around picket fences, space is viewed as a civic resource (Gamez 2002; Rojas 1999). In relation to trendy architectural responses to the alienation of the city, most barrio residents would be humored when informed that front porches are a ‘must amenity’. Environmentally, everyday life in barrios has engaged in recycling and urban farming.

Responding to economic marginalization and necessity, barrio residents have actively recycled a wide range of materials (Pena 2005). *Ropa, madera, pipas, ventanas, puertas, ladrillos y tinás* are among the innumerable materials that were adaptively reused for personal use, landscape design, structures, and/or art. In fact, no other social sector has been more directly engaged in active recycling throughout the 20th century than barrio residents.

In relation to food production and organic farming, for both pleasure and leisure, or to supplement household nutrition, barrio residents have continued to produce food since the 1700s. In the past quarter century, a vibrant *jardinero* movement has transformed numerous derelict and vacant zones of the city into productive use. *Una explosion de verde, yerbas, floras, verduras y fruta* has resulted from intensive labor that beautifies the city and offers non-toxic food resources for local and regional residents (Pinderhughes 2004). While elites remain intent on repressing some of these sites, the battle between *jardineros* against the City of Los Angeles and a property owner in South Central Los Angeles (Vasquez 2005) is a prominent recent example, *la gente* continually break new ground, expanding the use of urban land from sterile concrete toward organic food production.

This type of fundamental environmentalism is at the vanguard of the future of the city. In the context of barrio spatial relations, recycling and food production are historical and constant. Active recycling, especially given a transition toward a market economy for selected reusable
materials, retains an influence in the barrio economy. Food production at the local level, viewed as an abandoned prospect ceded to a ‘sterile concrete’ reality, has not only maintained a central role in everyday barrio culture, it has expanded in late urban capitalism.

Barrio spatial relations have been one of the most fundamental aspects of urbanism in the Southwest since the 1600s. In conjunction with a prior pattern of settlements among First Nations, colonies and barrios constitute the initial structure of cities in this region. In fact, until the era of railroad expansion, barrios were the urban. The influx of Euro-Americans into the Southwest (Rosenbaum 1981) in the latter stages of the 19th Century ushered in a fundamental ethnic transition, which has only been reversed in the last two decades. The evolution of cities is directly correlated with barrios and colonies. The three largest Latina/o urban geographies in this society are in El Paso, San Antonio and Los Angeles.

The barrio geography of cities of the Southwest, has in the past twenty five years significantly expanded (Diaz 2005; Suro and Singer 2002) and is on the precipice of an ethnic reconquesta. The most substantial Latina/o geography in this society, East Los Angeles (Valle and Torres 2000; Romo 1983; Acuña 1988), has exploded into what is now considered “the Greater Eastside.” This is a zone of approximately 450 square miles, stretching east of the Los Angeles river into the central San Gabriel Valley, and south from Highland Park into the small cities that constitute Southeast Los Angeles county. This ethnic and cultural transformation is the most fundamental aspect of urban policy associated with virtually every city in the Southwest and increasingly, cities throughout the nation. Barrio spatial expansion is rapidly surging into surrounding communities, working class suburbs and in some instances domineering space in entire counties. Los Angeles county is now 50% Latina/o, with a system of polynucleated barrios, which Mark Gottdiener had projected for suburbs in this region (1985) and whose
enlightened theoretical analysis should now be transposed in recognition of barrio urbanism.

In relation to redistributive policies, barrios have engaged in innumerable *luchas* against racism in planning and public policy. The urban cartel has consistently attacked the integrity of barrio spatial relations through eminent domain, highway routes and other economic oriented policies. From the era of structural political exclusion, barrio leaders have engaged in protests critiquing inequitable land use proposals and redevelopment ruptures which regressively impact barrios. Early social movements dating from the 1940s and 1950s emerged in Segunda Barrio in El Paso, the Westside in San Antonio, Chavez Ravine and East Los Angeles, Varrio Viejo in Tucson, rent strikes in Spanish Harlem, and land grant confrontations in Colorado and New Mexico. In spite of the position of distinct economic, political and historical marginalization (Darder and Torres 2004), it is an irrational assumption that the Latina/o community has not been an active participant in land use decisions.

Since the initial era of the Model Cities program, barrio social movements have been a prominent aspect of the conflictive relationship between planning and Latinas/os. The Crusade for Justice in Denver evolved from a strident critique of that city’s racist redevelopment and redistributive policies (Vigil 1999). One of the first protest movements in California was a result of the dismantling of the entire western sector of Barrio Logan by California’s state transportation agency. This was unique in relation to the interventionist role of cultural workers in redefining space in a distinct culture image. Throughout the Southwest, barrio social movements engaged cities over the failure to provide the most basic of urban amenities, sewer and water systems, paved streets, recreational facilities for youth, and storm drain corridors. In relation to safe and decent shelter, the key goal of the War on Poverty, barrio leaders consistently
demanded attention to declining housing conditions in barrios in direct opposition to exclusive housing for the professional middle class adjacent or within civic centers. Since the 1970s and 1980s, which led directly into the environmental justice era, barrio social movements have been demanding equity from city planning and civic leaders.

What planning, in its aversion to barrio urban policies and politics, has failed to recognize are the lessons for profession which are readily apparent within the framework of barrio spatial relations? The most fundamental observation, given the history of social and economic relations, is the fact that there is nothing new concerning claims to a ‘New Urbanism’. The entire project implicit to recent critiques of environmental crises correlated with sprawl and suburbia have their genesis in the historical production and reproduction of spatial relations in barrios. Mixed use, walking, public transportation, recycling, active utilization of community space, social knowledge and public art are all fundamental urban concepts which have emanated from Latina/o space.

Euro-centrism in planning, in failing to acknowledge much less learn from ethnic others, is reflective of an earlier era, ‘total segregation’, a construct designed to nurture, celebrate and defend white privilege (Almaguer 1994; Doob 1999; Bowser and Hunt 1996). Intellectually, staunch resistance to incorporating other, existing visions of urban practice by a predominantly Euro-American discipline, continues to reflect the ‘ignorance of ethnically cleansed discourse’ of an earlier period in US history.

El barrio and the future of sustainable urban policy is an important contribution to the future of urbanization and cities. In relation to energy use, maximizing existing resources, supporting collective public amenities, urban density, adaptive reuse and eclectic uses of space, place barrios in the vanguard of urbanism. This ‘real’ urbanism has and continues to exist in
barrios throughout the US. In particular, the role of the Ciudadano, a return to the vibrant social role of agency within urbanism is central to virtually all ideologies arguing for a transformation of city planning and urban development in the future (Katz 1994; Fung 2001; Caithorpe 1993; Bailly et al. 2000). The art of walking, integral to enhancing and regenerating social knowledge, is the end game of this recent discourse. Thus, arguments to re-conceptualize urban design, create open space in neighborhoods, revert to mixed uses and abandoning rational functional zoning logic are predicated on, what Alain Touraine states, “Political and social institutions can no longer be the servants of a supposedly rational order or a progress that is supposedly inscribed in the laws of historical evolution; they must be made to serve the Subject...to defend the radiant future from the past.” (2002, 303). The return to the center of the city, Lefebvre’s demand on urbanism to challenge gentrification against the working class (1991) is also critical to this legacy. Social relations in barrios celebrate the value and significance of the Ciudadano. It is an historic lesson that planning has yet to truly comprehend or value.

A critique of planning literature and barrio urban reality

Barrio urbanism has a decidedly distant relationship within planning. Mainstream literature rarely situates Latinas/os in the center of urban crises or in relation to oppositional movements critical of urban revitalization policy (Valle and Torres 2000; Peña 2005; Diaz 2005). Latina/o environmentalists, including Devon Peña, Benjamin Marquez and Laura Pulido, critical theorist, Rodolfo Torres, and Nestor Rodriguez have developed the most important urbanist analysis in relation to barrios and planning. Mike Davis is among the very few non-Latino urbanists, who have incorporated a level of analytical specificity and social critique on urban policy and Latinas/os. His book, Magical Urbanism contains a wealth of information and is a major
contribution to understanding the emerging Chicano and Latino urban landscape in the United States.

Why has this problematic failure to incorporate Latinas/os into planning literature persisted into the 21st century? What rational serves to legitimate a profession that consistently claims ignorance in relation to a significant ethnic community, in light of that fact, barrios are a fundamental component of every major city in the Southwest and other powerful cities in the country? Why has planning literature remained as ethnically cleansed within the narrow logic of ‘Lilly White’ suburbs nurtured by the profession since the post WW II suburban expansion? When will this intellectual hypocrisy end?

How did Latinas/os disappear in planning literature? In excavating this reality, a few key aspects of inherent to the city planning field are critical, racism; classism and endorsement of exclusion in public policy will be briefly explored.

Planning has exhibited a long battle in resisting acknowledgment of stark racism in education, practice and policy (Darder 1995; Hoch 1994). From its earliest inception in the modern era (post 1950), planning has actively resisted minority voices. This reality established a series of historical contradictions to any claims of a pluralist democracy in urban policy through the late 1980s. Planning remained one of the most segregated professions well into the 1970s and early1980s. Planning schools practiced a de facto ‘color line’ in annual admissions. University of California Berkeley (where the author attended) was, and is, notorious for the paltry level of Latina/o graduate students through the 1990s, despite the fact that it is located in the state with the overwhelmingly highest percentage of Latinas/os in the nation. In addition, the level of doctoral students in planning is nothing less than a social crime, given the importance of urban policy and planning to the future of barrio revitalization.
Structural racism resulted in (and many argue retains) a distinctly racist social and professional environment for Latina/o planners through the 1980s. This was the critical period of federally supported revitalization programs. In the era when redistributive benefit should have substantially enhanced barrios, which would conceivably address structural crises by the current era, minorities were forced into marginalized roles with virtually no power. Those that resisted were professionally repressed or blacklisted from the city planning profession.

Obviously, this had severe, detrimental impacts on barrio redevelopment and reconstruction. In fact, few attempt to argue that any meaningful level of tangible benefit actually accrued to barrios during this era. Racism and resistance to ethnic difference were key factors necessitating the evolution of barrio social movements engaging in desperate *luchas* for the very survival of barrios in numerous cities. Instead of principled inclusionary, egalitarian planning, barrio leaders were forced into confrontational roles in defense of barrio spatial relations and the cultural defense of Latinas/os in cities.

The regressive influence of classism also maintained a central role in city planning practice through the early 1980s. Internally structured in city bureaucracies, the primary criteria were ethnicity and gender (Hoch 1994). This was the similar type of ‘qualification’ for college admissions. For minorities in general and Latinas in particular, access to a professional degree, and thus a career in planning was a highly speculative proposition. Situated in an economy that defended systemic exclusion (Doob 1999), city planners often acted in defense of class privilege. This established an arena of friction and opposition within barrio constituencies critical of a range of failures in urban policy (Feagin 1989; Rodriguez 1993; Davis 2000; Diaz 2005).

Legitimating functioned as the key goal of the profession, not qualitative adherence toward actually revitalizing declining zones of the city. Sequestered in a male, Eurocentric
dominated world view, planning engendered a sense of siege mentality against the universe beyond the ‘gates of city hall’. They normatively rejected oppositional voices, based on the merits of different alternatives, but over which social sector should be ceded total control over planning knowledge and urban policy (Taylor 1998). In reinforcing privilege, planning stridently denied barrio residents from establishing proactive, community based alternatives to rational functional planning practice. Class status replaced enlightened practice which alienated multi-publics and created an isolationist vision of practice. In innumerable planning departments, maintaining total power over urban policy served as the mandate of the profession. This was magnified when Latina barrio leaders were at the vanguard of urban policy reforms.

The persistence of political exclusion during the critical early stages of Model Cities was, and remains central to the current crises in planning. Entering the fifth decade of predominate Eurocentric control over the policy apparatus of the state, the only historical lesson is that of stark failure to impact much less actually revitalize barrios, almost anywhere. The demise of the advocacy planning, the only true reform movement within planning doomed the profession into a sequence of oppositional relations with barrios. Social movements and aggressive protest were the sole avenue of political expression and critique of constant policy ineptitude.

Thus, it is of only limited astonishment that by the late 20th century Latinas/os in space had yet to assume a central place in planning discourse. The sole arena was environmental justice. In a famous 1989 Amicus journal article planning ‘proudly’ pronounced the ‘discovery’ of environmental racism. While addressing racism in any of its forms is important given the rancid legacy of this society, claiming a ‘new’ racism in the late 20th century was nothing more than a hypocritical historical cover-up of the vibrant social justice movements centered on the defense of barrio spatial relations that date to the 1940s and 1950s.
There is no such thing as uncovering! Discovering a ‘new racism’ in the late 20th century, which only exhibits either a blatant ignorance of planning history or manipulation of the historic record to exclude Latina/o voices from planning. In either instance, racism in planning practice correlates directly to the obscenely limited literature focused on barrios and urban policy. That a semblance of an urban literature did exist, was only due mainly to Chicana/o sociologists and historians who ethically could not escape documenting the inherent inequities between planning and barrios as a subset of other narratives. Eminent domain, freeway destruction, land banking, targeted disinvestment, racism in public policy and the devastation of Latina/o spaces were readily apparent to this field of academia. In planning, similar documentation was thread bare well into the 1990s.

One of the most fundamental failures in the literature is not recognizing how barrios are in the vanguard of sustainable urbanism. Devon Peña and Racquel Rivera-Pinderhughes are among the leading voices addressing the legacy of sustainable urbanism and local economic relations, which are fundamental to barrios. The defense and utilization of la tierra for food production, watershed management, communal celebrations and the protection of nature are normative in relation to barrio urban relations. These practices predate European immigrants in the western hemisphere. Barrios exhibit other essential features, which have only recently been “rediscovered” as important reforms to past planning practice, mixed use relations, reliance on public transportation, recycling and adaptive reuse, collective sharing of space and eclectic reproduction of the urban landscape through public art. The role of the Ciudadano and the art of walking, exemplify the importance of social knowledge and the evolution of a cultural community that emerges over time through common experiences within a human scale level of relationships.
Thus, it is the apex of Eurocentric arrogance to declare a new urbanism, when the entire contours of that framework have and continue to exhibit a vibrant and enduring reality in barrios through the country.

In the past decade, as mentioned earlier, Latina/o urbanists and a few others have directed attention toward the barrio urban crisis and the inherent value of barrio urbanism in the US. Increased attention to the Southwest, in relation to civic plazas (Arreloa 2002), open space and use of community spaces (Rojas 1999; Gamez 2002), business districts (Davila 2001), and environmental justice (Pena 2005, 1998, 1997; Marquez 1998; Pulido 1996) have initiated the inception of barrio spatial discourse. Ironically, adherents to the LA perspective who claimed to ‘make the invisible visible’, apparently failed to incorporate Latinas/os, further exemplifying a sense of amnesia in city planning.

The literature reflects education and practice in which planning has exhibited a distinctly conflictive relationship with Latinas/os and other minority communities. While the profession has, at minimum, begun to engage in addressing the ravages of conventional exclusion, the confrontation of inclusionary power within the bureaucracy, as with planning literature, has yet to arrive at the promise of a multiethnic equality.

On another level, the legacy of oppositional social movements is also a history of neglect and amnesia in the planning literature. In reviewing the modern era of this literature, it is a challenge to ‘discover’ barrio social movements and vibrant activism in relation to urban policy. The literature that does exist is often derived from sociology, social welfare, public health, ethnic history, education and law, in essence a range of fields other than city planning. This diverse array of disciplines occasionally intersects with planning in descriptions of poverty, poor housing conditions, lack of infrastructure and other issues which are correlated with the main themes of
those respective fields. In fact, a few ethnic historians, Rodolfo Acuña being the most prominent, have generated significant level of analysis of the Latina/o urban experience, which is significantly more extensive than the dearth of documentation, contained in city planning literature. His most significant contribution, *A Community Under Siege: A Chronicle of Chicanos East of the Los Angeles River* has been largely ignored by both Chicano and non-Chicano urbanists.