

Demographic and Spatial Analysis

Hispanic Spaces, Latino Places: Community and Cultural Diversity in Contemporary America

Daniel D. Arreola, editor. University of Texas Press, Austin, 2004. 364 pages. \$60, \$24.95 (paperback).

A welcome addition to the understudied field of Latino cultures and their linkages to place, this book transcends the common approaches to the study of demographic, racial, political, and cultural changes brought about by the fastest growing ethnic group in the U.S., to focus instead on Latinos' "different geographies, and social adjustments to diverse places" (p. 1). Contributors were selected from presenters at the 2002 Association of American Geographers meeting in Los Angeles, but most of the authors are not Latino or female.

The editor, Dan Arreola, provides a useful background by describing the Latino demographics in the U.S. today and recognizing their diversity. However, the assertion that the only characteristics they share in the U.S. is origin or ancestry in a Spanish-speaking country and "the fact that they are 'lumped' together as Hispanics" (p. 14) is overly simplistic. In fact, the sharing of language, similar colonial/postcolonial history in places of origin or ancestry, and similar experiences as subaltern groups in the U.S. are major factors that explain much of the panethnic Latino identity in the country, however fragmented and unstable it may be.

Arreola distinguishes the spatial perspective, which studies population characteristics at a regional to national scale, from placeperspective studies, based on ethnographic and historical field research at the local level. His tables on the categorization of space and place-perspective research on Hispanics since the 1970s (pp. 5–6) are a valuable preliminary tool in a needed multidisciplinary literature review. However, space and place perspectives are not, as Arreola suggests, just "beginning to influence nongeographers" (p. 7). To the contrary, a vast body of literature exists in these areas, especially in the multidisciplinary fields of urban, cultural, and Chicana/o and Latina/o studies. The book successfully dispels the popular conception that Latinos are an homogeneous group distinguished only by place of origin. A few contributors mention class and length of stay in the U.S. as characteristics of Latinos. Relevant distinctions of gender and age are mentioned in chapter 13 but are virtually absent from the rest of the book. In addition to race, gender and children's issues remain critical areas of research. A handful of chapters propose useful analytical frameworks for their topics (e.g., chapters 5 and 6). In addition, the chapter's transnational research explores the connections and effects in Bolivia of spatial practices in the U.S. and the implications of the globalization of labor markets in the formation of communities. Another valuable reflection, Herzog's "Globalization of the Barrio" (chapter 5), addresses the transnationality of Latino places in the U.S. and provides a productive framework of six "ecologies" (barriers, recaptured space, global tourism, global consumerism, post-NAFTA housing, and invented connections) with which to understand factors creating new cultural and spatial Latino landscapes, particularly in the border area of San Diego-Tijuana. In "Barrio Space and Place in Southeast Los Angeles" (chapter 6), Curtis provides a practical typology of Los Angeles's evolving barrios, useful for other U.S. metropolitan areas. Lastly, Haverluk proposes five stages of "Hispanization" that many Latino communities experience (entry, organization, occupational diversification, social and political conflict, and domination) in "Hispanization of Hereford" (chapter 14). He claims these are common stages of transformation for Hispanic communities throughout the U.S., and I suggest they may also explain phases of change in other immigrant communities.

Some chapters contain explicit field survey methodologies (e.g., chapters 9 and 11), primarily encompassing traditional cultural geography methods (mapping, physical and population surveys, and demographic analysis). However, a call by Benedict and Kent in "The Cultural Landscape of a Puerto Rican Neighborhood in Cleveland, Ohio" (chapter 9) for greater triangulation of methods, and in particular for in-depth interviews combined with field surveys for richer interpretations of findings, is most welcome. Most chapters include splendid historical descriptions of the transformations in their case-study cities, but contribute little in the way of theoretical or analytical tools that could help make sense of the complexity of Latino spaces beyond the cases at hand. Still fewer explicitly discuss policy relevance. Nonetheless, the book is rich in graphic materials that greatly add to its readability. Students, scholars, and professionals, as well as anyone interested in understanding the present and future of community, place, and cultural diversity in the U.S. through the lens of Latino spatial transformations, would find this book informative and revealing.

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