

**Sundown Town to “Mexican Town”:
Old-timers and Newcomers in Small Town America**

Eileen Diaz McConnell
Department of Transborder Chicana/o and Latina/o Studies
Arizona State University
Lattie F. Coor Hall, Room 6635
Mail Code 3502
Tempe, AZ 85287-3502
480.727.7073
480.965.7165 fax
Eileen.Diaz.Mcconnell@asu.edu

and

Faranak Miraftab
Department of Urban & Regional Planning
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Room 218, Temple Buell Hall
611 Taft Drive
M/C 619
Champaign, IL 61820
217.265.8238
217.244.1717 fax
Faranak@uiuc.edu

DRAFT: PLEASE DO NOT QUOTE OR CITE.

Paper prepared for presentation at the 2008 Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America, New Orleans, LA. The authors are grateful to William Kandel, Cecilia Menjívar, and CePoD affiliates at Arizona State University for feedback on earlier versions of the paper. The authors thank Reynolds Farley for advice about the index of dissimilarity, and Domenico Parisi for sharing index of dissimilarity figures.

**Sundown Town to “Mexican Town”:
Old-timers and Newcomers in Small Town America**

For more than a century, communities across the United States legally employed strategies to create and maintain racial divides in America. One particularly widespread and effective practice was that of “sundown towns,” places that signaled to African Americans and others that they were not welcome within the city limits after dark. Though nearly one thousand small towns, large metropolitan areas, and suburbs across the country may have been sundown towns; until recently, there has been little scholarship on the topic. This paper presents a case study of a small Midwestern community unofficially named “Mexican Town” by neighboring communities because of its large Latino population growth since 1990. Analyses of diverse sources document that this community was a sundown town that effectively excluded African Americans for nearly 150 years. This study documents the community's sundown history, current responses to rapid Latino population growth occurring within its boundaries, and the present spatial distributions of the town's Latino newcomers and white long-time residents. We consider the role of local housing characteristics and the absence and/or weak enforcement of pre-existing exclusionary housing policies for declines in residential segregation since 1990. The results of this exploratory study are informative for considering how analyses of Latino population growth in “new” areas, whether metropolitan or non-metropolitan, might be strengthened by exploring linkages between their racialized historical contexts, current racial and ethnic social dynamics, and spatial configurations.

INTRODUCTION

Bolstered by the U.S. Supreme Court’s 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision declaring that racial segregation was legal, for more than a century communities across America employed aggressive strategies to remain all-White.¹ Such practices included violence, overt and covert threats of violence, and local ordinances to exclude or forcibly drive African Americans out of town. One widespread way in which communities practiced racial apartheid was to become “Sundown towns,” places that used harassment, intimidation, economic and social ostracism, local ordinances, and zoning to keep African Americans, Mexicans, and other groups from living there (Loewen 2005). Perhaps a thousand U.S. localities—small towns, large metropolitan areas, and suburbs were all-White by design; in Illinois, for example, at least 145 towns of more than 1,000 people were Sundown (Loewen 2005). Indeed, the town of Anna, Illinois is nicknamed for its Sundown town policy of “Ain’t No Niggers Allowed” (199).

Sundown towns are part of the hidden history of America’s white racism (Loewen 2005), a history hidden at least to Whites.² Partly because of that invisibility to Whites and therefore in written histories, as well (Loewen 2005), there is little published research on Sundown towns.³ Yet, careful documentation and consideration of them would strengthen many areas of academic inquiry. By design, Sundown towns, such as the one we discuss in this paper, had historically few non-Whites living within their limits. In the last two decades, however, this particular town has seen its non-White population of Latinos rapidly increase. The geographic dispersion in the U.S. of Latinos, both U.S.- and foreign-born has drawn the attention of researchers (Stull, Broadway et al. 1995; Gouveia and Stull 1997; Durand, Massey et al. 2000; Grey 2000; Hernández –León and Zúñiga 2000; Grey and Woodrick 2002; McConnell and LeClere 2002; Fink 2003; Salamon 2003; Arreola 2004; Fennelly 2005; Gozdziaik and Martin 2005; Kandel and Parrado 2005; Zúñiga and

Hernández –León 2005). Yet, to our knowledge, no study of the movement of Latinos into “new” areas, whether metropolitan or non-metropolitan, has documented such communities’ racialized history as a Sundown town or explored whether such histories may be linked with their present racial and ethnic spatial reconfigurations. We argue that this racialized context could be useful for understanding the current residential patterns of the long-time, Non-Hispanic White residents and the Latino newcomers.

This paper, drawn from an instrumental case study of one Midwestern small town, explores how its identity as a former Sundown town may be one aspect, among many, associated with the spatial distribution of its new and rapidly growing Latino population. Since 1990, the community’s traditionally homogenous town of 6,000 people, which we call Riverbend, has had an astounding 5,000 percent growth in its Latino population.⁴ In 1990, Latinos made up one percent of Riverbend’s population; by 2000, Latinos comprised 18 percent of the town, and by 2006, more than 30 percent. The remaining percentages are Non-Hispanic Whites. In each of those decades, less than 1/10 of 1 percent were Non-Hispanic persons of other racial groups.

This study employs a multi-method approach; qualitative and quantitative data about Riverbend comprise (a) semi-structured interviews in 2006 and 2007 with 15 persons: Mexican immigrants, White local officials and business persons, members of church and faith-based organizations, and local service providers; (b) archival newspaper research about the community; (c) publicly available oral histories about early 20th century life in Riverbend conducted and transcribed by state university staff in the 1970s and 1980’s; and (d) 1820-2006 Census Bureau data for the county and, when possible, the town of Riverbend.

The paper undertakes two tasks. The first is to document the racial context of the community, county, and state before the arrival of Latino newcomers.⁵ Scholars (Winders 2005;

Fitzgerald 2006) have noted that many studies of Latino migration do not explicitly address racial stratification. Yet, the racialized history of the Riverbend community, county, and region described in this paper suggests the value of situating contemporary migration within a historical context marked by the centrality of race. As Loewen (2005) notes, to establish a community as a Sundown town is a challenge. In this case, it requires delving into archival material from newspapers, locating oral histories of community and area residents, and examining the historical presence of Blacks in the area. We document Riverbend’s Sundown town history and how race has been a crucial component in the community’s development.

The second task of this paper is to document the level of residential segregation in Riverbend in 2000, examine changes in residential segregation since 1990, and to explore an issue receiving little attention in both migration and residential segregation literatures: how the racial context of Riverbend as a Sundown town could be associated with the spatial distributions of the town’s Latinos and its Non-Hispanic White “old-timers.” In 2000, non-metropolitan counties (Kandel and Cromartie 2004) and non-metropolitan places (Lichter, Parisi et al. 2007) in the United States displayed moderate residential segregation between Hispanics and Non-Hispanic Whites. Formal calculations of segregation indices at a fine-grained level of geographic detail undertaken in this study confirm that Latinos and Non-Hispanic Whites in Riverbend in 2000 were moderately segregated, with a striking decline in residential segregation since 1990. Between 2000 and 2006, Census Bureau estimates indicate that the Latino community in Riverbend doubled. Based on previous patterns, Latinos could be less segregated from Whites at the current time.

Referring to research on residential segregation, Logan and colleagues (2002) note:

We are near the limit of what can be accomplished through the analysis of publicly available census data....This is not a time, if ever there were a time, for a one-pattern-fits-all theory of

residential location. The challenge now is to develop a theory of ethnic diversity, of contradictory processes of assimilation and separation, and of the conditions under which one or the other direction prevails (p. 320).

Two theories, described later in this paper, are often used to explain racial/ethnic residential segregation in the United States. Spatial assimilation theory focuses on individual-level factors such as income and education; the place stratification perspective emphasizes the role of structural factors, such as discriminatory policies at the federal-level, that established and maintained racial/ethnic segregation in the U.S. (Massey and Denton 1993; Charles 2003; Rosenbaum and Friedman 2007). This study undertakes an innovative approach to considering Latinos' distribution throughout this once all-White community. We consider a variety of structural explanations not typically considered in either approach: the low cost of local housing, its features, and the absence and/or weak enforcement of pre-existing exclusionary housing policies.

We also consider the role of the Sundown town history of the community. More specifically, we suggest that perhaps the success of past practices to keep out Blacks meant that this all-White town developed few of the institutional tools that would serve to isolate the recent and rapid increase of Latino residents. For example, the municipal codes often used to segregate groups by race/ethnicity and income (Berry 2001) were “put on the books” in Riverbend starting in the 1980's but have not been strictly enforced. In recent years; however, the community seems to be re-considering both their local housing policies and their enforcement. These factors working together may help to explain the current spatial residential patterns of Riverbend and of other small communities undergoing similar rapid demographic change. Further, such factors may also be useful for predicting post-2000 residential segregation patterns between Latinos and Non-Hispanic

Whites. However complex the web of factors that may shape such processes, this analysis places the historical factors at the center.

The organization of the paper is as follows. The next section describes previous scholarship about Latino change in small communities and describes the data and methods. Then the paper delves into the racial history of Riverbend, its contemporary racial and ethnic composition, and the community’s responses to Latino newcomers. The third section examines the residential segregation of Latinos and Non-Hispanic Whites and offers potential explanations for the situation. Our analysis of the connection between the town’s past policies and its current residential integration of newcomers concludes by discussing the possibilities for residential integration in Riverbend’s future.

BACKGROUND

Researchers, policymakers, and journalists have followed recent demographic trends among Latinos in the United States with great interest, and particularly their increasing presence in areas that historically have had few Latinos. Indeed, in record time, every region of the country had large increases in Latino native and foreign-born populations (Frey 2002; Guzman and McConnell 2002; Suro and Singer 2002; Suro and Tafoya 2004). The increases in non-metropolitan counties have been particularly strong (Saenz and Torres 2003; Kandel and Cromartie 2004; Lichter and Johnson 2006). Indeed, Latino populations, particularly immigrants, have increased dramatically in many non-metropolitan areas, accounting for a quarter of the non-metropolitan growth through the 1990’s and preventing population losses in 100 counties (Kandel and Cromartie 2004). High-growth Hispanic counties, such as Riverbend’s, are defined as counties with at least 1,000 Latinos and 150 percent growth between 1990 and 2000 (Kandel and Cromartie 2004). These counties, as well as others with large increases though not meeting these criteria, are dispersed throughout the Midwest

and South. Latino population growth in the non-metropolitan Midwest has been particularly rapid, approximately 113 percent between 1990 and 2000 (Goudy 2002), which outpaced rates in Midwestern urban areas.

The majority of Latin American immigrants in both the U.S. overall and rural areas are from Mexico (Fink 2003; Mohl 2003; Moran-Taylor and Menjivar 2005), though others come from Guatemala and El Salvador (Hernández –León and Zúñiga 2003; Salamon 2003; Lichter and Johnson 2006). In non-metropolitan areas, some Mexican newcomers come directly from Mexico and others from elsewhere within the U.S. (Saenz and Torres 2003). A review of research points to diversity among these migrants. For instance, some Mexican immigrants have been in the U.S. for many years, with U.S.-born children, legal status to live and work in the U.S., and fluent English; others have been in the U.S. for only a few months and plan to eventually bring their Mexican-born children to the country (Durand and Massey 2004; Vásquez, Seales et al. 2008).

Though most scholarship about international migration and Latinos in the U.S. focuses on larger cities, more studies now consider the complex dynamics of such recent changes in small communities. Indeed, a growing body of research seeks the causes and consequences of Latinos' appearance in non-traditional, mostly non-metropolitan, areas (Stull, Broadway et al. 1995; Gouveia and Stull 1997; Durand, Massey et al. 2000; Grey 2000; Hernández –León and Zúñiga 2000; Grey and Woodrick 2002; 2002; Fink 2003; Salamon 2003; Arreola 2004; Millard and Chapa 2004; Fennelly 2005; Gozdziaik and Martin 2005; Kandel and Parrado 2005; Zúñiga and Hernández –León 2005; McConnell Forthcoming, 2008). Although population increases in small towns of dozens or a few hundred Latinos may appear inconsequential, they have profoundly affected both the long-term residents and the newcomers in many domains: housing, employment, health care, and education (Stull, Broadway et al. 1995; Fink 2003; Salamon 2003; Millard and Chapa 2004;

Gozdziak and Martin 2005; Zúñiga and Hernández –León 2005). The experiences of these communities offer valuable information about the growing racial and ethnic diversity in the United States, the challenges and opportunities stemming from rapid population change, and heterogeneity in immigrant adaptation and mobility.

Qualitative studies of the causes and consequences of the rising Latino population, both native and foreign-born, in non-metropolitan areas have offered important insights. One explanation focuses on small towns dominated by food-processing industries. As convincingly argued in Stull, Broadway, and Griffith (1995), in recent decades food processing industries have implemented a cost-cutting “rural industrialization strategy” relocating urban plants to rural areas or re-opening rural plants that had closed. Meat and other food processors faced with declining profit margins look to the lower land prices in rural areas, the shorter distances to the “source” (be it cows or corn), the availability of non-union workers, and the tax incentives offered by rural communities (Hernández –León and Zúñiga 2000; Fennelly and Leitner 2003; Grey and Woodrick 2005). Similar reasons attract textile (Zúñiga and Hernández –León 2005) and other industries (Millard and Chapa 2004; Kandel and Parrado 2005). Though this rural industrialization is based on work that is physically dangerous and dirty, and pays less to workers than was the case in earlier decades, it has nevertheless brought jobs and economic stimulus to small communities (Stull, Broadway et al. 1995; Gouveia and Stull 1997; Gouveia and Stull 1997; Fennelly and Leitner 2003; Kandel and Cromartie 2004; Kandel and Parrado 2005; Zúñiga and Hernández –León 2005).

Other factors, too, have drawn Mexican migrants as well as others to non-traditional destinations across the country. Immigrant saturation of the labor market, job displacement, and small downward shifts in wages in some Southwestern locales may encourage migration elsewhere (Latapí, Martin et al. 1997; Durand, Massey et al. 2000; Massey, Durand et al. 2002; Massey and

Malone 2002; Donato, Aguilera et al. 2005). Cities, for example Los Angeles, began enforcing policies on housing, occupational safety, and minimum wages, so the low-wage employers left those cities and settled in new places which then attracted immigrants (Light 2006). The federal government’s stiffer policies to thwart immigration from Mexico may have shifted Mexican migrants away from traditional crossing routes to newer, more dangerous paths and causing them to move to areas with less immigrant surveillance (Massey, Durand et al. 2002; Hernández –León and Zúñiga 2003; Orrenius 2004). Earlier, the amnesty provisions of the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act had allowed many formerly undocumented farm workers to seek employment in places that had previously had few Latinos (Millard and Chapa 2004; Fennelly 2005; Zúñiga and Hernández –León 2005). The affordability and year-round employment possible in many rural areas attract migrants deciding where to settle. Other reasons are the perception of a better quality of life and greater safety for raising children (Millard and Chapa 2004; Fennelly 2005; Zúñiga and Hernández –León 2005).

Residential segregation of ethnic and racial groups is viewed as the norm in the United States.⁶ For example, in large metropolitan areas such as Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York City, racial/ethnic segregation between African Americans and Non-Hispanic Whites is and has been high for decades (Massey and Denton 1993; Logan, Stults et al. 2004; Wilkes and Iceland 2004).⁷ Historically, Latinos have been less segregated from Whites than African Americans were, but Hispanic-White segregation nationwide increased between 1980 and 2000 (Lewis Mumford Center 2001; Lewis Mumford Center 2002).⁸ Though most racial segregation studies focus on metropolitan areas (e.g., Massey and Denton 1993; Alba, Logan et al. 2000; Iceland and Wilkes 2006); scholars are beginning to examine segregation in less-populated areas, such as non-metropolitan counties, non-metropolitan places, and micropolitan areas, urban clusters with

populations between 10,000 and 50,000 (Kandel and Cromartie 2004; Lichter and Johnson 2006; Wahl, Breckenridge et al. 2006; Lichter, Parisi et al. 2007). Throughout the 1990’s, Latinos were moving to previously all-White locales, reducing their segregation from Whites in non-metropolitan areas over the ten year period (Kandel and Cromartie 2004; Lichter and Johnson 2006; Lichter, Parisi et al. 2007).

Two theoretical explanations are most often used to explain racial/ethnic residential segregation and its persistence in the United States.⁹ The first, the spatial assimilation model, suggests that differences in residential segregation are primarily due to individual-level differences in socioeconomic characteristics and human capital, such as education and income, across racial and ethnic groups (Charles 2006). As non-White minority groups improve their socioeconomic conditions, it is expected that they will also improve the quality of their housing and decrease their segregation from Whites. More acculturated immigrants could experience the same improvements, translating their upward economic mobility into residential mobility (Rosenbaum and Friedman 2007). Substantial research indicates that this framework applies more to Asians and lighter-skinned Latinos than to African Americans and darker-skinned Latinos (e.g., Logan and Alba 1993; Schill, Friedman et al. 1998).

Scholarship demonstrating differences among racial/ethnic groups, particularly for African Americans, after controlling for socioeconomic resources has led to a second theory: the place stratification model. This theory points to the role of structural barriers limiting the opportunities of African Americans and other non-White groups (Charles 2006; Rosenbaum and Friedman 2007). Institutional practices such as discrimination in mortgage lending, access to housing, and steering by real estate agents serve the interests of powerful whites and limit the upward mobility of African Americans and Latinos (Massey and Denton 1993; Oliver and Shapiro 1995; Conley 1999; Galster

McConnell and Miraftab, Sundown Town to “Mexican Town”...

and Godfrey 2005; Charles 2006). This paper considers how the sundown town history of Riverbend and related community-level factors could also be associated with the spatial distributions of Latinos and Non-Hispanic Whites.

DATA AND METHODS

For the paper’s two objectives as stated above, we draw from diverse sources. Documenting the racial and ethnic history of Riverbend required several approaches. Following Loewen’s (2005) call for triangulation of sources, we carefully examined archival and contemporary newspaper articles about Riverbend and nearby metropolitan areas, a circa 1880 book-length history of the county, historical census data between 1820 and 1960, and dozens of oral histories of community members and nearby residents collected by a state university in the 1970s and 1980s. In addition, we made numerous trips to Riverbend, touring the town with its officials and also conducting fifteen open-ended interviews with diverse individuals in the community. Using media accounts of Riverbend’s demographic changes, in 2006 and 2007 we identified and interviewed individuals who could talk about the community’s history, recent changes, and challenges. They included Mexican migrants, immigrant activists, long-time residents working in social service agencies, church leaders and local business owners.¹⁰ We also interviewed Non-Hispanic White community members working for the city, local agencies, and individuals employed in local banking, real estate, and mobile home parks.¹¹ Newspaper articles about the community published since 1990 that quoted White Riverbend residents were examined to supplement the perspectives of long-term residents whom we interviewed.

Census Bureau data about Riverbend and the county provided quantitative information about the presence of Blacks between 1820 and 1960. We used Census 2000 data to determine the number and spatial distribution of Latinos, homeownership rates, and housing values in the

community. From 2000 census block-level data, we calculated the index of dissimilarity, a commonly used measure of the “evenness” of spatial distributions of Latinos and Whites (Massey and Denton 1988). Calculations of residential segregation at a finer level of detail such as census blocks is necessary when studying small communities that may include only a few census tracts; using census tracts in these cases are “neither feasible nor defensible” (Lichter, Parisi et al. 2007: 568).¹² We used several methods to document the structural features of the housing market, the local housing policies, and the experiences of Latinos with housing. During our trips to Riverbend, we photographed neighborhoods and noted their types of homes and the physical aspects of the community. We visited the census tracts that showed high proportions of Latinos in 2000, to record those landscapes. We consulted Riverbend’s zoning laws and building permits and toured the community with a city official to document past and present housing policies. To learn about Latinos’ experiences with the local housing market, we examined information on home purchases in 2005 and 2006, provided by a local real estate agent, and interviewed banking personnel, real estate agents, and city staff.

The next section of the paper draws on those quantitative and qualitative sources for a historical and contemporary profile of the community. In doing so, we have been careful to obscure the names, locations, and identifying details about the community, the respondents, and the authors and publishers of newspaper articles. Confidentiality is always of concern in qualitative research. The current situation in Riverbend requires additional care because several towns in the Midwest have been featured in national news coverage about increases in Latino populations and the site of increased immigration surveillance and enforcement. Many of the Latino newcomers in Riverbend lack legal authorization to live and work in the U.S and immigration oversight there is vigorous. Given the size of the community, it could be possible to identify several of those persons who

McConnell and Miraftab, Sundown Town to “Mexican Town”...

granted us interviews unless we conscientiously protect the names and the identifying information about the community.

FROM SUNDOWN TOWN TO “LITTLE MEXICO”

Though Riverbend is several hours from larger towns and metropolitan areas, the town has been a transportation hub since it was founded. Early in Riverbend’s history, its proximity to a river made it an attractive location, as the river was used to transport goods and passengers by steamship to other Midwestern locales. The community was on the railroad line and had a coal terminal providing many opportunities for employment in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Settled in the first quarter of the 19th century by Midwesterners from other areas, Riverbend has had a strong history of keeping “outsiders” out but has constructed “outsiders” differently in different eras. Early German migrants, labeled first as 'culled Gemmen' and later as “Nazi Germans” were treated unkindly. The Riverbend newspaper in 1929 remarked, “while no violence has been attempted toward those of the class who happened into the city, it has always been quite evident that they were not welcome.” Oral histories also confirm negative attitudes towards immigrants. For example, a White woman who moved to Riverbend in 1919 at age 30 recalls disliking the immigrants there, “I never wanted into [Riverbend] because I said, ‘It’s just full of dominating Dutch. And I hated the Dutch.’”¹³ In a 2007 interview, a resident whose parents were of German migrant parents, recalls discrimination against her family:

(E)ven in WWII my grandparents’ family were persecuted as collaborators with Germans. There was a lot of suspicion and verbal abuse. They threw out eggs, painted swastikas on their house....My dad in high school had constant verbal abuse [people] calling him Krauts.

In the late 19th century, when more blacks were seen in the area, Riverbenders employed outright racist practices to maintain the “character,” often understood as the whiteness, of their town. Since locals can be reluctant to speak frankly about the twentieth century’s racist attitudes and practices, we turned to oral histories collected in the 1970s and 1980s from persons born around 1900. They make clear that Riverbend was indeed a Sundown town. African Americans worked in Riverbend as waiters and porters at the local train station and as domestics and nannies, but by all accounts they were not allowed to live there. One white man recalled that signs were posted in Riverbend said, “Don’t let the sun set on you in this man’s town.”¹⁴ A Black man who had lived in a neighboring town said that he couldn’t get a hotel room for the evenings when he worked in Riverbend during the late 1920’s and 1930’s; a posted sign warned, “Read and run, Mr. Nigger.”¹⁵ Signs posted at the entrance of communities signaled to African Americans and other groups that they were not welcome within the city limits after dark; their existence have been confirmed in more than 180 communities (Loewen 2005: 104). Still another local, a white woman born in 1898 and life-long Riverbend resident, noted:

[Riverbend] didn’t allow colored folks in...Just recently, the last few years they [African Americans] were allowed to come here. [At that time, African Americans] could come here like if they worked on a bus or something ... but they wouldn’t let them stay overnight. ...[Riverbend] just didn’t allow colored folks here.¹⁶

The frequency of Sundown towns across America and the fact that they have been historically ignored highlights the deliberate invisibility of racism in U.S. history (Loewen 2005). Ignored as well, and thus unexamined, are the rationales for the ubiquitous racist policies. For instance, the catalyst for Sundown policies in many towns was the perception of rising crime waves

perpetrated by Blacks and in alleged rapes of White women by Black men (Loewen 2005). The White woman in the previous quote explains that Riverbend:

(U)sed to be the county seat, and a couple of Negroes stole the papers and took them to [another town] because they wanted [that town] to be the county seat. And I don't know for sure but I kind of believe that those two Negroes were hung down here in the park. The city park. I think I've heard Mother and Dad tell about it.¹⁷

This explanation justifies exclusionary practices against African Americans as caused by their own actions, blaming the victims rather than the institutionalized discrimination occurring in multiple sites in the state and across the country.¹⁸ The same woman noted, “At that time coloreds and whites were sort of segregated. They didn't mix like they do now.” In this statement, how blindly invisible racism is: Blacks and Whites voluntarily don't “mix”; the institutional discrimination that ensured their separation and unequal treatment escapes any discomfiting attention.

Elsewhere in the same county, adjacent counties, and across the Midwest there also were Sundown towns (Loewen 2005), they are the larger context for the actions and perspectives towards Latino migrants in Riverbend. Early in the 20th century, urban areas with large Non-White populations such as East St. Louis and Chicago, enacted violent exclusionary policies towards African Americans. An egregious example is the 1908 “race riot”¹⁹ in Springfield, Illinois, the state capital and the birthplace of Abraham Lincoln (Senechal 1990). Following an accusation that a Black man had raped a White woman, several Black men were lynched (Loewen 2005).²⁰ Individuals living then recall roaming mobs of angry White men carrying weapons, the destruction of many African American-owned businesses and homes, and the eventual arrival of the militia called out by the governor.²¹ Estimates suggest that two-thirds of Springfield's African Americans fled the city to escape the mob (Senechal 1990). Clearly, African Americans in Midwestern

communities and across the country experienced brutal physical, economic, and psychological damage because of racist events and institutionalized discriminatory practices.

Turning to the Latino migration to the Midwest, which this paper examines, although the extent of Latino growth since 1990 is new, Latinos are not new to the region. Mexican migrants and Mexican Americans came to the Midwest before World War I for jobs in agriculture as well as in industrial firms such as the Ford Motor Company and Inland Steel. They worked in factories in Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio; and constructing railroads to St. Louis and Chicago (Valdes 1991; Vargas 1993; García 1996; Valdes 2000).²² Puerto Ricans arriving in Chicago after the 1940s worked in hotels, restaurants, and other service-oriented businesses (Ramos-Zayas 2003). Indeed, throughout the 20th century, despite discrimination and racialization, Mexican Americans, Mexican migrants and other Latinos have built stable lives in the region.

The current influx of racially and ethnically diverse migrants to Riverbend is *not* the town’s first experience of immigration or issues of race. The sundown town history is an important backdrop for understanding the contemporary experiences of racial and ethnic change in the community. In light of the history of Riverbend and other places in the Midwest, it is no surprise that the town was nearly all White before recent decades brought increasing numbers of Latinos. Riverbend’s past practices aimed to ensure such homogeneity. A newspaper article of 2003 reminded readers: “In 1858, the people of (Riverbend) had gathered in the town square to hear a speech opposing slavery. But a century later, they had hung a noose in that same park, warning blacks to stay away” (news service, November 9, 2003). Census data show fewer than fifteen African Americans in the entire county from the decade of the town’s inception through 1960. Census 2000 data show fewer than 30 African Americans in Riverbend in 2000, or less than .005 percent of the population. These data are not unrelated to Riverbend’s Sundown town history.²³

Such policies and practices reveal how racial discrimination is institutionalized in ways intended to have differential impacts on minority groups (Pincus 1996). The long-standing practices in Riverbend intended to exclude those considered undesirable, surely help us understand the context of Latino migration today.

Riverbend Today

Though Riverbend has remained of about the same size for the last thirty years, the racial/ethnic composition of the area has changed dramatically: the Non-Hispanic White population has decreased since 1990, according to census figures, at the same time that the population of Latinos has increased considerably (U.S. Census Bureau).²⁴ In 1990, fewer than 40 Latinos lived in Riverbend; approximately 5,300 Non-Hispanic Whites and 12 persons of other races also lived there. In 2000, there were more than 1,000 Latinos, approximately 30 persons were other minority group members, and the remaining population was Non-Hispanic White. County-level estimates indicate that by 2006, more than 2,000 Latinos lived in Riverbend compared with fewer than 4,000 Non-Hispanic Whites (Census Bureau 2006).²⁵ Our interviews and recent newspaper articles suggest that the numbers of Latinos in Riverbend are in line with this estimate. The 5,000 percent growth in the Latino population in sixteen years far out-paced Latino population growth in most of the Midwest.

Census data indicates that of Latinos residing in the community in 2000, more than half were living in a foreign country, primarily Mexico, five years earlier (Census Bureau). Persons we interviewed indicated that the Mexican states most commonly sending migrants to Riverbend are Michoacán, Guanajuato and the state of Mexico (which includes Mexico City). Of those Latino migrants in Riverbend in 2000 who were living in the US in 1995, approximately 33 percent were

living in another state (Census Bureau). Thus, Riverbend includes a mix of immigrants recently arrived in the U.S. and migrants who previously lived elsewhere in the country.

Until the mid to late 1980s, Riverbend had several factories, but now a meatpacking plant is the primary source of employment, along with the local school district and hospital. The plant reflects its corporation’s “rural industrialization strategy” (Stull, Broadway et al. 1995). After years of declining profits and rising labor costs, the plant had closed in the 1980s, and was then sold to another corporation. The plant re-opened a year later with half as many workers and a much lower starting wage (news service, November 9, 2003). Employee turnover was very high due to the low wages, the difficult work, and employee injuries. The corporation began to recruit from outside the area, particularly in border towns of the Southwest, bringing in Mexican migrants and Mexican Americans (news service, November 9, 2003; interviews 2006). Many workers in Southwestern agriculture then left for Riverbend to work at the plant because it provides full-time, year-round employment and its starting wages and job security are better at least than in farm work.

Although initially the local factory workers had been predominantly White, by 2007 about 46 percent were non-native English speakers (city newspaper, March 14, 2007). Nearly 2,500 people work at the factory. Nearly 1,000 are Non-White, of whom approximately 80% are Latino, according to the state’s Department of Commerce 2006 community profile for Riverbend.²⁶ By all accounts, the majority of adult Latinos living in town work at the factory—the plant provides job applications in Spanish and English. According to the company website, positions at the plant currently pay more than \$12 per hour. A 2007 *Fact Sheet* from the plant estimates that the average annual salary of production workers is \$26,000 with a starting wage of \$11.65/hour. The difficult work at the plant causes a high annual turnover rate: about 43% in 2007, and as high as 80% in the 1990s (interview 2007).

Many of this factory’s Latino workers are undocumented Mexican immigrants, some of whom purchase fraudulent identification and work papers (city newspaper, May 20, 2001; city newspaper, March 8, 1991; interviews 2006). Most of the plant sub-contracted cleaning services by sanitation companies are also likely to be undocumented, as in other areas (Donato, Stainback et al. 2005; Massey 2007). Third-shift employment at one local sanitation company pays nearly \$8.00 an hour, according to classified ads in English and Spanish. The majority of the sanitation company’s approximately 120 workers are Latino, mostly Mexican migrants (city newspaper, April 4, 2007), which increases the Latino workforce associated with the plant.

The effects of Latino population growth were felt immediately in Riverbend, and confirm the findings in the literature about the consequences of rapid immigrant growth in small-town America, especially for schools, churches, and social service agencies. The School District, which by 2003 had seen an increase of Spanish-speaking students equaling one-third of all students, hired Spanish-speaking staff to serve as liaisons between the school and immigrant families. In 2005, one of the two elementary schools adopted a dual language program supported by the parents’ consent. Several years ago, the local newspaper began to publish a weekly newspaper in Spanish. It carries special-interest articles, some translated from the main local paper, and classified advertisements by real estate agencies, banks, butcher shops and other businesses in Riverbend and nearby towns. Further, Latinos are rejuvenating local churches, and now account for the majority of weddings and baptisms in one Catholic Church (interviews 2006).

The economic impacts of the newcomers in Riverbend are unequivocal. Latino immigrants have established Mexican restaurants, bars, and grocery stores that draw Latinos and non-Latinos. Entrepreneurial Latinos appear to be mostly secondary migrants who have previously lived elsewhere in the U.S., gaining experience and social capital. Such previous experience in the U.S.

probably has allowed newcomers in Riverbend to become economically successful fairly soon, as has also happened in other areas (Hernández –León and Zúñiga 2003). Indeed, newspaper reports indicate that the oldest Mexican-owned restaurant closed down in the last two years partly because of the competition from new Mexican restaurants in Riverbend. Aside from establishing their own businesses, Mexican immigrants purchase cars and houses, and increase the demand for rental housing (city newspaper, March 31, 2002, interviews). Both Latino immigrants and White locals recognize these realities.

Reactions to Community Change

Riverbend’s racist past can cast light on how it is coping now with Latino in-migration. The current mayor, a lifelong resident of Riverbend and previously employed at the plant, has served five terms as mayor intermittently since the 1980’s. He is currently in his second consecutive term since being re-elected in 2002. Consider his comments in 2003:

[Riverbend] had been an all-white, redneck community for 160 years....For a community like that to have a different ethnic group come in, well, it's hard to adjust....[Until 1990] there were no Hispanics here. *I'd like to think I had a lot to do with that* (news service, Nov. 9, 2003). ...If a genie would jump out of a bottle and ask me if I'd like to have it the same way as 15 years ago, damn right I would. But that's not reality" (news service, Nov. 12, 2003, italics added).²⁷

The mayor’s attempt to take credit for keeping Riverbend “all-White” is rendered more meaningful in the context of the decades-long practices keeping African Americans out of the community and the county. The earlier absence of Non-Whites is a source of pride for this politician, perhaps exemplifying his role in maintaining the historical character of the town. The term “redneck” refers to a class-based category of Whiteness that, though sometimes used disdainfully, is also claimed as

an assertion of pride by working-class Whites, drawing a distinction from another category, “white trash” (Hartigan 1997; Wray 2006). Certainly, a communal pride in “redneck” Whiteness could be threatened by the growth of Latinos. Indeed, the presence of non-Whites in Riverbend is remarked on critically by those in nearby communities who are invested in keeping their towns All-White. Their references to Riverbend as “Little Mexico” and “Mexican town” (news service, November 9, 2003, interviews 2006) are disturbing to some in Riverbend.²⁸ The taunts of “We Want Tacos” by neighboring townspeople at high school sporting events (news service, Nov. 12, 2003) can be felt as taunts for not excluding Non-Whites from Riverbend.

The mayor and other community members who are dismayed by the growth of Latinos in the community recognize that the principal employer, the meat packing plant, is responsible for the town’s changing racial/ethnic composition. Before leaving the position as mayor in 1990, he warned the incoming mayor: “If you don’t stay after [the corporation owning the factory], you are going to have a lot of Hispanics and a lot of Asians come in here and take those jobs.’ That’s exactly what happened,” (news service, November 9, 2003). A corporate representative says of the Riverbend plant, “We’ve done very little recruiting outside the [Riverbend] area over the years. People have come to us, by and large” (news service, May 5, 2006). In contrast, the Mexican migrants interviewed for this study claim that the factory recruited them and other Latinos to come to Riverbend and work at the plant.

Other opponents of Latino migration to Riverbend ground their objections in a concern for domestic safety and the criminality of unauthorized immigrants. Sometimes, also, the possibly illegal status of newcomers offends old-timers. At other times it is the migrants’ perceived resistance to assimilating that is resented. A local newspaper’s informal survey of residents in 2007 reported a consensus that “if someone is relocating to another culture, they should learn the

language and expect to follow the laws of the land” (city newspaper, April 11, 2007).²⁹ One White respondent argues that Riverbend “has bent over backwards” for the new arrivals (interview 2006). A long-time resident, she resented the fact that the town has accommodated the Mexicans, many of whom she implied are undocumented, with access to public open spaces for Sunday afternoon soccer games. This perspective seems to be shared among a cross-section of the White community. Such oft-repeated concerns—about the rule of law, failures to assimilate or integrate, and “taking advantage” of the community’s goodwill—may obscure deeper, and historically based, racial and ethnic prejudice and institutional practices to keep the town for Whites only.

The small size of the town means that it is hard to avoid Latinos. Of course that is so in the public schools: with only two public elementary schools and a combined middle and high school, nearly all Riverbend youth attend the same schools. Moreover, Census 2000 data, and interviews reveal that Latino newcomers reside in every neighborhood. Moving away to avoid Non-Whites is a well-established response in the United States (Lichter and Johnson 2006). However, White Riverbend residents who might wish to isolate themselves from Latinos cannot unless they move out of the area, a strategy that is not easily available to White blue collar workers tied to the plant.³⁰

Other qualitative studies of immigration and small town change have explored how small-town community members show newcomers “their place”—by individual acts of discrimination in work or social arenas, and by expressing racial prejudice and distaste about immigrants and specifically Mexicans among other practices (e.g., Millard and Chapa 2004; Zúñiga and Hernández–León 2005). Though relatively rare, overtly racist activity has occurred in Riverbend since Latino migrants began to arrive. A 2005 Southern Poverty Law Center report indicates that a Ku Klux Klan brotherhood group is active in Riverbend; the group has a website including a rented mailbox address at the local post office. The KKK last marched in Riverbend during the 1990’s, erecting a

McConnell and Miraftab, Sundown Town to “Mexican Town”...

burning cross on the site of a murder, and arsonists burned down the business owned by a Latino migrant where it happened. In 2000 in a nearby community, a house that a Mexican family was to rent was destroyed (city newspaper, May 12, 2000). In 2007, Neo-Nazi skinheads demonstrated by the town’s main plaza for several hours.

Despite these serious events, it would be inaccurate to paint a uniformly negative picture of how the town’s residents and institutions have reacted to its changing demographics.³¹ Some local institutions have responded remarkably positively to accommodating the changes in Riverbend. The church leaders of various faiths have openly supported the migrants, who have revitalized congregations with younger members. The School District, for example, adopted a dual language program and a local Spanish language newspaper is currently published. These are significantly positive responses for a community of this size. Moreover, annual celebrations of Mexican festivities, like Cinco de Mayo or the Mexican Independence day in September, encourages slow but growing inter-cultural interactions in Riverbend. Despite some resentment, for the last seven years local Latinos have obtained city permit for a lengthy parade and a full-blown celebration of Mexican Independence day with music, dance and food at the town’s main plaza. Accepting the slow process of change, one Mexican migrant states, “We invite the Anglo population and little by little we are having more and more who attend to our parties. . . . They go to our festivities and they listen to our music. They say, ‘Oh we like the food or we like the band.’ And they come every year over and over” (interview 2006).

Having established the past history of Riverbend as a Sundown town and offered a broad picture of the complex dynamics in the town’s present reaction to its new Mexican residents, we turn to the second focus of this paper: how the community’s history as a Sundown town may relate to the contemporary patterns of Latino residential distribution in Riverbend. The racialized history

of Riverbend illuminates contemporary reactions and events beyond those of a few destructive racist individuals operating in isolation. For the racist practices that earlier “discouraged” Blacks from settling in Riverbend in earlier decades not only contributed to its racial/ethnic homogeneity until Latinos arrived, but, along with other factors, may have also shaped the town’s current racial/ethnic spatial distributions.

RESIDENTIAL PATTERNS AND HOUSING IN RIVERBEND

A growing body of scholarship focuses on Hispanic-White residential separation in non-metropolitan areas (Kandel and Cromartie 2004; Lichter and Johnson 2006; Lichter, Parisi et al. 2007; Parisi and Lichter 2007; Wahl, Breckenridge et al. 2007). Lichter and colleagues’ (2007) analysis of residential segregation in non-metropolitan places use 2000 census data at the census block-level. A lower level of geographic detail than the census tract, census blocks are more appropriate for evaluating spatial isolation in smaller communities with few census tracts. According to their calculations, non-metropolitan places register moderate Hispanic-White segregation in 2000, with an average index of dissimilarity of 49 (Lichter, Parisi et al. 2007).³² The majority of non-metropolitan places that they included in their sample, seventy percent, had dissimilarity indexes of between 40 and 60 in 2000 (Lichter, Parisi et al. 2007).

Turning to Riverbend, Census Bureau maps show that two census tracts and a portion of a third census tract, comprising seven block groups totaling approximately 390 census blocks, are within Riverbend’s boundaries.³³ Latinos, who comprised approximately 18 percent of Riverbend’s residents in 2000, were dispersed somewhat equally across most of the seven block groups. Indeed, Latinos comprised between 13.2 and 26.8 percent Latino of six block groups, a seventh block group in the southern portion of Riverbend, had the lowest proportion Latino, 7.3 percent. All of our

interviews in 2006 and 2007 with knowledgeable locals from the local housing authority, real estate agents, city housing officials, lenders, and Mexican migrants themselves suggest that Latinos live throughout Riverbend.

However, formal calculations of the index of Hispanic-White dissimilarity for Riverbend using block-level data reveal that the community is moderately segregated in 2000, with an index of dissimilarity of 57.6. This means that about 58 percent of Latinos would have to move to be evenly distributed with Non-Hispanic Whites across all census blocks. This is slightly lower than the index of 59.4 calculated for the community by Lichter and colleagues (2007) and shared with us (Parisi 2008). The difference between the two figures is likely to be their use of a GIS-based approach to aggregate block-level data to the place compared with our inclusion of all census blocks within seven block groups that fall within Riverbend’s boundaries. Most strikingly, there has been a *30 percentage point decline* in Riverbend’s residential segregation in one decade: in 1990, the index of dissimilarity was 90.1 (Parisi 2008), but was below 60 by 2000.³⁴ This decrease in residential segregation is much larger than that occurring for all non-metropolitan places and counties nationwide (Kandel and Cromartie 2004; Lichter, Parisi et al. 2007). For example, average segregation in Non-metropolitan places nationally decreased from 53.2 in 1990 to 49.7, or 3.5 percentage points.

Though useful, residential segregation measures using quantitative data from the 2000 Census quickly becomes outdated for communities, like Riverbend, that have experienced substantial change since that year. Indeed, 2006 estimates suggest that the Latino population in Riverbend has doubled since the last census. Based on declines in residential segregation in the county and community since 1990 and the information obtained through interviews and observations, it is possible that there is less residential segregation in Riverbend at the current time

than in 2000.³⁵ The next section focuses on structural factors that may lead to this result: the cost and features of the local housing market and, until recently, the weak enforcement of Riverbend’s few pre-existing housing policies.

Riverbend’s Housing Context

Visitors to Riverbend cannot fail to notice a striking mixture of housing types in its residential neighborhoods, for example dilapidated mobile homes next to large and beautiful Victorian homes on the same street. Mobile homes constitute 15 percent of the housing units in Riverbend and are one of the more affordable housing options for Latino newcomers. Nationally, mobile homes are less expensive than single detached family homes or other types of housing (Bennefield 2003); they are found throughout Riverbend.³⁶ Riverbend’s mix of older and newer housing units is mostly single-family housing, plus a handful of small, multi-family structures. The largest multi-unit complex, built in 2005, has approximately 40 units of which most are allocated to low-income households. Site-built houses tend to be seventy years old or older, with 2-3 bedrooms and approximately 1,000 square feet plus basements, and sell for between \$30,000 and \$60,000.³⁷

By 2000, about 20 percent of Latinos in Riverbend were homeowners. Several interviewees who had been among the first wave of Latino newcomers noted that they were motivated to buy homes soon after arriving, due to Riverbend’s relatively tight rental market at the time. Since 2000, Latinos appear to have made great inroads on homeownership. There are numerous examples of married couples who arrived, moved up the career ladder at the local plant, and now own their homes. City officials, trailer park managers, and real estate agents all note that Latinos take care of the houses that they purchase. A local official said, “Their choice of paint might be a little different than what we’re used to, but they keep them [their houses] up” (interview 2007). In addition, migrants, real estate agents, and lenders all remarked that several Latino entrepreneurs own local

rental properties. Real estate agents said that recently they have begun to considerable business with Latinos. One prominent real estate agent enrolled in Spanish classes to improve her interactions with her increasingly Spanish-speaking clientele. Some of her Mexican migrant clients buy very inexpensive houses, renovate them with the help of friends, and sell or rent them to other Latinos (interview 2006). Among her real estate transactions, persons with Spanish surnames represented 28 percent of the houses that she sold in 2004, 25 percent in 2005 and 33 percent for the first six months of 2006.

Low home prices make homeownership relatively affordable in the town, even for those with fairly low incomes. Census 2000 data for Riverbend list the median value of Latino-owned homes as approximately \$50,000; the median housing values for Non-Hispanic Whites is about \$43,000. A 30-year fixed mortgage with a \$50,000 loan amount, an interest rate of 7 percent, and local real estate taxes (1.5% of appraised value) would result in a monthly payment of less than \$400. The cost of the mortgage and tax would comprise about 21 percent of the pre-tax income of a full-time employee at the plant earning \$12 per hour. Latino and Non-Latino renters in Riverbend pay a similar amount, approximately \$410 a month, less than the state or national average (Census Bureau). Figures for renters and homeowners suggests a reasonable housing cost burden; considering that in 2001, nearly 24 percent of homeowners and 40 percent of renters were allocating more than 30 percent of their income to housing (Joint Center for Housing Studies 2007).

One Mexican interviewee who moved to town from California more than 10 years ago told us: Riverbend “is the place to make your dream of becoming a home owner true” (interview 2006). Latino migrants in Riverbend employ various strategies to purchase homes. Some families have taken out mortgages to buy their home. Others pool their funds and put the home in the name of one individual, often a U.S. citizen. One particularly dangerous method is to purchase a home using

McConnell and Miraftab, Sundown Town to “Mexican Town”...

the social security number and identity of someone else, often unknown (interview 2006, city newspaper April 12, 2007). Of course those doing so not only are engaging in fraud, but also do not legally own the house on which they are making payments. Nationally, as the Latino population has increased, lenders have expressed a strong interest in attract buyers among them (Gallagher 2005; Grow 2005). In Riverbend, too, mortgage lenders have seemed willing to provide mortgages to Latino homebuyers, and work on a “case-by-case” basis to help Latino applicants qualify for mortgages (interviews 2006).³⁸

Housing Policies

A lack of pre-existing and enforced residential regulation, e.g., land use and zoning ordinances, and the features of the local housing market noted above, may help explain the spatial distributions of Latinos in a formerly all-White town. Though racially based codes have been illegal since 1917 (Berry 2001), municipal zoning ordinances that maintain or reflect desired social hierarchies implicitly serve racial/ethnic segregation (Burns 1994; Silver 1997; Sandercock and Klinger 1998a; 1998b; Meyer 2000; Pader 2002). In most large cities, or even smaller towns with experience of ethnically and racially diverse population, zoning and land use regulation have been as spatial means to stratify groups. For example, Johnson and colleagues (2004) demonstrate how local policies such as zoning and land-use regulations reinforce Black-White residential segregation in a small North Carolina town. In other places, designating separate areas for mobile homes, which are usually occupied by lower-income residents, zoning ordinances concentrate poorer, often minority households in areas such as trailer parks on the edge of town. Annexation, or the decision to incorporate adjacent territory, and the lack of annexation is another municipal tool to exclude disadvantaged, often Black, populations (Johnson, Parnell et al. 2004; Lichter, Parisi et al. 2007) Studying local government ordinances and planning regulations in Orange County, California,

McConnell and Miraftab, Sundown Town to “Mexican Town”...

Harwood (2005) concludes that they operate as effective anti-immigrant “border check points” at the neighborhood level, keeping the immigrants out (p. 368). Though many ordinances are crafted to be racially neutral in appearance; for example, occupancy standards that limit bedroom occupancy to two people, such policies nonetheless inscribe “ethnicity and family relations on the land” (Pader 1993; Pader 2002; Ahrentzen 2003).³⁹

Riverbend, being a small town, does not have a designated planning agency. Its “planning” decisions are made by engineers or other professionals not necessarily trained as planners, and by economically and politically powerful local figures such as the Chamber of Commerce and elected officials. As a homogeneously blue-collar, working-class town where employment is almost all tied to its meat-packing plant and which had been kept all-White through the brutal practices of a sundown town, Riverbend had little need for formal or implicit regulatory means to spatially segregate racial and ethnic groups within its boundaries.

In 1980, a zoning ordinance was established that differentiated districts for single-family, site-built homes and mobile homes. Nevertheless, locals note that its enforcement has been lax for many years (interviews 2006, 2007). Thus, mobile homes have been placed in residential neighborhoods next door to site-built homes, creating a striking blend of housing types on the same street. Only in 2003 did the town authorities begin to take an interest in revising and enforcing its brief 1980 zoning and land use regulation document. In 2003, two issues arose as a response to the newcomers in town: criticism that the proliferating mobile homes might be substandard, and complaints about overcrowding of single-family homes. These became the foci of a new-found attention to and enforcement of local ordinances. A new policy required that on land where a mobile home was located, it be replaced within 60 days by another mobile home no older than five years. That may certainly encourage lower-income households, including Mexican immigrants, to

find other alternatives. Zoning amendments also created a mobile home district, so that mobile homes could no longer be located in the areas with single-family, site-built homes; after 2003 they were relegated to trailer parks or other areas zoned specifically for mobile homes (interview 2007). Latino migrants argue that the zoning ordinances addressed a specific but relatively benign phenomenon, immigrants placing mobile homes on vacant lots (city newspaper, March 31, 2002).

Since 2003, Riverbend officials appear to have become more interested in making occupancy standards part of local zoning ordinances. Many of the residents and city officials interviewed criticized overcrowding; in one instance 17 people were alleged to be residing in a single-family house. While some interviewee’s voiced concern for occupants’ safety and fire hazard as their rationale for enforcement of occupancy regulations, others (e.g., the mayor in a 2007 interview) wanted tough enforcement of occupancy regulations on the basis that families were paying an unfair proportion of the cost of water vis-a-vs extended or ad-hoc families in a single house. That issue arose because residents pay a flat per-site water rate. Meanwhile the city is financially struggling with the cost to install water meters at residences.

The small size of Riverbend makes it easier for officials to enforce regulations and identify code violators. Occupancy codes are particularly burdensome for the Latino migrants in Riverbend; the shortage of rental housing, relatively low pay, the possibility of on-the-job injury and loss of pay, and the presence of single immigrant men combine to foster overcrowded housing. On a tour with a local official, he quickly pointed out houses, apartments or mobile homes where perhaps dozens of individuals lived—in all cases immigrant families. Such units have been cited for violating the ordinance limiting a housing unit to a single family. Suspected violators are required to show birth certificates and other information to prove that they belong to only one family.

The 2003 revision of zoning regulations for mobile homes and occupancy rates—whether justified in terms of “substandard trailers,” the imperiled safety of inhabitants in overcrowded units, or the unfairness of service payments carrying “free riders” – was clearly a response to the town’s in-migration. However, this formal institutionalized response through such planning tools as zoning and land use did not happen in Riverbend until more than a decade after Latino migrants began to arrive.

One explanation for the delayed enforcement of spatial mechanisms for social stratification lies in Riverbend’s history as a Sundown town. We suggest that because of its racist history and consequent lack of racial/ethnic diversity, the local officials were not attuned to the situation. In cities with urban space already stratified on the basis on class, race and ethnicity, newcomers commonly fall into “their place,” but this homogenously all-White, working-class town had no such pre-existing, designated neighborhoods or segmented housing market. In short, the town’s “safety” from outsiders due to its effective exclusionary practices as a Sundown town may be related to the authorities’ delayed reaction to recent demographic changes. Their slow response may partially explain the striking decrease in Riverbend’s Hispanic-White residential segregation between 1990 and 2000.

However, this historically-based explanation does not rule out a shift to increased spatial segregation of immigrants in Riverbend in the future. Nor is it a reductionist or deterministic assertion about this complex, historically constructed and locally situated phenomenon. Indeed, Riverbend officials have begun to enforce regulations that may increase the residential segregation of the old-timers and the newcomers in the near future. Rather, our approach simply highlights how the reality of a Sundown town’s successful exclusion of Non-Whites may have different outcomes, that is, eventually, either more or less residential segregation than might occur in larger cities or in

small towns without a history of unwelcome diversity. We suggest that the history of Riverbend as a Sundown town may be linked with the absence, weak enforcement, and delays in creating exclusionary land use regulation that increase racial/ethnic separation.

CONCLUSION

The Sundown town signs in Riverbend have been gone for decades and residential segregation between recent Latino newcomers and long-term, non-Latino residents declined between 1990 and 2000, and perhaps until the present time. This is an interesting outcome: a place that warned African Americans to stay away using racist symbols several decades ago is now nearly one-third Latino, with Latino newcomers residing “all over” (interview, 2006), not simply in mobile home parks on the edge of town as suggested in other studies. This study uncovers a hidden history of a previously all-White community as it effectively excluded African Americans for nearly 150 years. The study explores how the racist history of this small Midwestern town may connect with contemporary dynamics vis-à-vis a new population: Latinos who have arrived since 1990. Our “thick description” of Riverbend points out ways in which the town is typical of small food-processing communities across the country who have received large increases in Latino populations.

Our examination of diverse materials indicates that this context is useful for considering the current racial and ethnic dynamics, the responses to newcomers, and spatial distributions of Latinos and non-Latinos in Riverbend. We explore how, ironically, the deep-rooted practices of Sundown town policy, in combination with other factors, could shape how the new racial and ethnic diversity has been incorporated in the community. This context is particularly useful to consider how and why the structural features of the local housing market were not a priori exclusionary before Latino migrants arrived. Further, the historically constituted lack of preparedness for exclusion through zoning and land use regulation operated in conjunction with the local housing market and other

contextual factors may help explain the 30 percentage point drop in residential segregation between Latinos and non-Latino Whites between 1990 and 2000. Though residential integration may have increased since 2000, with the continued in-migration of Latinos; Riverbend officials have begun to enforce and strengthen local codes: activities that may lead to more Latino-White residential segregation in Riverbend.

Sundown town policies are little thought about, but when they are, the practices are seen to have been relatively rare, random, but brutal. As Loewen (2005) convincingly argues, perhaps a thousand communities across the United States had such exclusionary policies, which directly influenced the settlement patterns of African Americans. This paper scratches the surface of how racial discrimination has been institutionalized not only in this community but in other small towns across the Midwest. We offer an example of how the customary conclusions drawn about the interracial dynamics of population change in both metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas might be strengthened by examining their racialized historical contexts. In addition, we suggest how a detailed and careful examination of local housing conditions and housing policies might be useful in understanding residential segregation in small communities experiencing rapid Latino population growth. Additional qualitative and quantitative comparative research in diverse settings would move forward the documentation of Sundown towns in America and examine their relevance for contemporary processes of demographic change and integration in the United States.

REFERENCES

- Ahrentzen, S. (2003). "Double Indemnity or Double Delight? The Health Consequences of Shared Housing and "Doubling Up"." Journal of Social Issues **59**(3): 547-568.
- Alba, R. D., J. R. Logan, et al. (2000). "The Changing Neighborhood Contexts of the Immigrant Metropolis." Social Forces **79**: 587-621.
- Arreola, D. D., Ed. (2004). Hispanic Spaces, Latino Places: Community and Cultural Diversity in Contemporary America Austin, TX University of Texas Press.
- Bennefield, R. L. (2003). Home Values: 2000. Census 2000 Brief. U. S. D. o. C. Economics and Statistics Administration. Washington, D.C., U.S. Census Bureau.
- Berry, C. (2001). "Land Use Regulation and Residential Segregation: Does Zoning Matter." American Law and Economics Review **3**(2): 251-274.
- Burns, N. (1994). The Formation of American Local Governments: Private Values in Public Institutions, Oxford University Press.
- Census Bureau, U. S. Census 2000, Summary File 3; generated by Eileen Diaz McConnell; using American FactFinder; <http://factfinder.census.gov>; (2007).
- Census Bureau, U. S. (2006). County Population by Age, Sex, Race, and Hispanic origin: April 1, 2000 through July 1, 2005. P. D. Population Estimates Program, U.S. Census Bureau.
- Charles, C. Z. (2003). "The Dynamics of Racial Residential Segregation." Annual Review of Sociology **29**: 167-207.
- Charles, C. Z. (2006). Won't You Be My Neighbor? Race, Class, and Residence in Los Angeles New York, NY, Russell Sage Foundation.
- Conley, D. (1999). Being Black, Living in the Red: Race, Wealth, and Social Policy in America. Berkeley, University of California Press.
- Donato, K. M., M. Aguilera, et al. (2005). "Immigration policy and employment conditions of US immigrants from Mexico, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic." International Migration **43**(5): 5-29.
- Donato, K. M., M. Stainback, et al. (2005). The Economic Incorporation of Mexican Immigrants in Southern Louisiana: A Tale of Two Cities. New Destinations of Mexican Immigration in the United States: Community Formation, Local Responses and Inter-Group Relations. V. Z. a. R. Hernandez-Leon. New York, Russell Sage.
- Durand, J. and D. S. Massey, Eds. (2004). Crossing the Border: Research from the Mexican Migration Project. New York, NY, Russell Sage Foundation.
- Durand, J., D. S. Massey, et al. (2000). "The Changing Geography of Mexican immigration to the United States: 1910-1996." Social Science Quarterly **81**(1): 1-15.
- Fennelly, K. (2005). Latinos, Africans, and Asians in the North Star State: New Immigrant Communities in Minnesota. Beyond the Gateway: Immigrants in a Changing America. E. M. Gozdziaak and S. F. Martin. Lanham, MD, Lexington Books.
- Fennelly, K. and H. Leitner (2003). How the Food Processing Industry Is Diversifying Rural Minnesota. JSRI Working Paper. Lansing, Michigan, Michigan State University.
- Fink, L. (2003). The Maya of Morgantown: Work and Community in the Nuevo New South. Chapel Hill, NC, University of North Carolina Press.
- Fitzgerald, D. (2006). "Towards a Theoretical Ethnography of Migration." Qualitative Sociology **29**(1): 1-24.

- Frey, W. H. (2002). Census 2000 Reveals New Native-Born and Foreign-Born Shifts Across U.S. R. R. (02-520), Population Studies Center, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan.
- Gallagher, M. (2005). Alternative IDs, ITIN Mortgages and Emerging Latino Markets. Profitwise News and Views. Washington, DC, Newsletter of the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago. .
- Galster, G. and E. Godfrey (2005). "By Words and Deeds - Racial Steering by Real Estate Agents in the US in 2000." Journal of the American Planning Association **71**(3): 251-268.
- García, J. R. (1996). Mexicans in the Midwest, 1900-1932. Tucson, University of Arizona Press.
- González , G. G. (1991). "Labor and Community: The Camps of Mexican Citrus Pickers in Southern California." The Western Historical Quarterly **22**(3): 289-312.
- Gouveia, L. and D. D. Stull (1997). Latino Immigrants, Meatpacking, and Rural Communities: A Case Study of Lexington, Nebraska. JSRI Research Reports. T. J. S. R. Institute. East Lansing, Michigan, Michigan State University.
- Gouveia, L. and D. D. Stull (1997). Latino Immigrants, Meatpacking, and Rural Communities: A Case Study of Lexington, Nebraska. JSRI Research Report. East Lansing, Michigan, The Julian Samora Research Institute
- Gozdziak, E. M. and S. F. Martin, Eds. (2005). Beyond the Gateway: Immigrants in a Changing America. Lanham, MD, Lexington Books.
- Grey, M. (2000). Marshalltown, Iowa and the Struggle for Community in a Global Age Communities and Capital: Local Struggles Against Corporate Power and Privatization. T. W. Collins and J. D. Wingard. Athens, GA, University of Georgia Press.
- Grey, M. and A. Woodrick (2002). "Unofficial Sister Cities: Meatpacking labor migration between Villachuato, Mexico and Marshalltown, Iowa." Human Organization **61**(4): 364-376.
- Grey, M. A. and A. C. Woodrick (2005). "Latinos Have Revitalized Our Community": Mexican Migration and Anglo Responses in Marshalltown, Iowa. New Destinations: Mexican Immigration in the United States. V. Zúñiga and R. H. -León. New York, Russell Sage.
- Grow, B. (2005). Embracing Illegals. Business Week.
- Guzman, B. and E. D. McConnell (2002). "The Hispanic population: 1990-2000 growth and change." Population Research and Policy Review **21**(1-2): 109-128.
- Hartigan, J. (1997). Name Calling: Objectifying "Poor Whites" and "White Trash" in Detroit. White Trash: Race and Class in America. M. Wray and A. Newitz. New York, Routledge.
- Harwood, S. (2005). "Struggling to Embrace Difference in Land-use Decision Making in Multicultural Communities." Planning Practice and Research **20**(4): 355-371.
- Hernández -León, R. and V. Zúñiga (2000). "Making Carpet by the Mile: The Emergence of a Mexican Immigrant Community in an Industrial Region of the U.S. Historic South." Social Science Quarterly **81**(1): 49-66.
- Hernández -León, R. and V. Zúñiga (2003). "Mexican Immigrant Communities in the South and Social Capital: The Case of Dalton, Georgia." Southern Rural Sociology **19**(1): 20-45.
- Iceland, J. and R. Wilkes (2006). "Does socioeconomic status matter? Race, class, and residential segregation." Social Problems **53**(2): 248-273.
- Johnson, J. H. J., A. Parnell, et al. (2004). "Racial Apartheid in a Small North Carolina Town." Review of Black Political Economy **31**(3): 89-107.
- Joint Center for Housing Studies, H. U. (2007). State of the Nation's Housing, 2007. H. University. Cambridge, MA, Graduate School of Design, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University

- Kandel, W. and J. Cromartie (2004). New Patterns of Hispanic Settlement in Rural America Rural Development and Research Report 99
Washington, DC, Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture.
- Kandel, W. and J. Cromartie (2004). New Patterns of Hispanic Settlement in Rural America. E. R. Service. **RDRR99**.
- Kandel, W. and E. A. Parrado (2005). "Restructuring of the US meat processing industry and new Hispanic migrant destinations." Population and Development Review **31**(3): 447-+.
- Latapí, A. E., P. Martin, et al. (1997). Factors that Influence Migration. Migration Between Mexico and the United States: A Binational Study. Washington, D.C., U.S. Commission on Immigration Reform.
- Lewis Mumford Center, C. U. a. R. R. (2002). Separate and Unequal: Racial and Ethnic Neighborhoods in the 21st Century. Albany, NY, University of Albany-SUNY.
- Lewis Mumford Center, S. (2001). Ethnic Diversity Grows, Neighborhood Integration Lags Behind Albany, NY, State University of New York.
- Lichter, D. T. and K. M. Johnson (2006). "Emerging Rural Settlement Patterns and the Geographic Redistribution of America's New Immigrants." Rural Sociology **71**(1): 109-131.
- Lichter, D. T., D. Parisi, et al. (2007). "Municipal Underbounding: Annexation and Racial Exclusion in Small Southern Towns." Rural Sociology **73**(1): 47-68.
- Lichter, D. T., D. Parisi, et al. (2007). "National Estimates of Racial Segregation in Rural and Small-Town America." Demography **44**(3): 563-81.
- Light, I. (2006). Deflecting Immigration: Networks, Markets, and Regulation in Los Angeles. New York, Russell Sage Foundation.
- Loewen, J. W. (2005). Sundown Towns: A Hidden Dimension of American Racism. New York, The New Press.
- Logan, J. R. and R. D. Alba (1993). "Locational Returns to Human Capital: Minority Access to Suburban Community Resources." Demography **30**(243-268).
- Logan, J. R., R. D. Alba, et al. (2002). "Immigrant Enclaves and Ethnic Communities in New York and Los Angeles." American Sociological Review **67**: 299-322.
- Logan, J. R., B. J. Stults, et al. (2004). "Segregation of Minorities in the Metropolis: Two Decades of Change." Demography **41**(1-22).
- Massey, D. S. (2007). Building a Better Underclass. Categorically Unequal: The American Stratification System. New York, Russell Sage Foundation.
- Massey, D. S. and N. A. Denton (1988). "The Dimensions of Residential Segregation." Social Forces **67**(2): 281-315.
- Massey, D. S. and N. A. Denton (1993). American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press.
- Massey, D. S., J. Durand, et al. (2002). Beyond Smoke and Mirrors: Mexican Immigration in an Era of Economic Integration. New York, Russell Sage.
- Massey, D. S. and N. Malone (2002). "Pathways to legal immigration." Population Research and Policy Review **21**(6): 473-504.
- McConnell, E. D. (2004). Latinos in the Rural Midwest: The Twentieth-Century Historical Context Leading to Contemporary Challenges Apple Pie and Enchiladas: Latino Newcomers in the Rural Midwest. A. V. Millard and J. Chapa. Austin, TX University of Texas Press.
- McConnell, E. D. (Forthcoming, 2008). "The U.S. Destinations of Contemporary Mexican Immigrants." International Migration Review **42**(3).

- McConnell, E. D. and F. B. LeClere (2002). "Selection, context, or both? The English fluency of Mexican immigrants in the American Midwest and Southwest." Population Research and Policy Review **21**(3): 179-204.
- Meyer, S. G. (2000). As Long as They Don't Live Next Door: Segregation and Racial Conflict in American Neighborhoods. 2000, Rowman & Littlefield.
- Michigan. (2007). "Racial Residential Segregation Measurement Project." Retrieved May 10, 2007, from <http://enceladus.isr.umich.edu/race/racestart.asp>.
- Millard, A. V. and J. Chapa, Eds. (2004). Apple Pie and Enchiladas: Latino Newcomers in the Rural Midwest. Austin, TX, University of Texas Press.
- Millard, A. V. and J. Chapa (2004). Apple Pie and Enchiladas: Latino Newcomers in the Rural Midwest. Austin, University of Texas Press.
- Mohl, R. A. (2003). "Globalization, Latinization, and the nuevo New South." Journal of American Ethnic History **22**(4): 31-66.
- Moran-Taylor, M. and C. Menjivar (2005). "Unpacking Longings to Return: Guatemalans and Salvadorans in Phoenix, Arizona." International Migration **43**(4): 91-119.
- Oliver, M. L. and T. Shapiro (1995). Black Wealth/White Wealth: A New Perspective on Racial Inequality. New York, Routledge.
- Orrenius, P. M. (2004). The Effect of U.S. Border Enforcement on the Crossing Behavior of Mexican Migrants. Crossing the Border: Research from the Mexican Migration Project. J. Durand and D. S. Massey. New York, Russell Sage Foundation.
- Pader, E.-J. (1993). "Spatiality and Social Change: Domestic Space Use in Mexico and the United States." American Ethnologist **20** (1): 114-137.
- Pader, E. (2002). "Housing Occupancy Standards: Inscribing Ethnicity and Family Relations on the Land." Journal of Architectural and Planning Research **19**(4): 300-318.
- Parisi, D. (2008). Personal communication.
- Parisi, D. and D. T. Lichter (2007). Hispanic Segregation in America's New Rural Boomtowns. Washington, DC Population Reference Bureau.
- Pincus, F. L. (1996). "Discrimination Comes in Many Forms: Individual, Institutional, and Structural." American Behavioral Scientist **40**(2): 186-195.
- Ramos-Zayas, A. (2003). National Performances: The Politics of Class, Race, and Space in Puerto Rican Chicago. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.
- Reardon, S. F., S. A. Matthews, et al. (forthcoming). "The Segregation Profile: Investigating How Metropolitan Racial Segregation Varies by Spatial Scale." Demography.
- Rosenbaum, E. and S. Friedman (2007). The Housing Divide: How Generations of Immigrants Fare in New York's Housing Market. New York City, New York University Press.
- Saenz, R. and C. C. Torres (2003). Latinos in Rural America. Challenges to Rural America in the Twenty-First Century. D. L. Brown and L. E. Swanson. University Park, PA, Penn State University Press. : 57-72.
- Salamon, S. (2003). Newcomers to Old Towns: Suburbanization of the Heartland. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.
- Sandercock, L. and B. Kliger (1998). "Multiculturalism and the Planning System, Part One." The Australian Planner **35**(3): 127-132.
- Sandercock, L. and B. Kliger (1998). "Multiculturalism and the Planning System, Part Two." The Australian Planner **35**(4): 231-235.
- Schill, M. H., S. Friedman, et al. (1998). "Housing Characteristics of Foreign- and Native-Born Households in New York City by Birthplace." Journal of Housing Research **9**(2): 201-235.

- Senechal, R. (1990). The Sociogenesis of a Race Riot Urbana, IL, University of Illinois Press.
- Silver, C. (1997). The Racial Origins of Zoning in American Cities
- In the Shadows: Urban Planning and the African American Community. J. M. Thomas and M. Ritzdorf. Newbury Park, CA, Sage Publications.
- Stull, D. D., M. J. Broadway, et al., Eds. (1995). Any Way You Cut It: Meat Processing and Small-Town America. Lawrence, KS, University Press of Kansas.
- Suro, R. and A. Singer (2002). Latino Growth in Metropolitan America: Changing Patterns, New Locations Washington, D.C. , Center on Urban & Metropolitan Policy and The Pew Hispanic Center.
- Suro, R. and S. Tafoya (2004). Dispersal and Concentration: Patterns of Latino Residential Settlement. Washington, DC. , Pew Hispanic Center.
- Valdes, D. N. (1991). Al Norte: Agricultural Workers in the Great Lakes Region, 1917-1970. Austin, University of Texas Press.
- Valdes, D. N. (2000). Barrios Nortenos: St. Paul and Midwestern Mexican Communities in the Twentieth Century. Austin, University of Texas Press.
- Vargas, Z. (1993). Proletarians of the North: A History of Mexican Industrial Workers in Detroit and the Midwest, 1917-1933. Berkeley, University of California Press.
- Vásquez, M., C. E. Seales, et al. (2008). New Latino Destinations. Latinos/as in the United States: Changing the Face of América. H. Rodríguez, R. Sáenz and C. Menjívar. New York, Springer.
- Wahl, A. M. G., R. S. Breckenridge, et al. (2006). "Latinos, Residential Segregation and Spatial Assimilation in Micropolitan Areas: Exploring the American Dilemma on a New Frontier." Social Science Research **36**: 995-1020.
- Wahl, A. M. G., R. S. Breckenridge, et al. (2007). "Latinos, Residential Segregation and Spatial Assimilation in Micropolitan Areas: Exploring the American Dilemma on a New Frontier." Social Science Research **36**: 995-1020.
- Wilkes, R. and J. Iceland (2004). "Hypersegregation in the Twenty-first Century: An Update and Analysis." Demography **41**(1): 23-26.
- Winders, J. (2005). "Changing politics of race and region: Latino migration to the US South." Progress in Human Geography **29**(6): 683-699.
- Wong, D. W. S. (2004). "Comparing Traditional and Spatial Segregation Measures: A Spatial Scale Perspective." Urban Geography **25**: 66-82.
- Wray, M. (2006). Not Quite White: White Trash and the Boundaries of Whiteness. Durham, NC, Duke University Press.
- Zúñiga, V. and R. Hernández –León, Eds. (2005). New Destinations: Mexican Immigration in the United States. New York, Russell Sage.

¹ Extensive scholarship documents the existence of legal rulings and precedence supporting racial segregation in the United States and federal practices, such as via the Federal Housing Authority, that implemented and maintained residential segregation in the nation (e.g., Conley, 1999; Massey and Denton 1993; Oliver and Shapiro 1995).

²Discriminatory practices also were directed against American Indians, Japanese, the Chinese, Jews and many others (Loewen 2005).

³James Loewen provides a short bibliography of works mentioning sundown towns at: <http://www.uvm.edu/~jloewen/content.php?file=sundowntowns-mention.html>.

⁴Though the community and the county in which Riverbend is located have primarily non-Hispanic Whites, members of other racial/ethnic groups reside in adjacent counties. Loewen (2005) notes that disparities across the racial/ethnic compositions of counties suggests that racial policies may be responsible for the distinct mix of populations (p. 145).

⁵Following Moran-Taylor and Menjívar (2005), we refer to Latinos, predominantly persons from Mexico, as newcomers, migrants, and the like to emphasize the fluidity and back-and-forth movements of Mexican migration to the United States. Like other Mexican migrants, those residing in Riverbend engage in transnational practices. Though financial resources, products, and the migrants themselves cross national borders between Mexico and Riverbend, this paper focuses on their activities on the U.S. side of the border.

⁶See Charles (2003) for a thorough review of empirical and theoretical scholarship on racial segregation in the United States.

⁷A common measure of residential segregation, the Dissimilarity Index, shows the extent to which two groups are evenly spread among census tracts. The value indicates the proportion of either group that would have to move to another subarea to be evenly distributed with the other group.

⁸Cities such as Los Angeles show that both Hispanics and Blacks are very segregated residentially from Non-Hispanic Whites, with a Dissimilarity Index from Whites of 63 for Hispanics and 68 for African Americans. In the largest Midwestern city, Chicago, the dissimilarity index for Latinos is 62 and for Blacks is 81 (Lewis Mumford Center 2001).

⁹Charles (2003) provides a more complete review of these frameworks.

¹⁰There are Latin American migrants in Riverbend from countries other than Mexico; however, they are a tiny fraction of the total Latino migrant population in the community.

¹¹This approach was judged to be most appropriate, as it was not possible to identify all immigrants residing in the community, given their recency of arrival, irregular living arrangements, hours of employment, and legal status. Respondents suggested that immigrant workers who had to leave the plant because of injury or health problems often left the area; such persons were not interviewed in this study. Neither researcher was born in Mexico, but each is either a first or second generation immigrant to the United States. Both conducted interviews in Spanish or English. A graduate assistant working on the project, a White male, conducted in-person and phone interviews with some of the White locals in our sample.

¹²Moreover, measures based on higher levels of aggregation may underestimate segregation; calculations using lower-level data and more spatially-sensitive units reveal more segregation (Reardon et al., forthcoming; Wong 2004).

¹³The reference to “Dutch” likely stands in for Germans, or the “Deutsch.” Memoir audiotaped in 1978 and transcribed by state university staff.

¹⁴Memoir audiotaped in 1972 and transcribed by state university staff.

¹⁵Memoir audiotaped in 1975 and transcribed by state university staff.

¹⁶Memoir audiotaped in 1987 and transcribed by state university staff.

¹⁷Memoir audiotaped in 1987 and transcribed by state university staff.

¹⁸See Bonilla-Silva (2006) for an analysis of the primary frames employed by Whites in discussions of racial and ethnic stratification in the United States.

¹⁹The labeling of these activities as “race riots” is inaccurate. By all accounts, roaming groups of White males went looking for African Americans to assault. Those versed in Mexican American history will see similarities with the mislabeling of the Zoot Suit Riots in Los Angeles in 1942.

²⁰Memoirs audiotaped in 1973 and 1990, transcribed by state university staff.

²¹Memoir audiotaped in 1973, transcribed by staff from a state university.

²²McConnell (2004) provides an overview of Latino migration to the non-metropolitan Midwest.

²³Though not the focus of this study, these exclusionary policies also help explain the disparate settlement patterns of African Americans and recently arrived African immigrants, noted by Lichter and Johnson (2006).

²⁴We do not have the empirical evidence to speculate on the connection between Non-Hispanic White decreases and Latino increases, though it is possible that a “tipping point” has been reached, as noted in Lichter and Johnson (2006).

²⁵The most recent quantitative data available about a small town such as Riverbend are from Census 2000. Data sources such as the 2006 American Community Survey (ACS) collected by the U.S. Census Bureau do not calculate population estimates for areas with populations smaller than 65,000. To arrive at the 2006 figure for the community, we assumed that the approximately the same proportion of the county’s Latinos lived in Riverbend as in 2000 (89 percent), and extrapolated from the 2006 county-level estimates from the ACS.

²⁶The other 20% of Non-White workers at the plant are African immigrants, with a few others from Asian countries. This paper focuses on Mexican migrants, the overwhelming majority of Non-White living individuals in Riverbend.

²⁷ The mayor often makes such statements; in 2007, he said, “If I could wave a magic wand, I’d rather have no Hispanics and have this town be like it was in the ‘50s. But that’s just not going to happen.” (news report, June 7, 2007).

²⁸ Communities with large proportions of Mexicans, such as citrus picker camps in California, are often called “Little Mexico” (González 1991).

²⁹ Latinos in Riverbend respond to this argument. Recently, one Latina migrant offered the following explanation: We don’t feel that we are hurting anyone by being here, because we work, because we don’t steal anything. ...I understand that being here without papers is an offence, but we try to do the best we can. We pay our taxes, and we try to obey the law as best we can” (city newspaper, April 6, 2007).

³⁰ Data for the county in which Riverbend is located indicate that there has been more out-migration between 2000 and 2006 than in-migration from international destinations (U.S Census Bureau components of change estimates), but this could be due to the movement of both Whites and Latinos to areas with more diverse employment, young adults coming of age and choosing large urban areas, as well as moves specifically to avoid Latinos.

³¹ We concur with Hernández –León and Zúñiga (2005) about the importance of identifying “accommodation,” not just “conflict, competition, and tension” (p. 254).

³² The index of dissimilarity is on a 0-100 scale, approximately 60 or higher, is considered to be high segregation, 40-60 is moderate segregation, and below 40 is low (Lichter et al 2007). The communities included in their analyses were limited to places with populations larger than 500 that were at least 10 percent white and 10 percent minority in 1990.

³³ Census maps show that the two complete census tracts considered here cover 1.1 miles and 2.8 miles, respectively. A block group from a third census tract is also within the place boundaries and is 2.8 miles wide. Each block group contains between 37 and 77 census blocks.

³⁴ Riverbend’s county also become less segregated, with more even distribution of Latinos and non-Hispanic Whites, between 1990 and 2000: decreasing from a dissimilarity index of 92.4 to 76.6 in 2000 (Michigan 2007).

³⁵ Beginning in 2010, data based on five year averages for small communities will be available from the Census Bureau; these data will be useful for future calculations of the index of dissimilarity between censuses.

³⁶ Being a predominantly working-class town, Riverbend has mobile homes occupied by an racially and ethnically mixed group. For example, in one mobile home park within the city’s boundaries with approximately 20 mobile homes, about 40 percent of the residents have Latino surnames; the remainder are non-Hispanic White. Further, Riverbend’s mobile homes are not confined to the designated parks, as is often the case dictated by enforced zoning and land use codes. Mobile homes are located on residential streets alongside site-built homes.

³⁷ There are only a few Riverbend homes valued at over \$100,000, all of which are owned by Non-Latino residents. The local housing market is suffering, as it is in are other parts of the country. A review of a local real estate agent’s website in March 2007 showed price reductions for 43 percent of houses with asking prices under \$40,000; 55 percent of houses priced \$40,000-\$70,000; and 33 percent of houses over \$70,000.

³⁸ Indeed, though few local banks have Spanish-speaking loan officers, Latino customers often bring persons to interpret for them. Banking personnel indicate that they work on a “case-by-case” basis with Mexican applicants lacking social security numbers and other materials.

³⁹ The title of Pader’s (2002) article includes this phrase. Other scholars are more skeptical (e.g., Berry 2001).