

RESEARCH REPORT

Creative Networks: Mexican Immigrant Assets in Chicago

For

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From

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PREFACE

This project has its origins in the work of the Culture and Creativity Program at the Rockefeller Foundation. Joan Shigekawa, the associate director of the program, has supported rigorous research in the social impact of the arts, and encouraged collaboration between scholars using quantitative techniques and those with a more qualitative orientation. At a conference at the Foundation's offices in 2003, she brought together arts researchers with network analysis theorists and created a fertile terrain for interaction. The opportunity to formally integrate methodologies came with the launching of the Foundation's North American Transnational Communities Initiative. Joan encouraged us to work together to study the cultural and artistic practices and networks of Mexican immigrants in Chicago to complement the demographic and economic studies supported under the Initiative.

Though we knew immigration issues had become more prominent in the media and public discourse in the years since the North American Free Trade Agreement (1994) and the government's increasing push to secure the borders after the events of 9/11, forces beyond what we could have predicted led to immigration becoming one of the biggest public issues of 2006. The introduction of H.R. 4437 by Wisconsin Representative James Sensenbrenner in December of 2005, with its severe restrictions on and punishments for immigrants in the United States who lack papers, massively increased the visibility of the issue in all media formats. Across the United States, in response to the proposed harsh legislation, millions of immigrants and their supporters began mobilizing for the right to earn a living and remain with their families without fear. Major marches in several cities on March 10th and May 1st of 2006 took place as we were writing this report, and showed the country that immigrants are willing to act as a political force for social justice.

Much of the debate about immigration in recent months has been primarily about its economic impact on American citizens, specifically on entry-level low-income workers, and the need to secure the border due to concerns about terrorism. While these aspects of the issue continue to be discussed and debated, and are certainly important, we have noticed the discourse is missing any mention of the cultural and artistic contributions of Mexican immigrants to the United States. The limits of discussing immigration only in terms of one or two aspects of the issue are hinted at in the end of Roger Lowenstein's recent *New York Times Magazine* article "The Immigration Equation". Lowenstein, citing David Card, an economist at Berkeley, questions: "what is it that immigration policy is supposed to achieve?" (NY Times, July 9, 2006). The rich cultural, artistic and social networking data in this report provide an essential background for a serious, humane consideration of that question.

Alaka Wali, Noshir Contractor, and Rebecca Severson
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We would also like to thank the multifaceted research and research support teams who worked on this project. Yarimar Bonilla, Heather McClure, Jesse Mumm, Sarah Van Deusen Phillips and Sujey Vega stepped up to the challenge of short-term team ethnography, and their contributions and hard work deserve praise. The project benefited tremendously from the help of volunteers and interns. Sofia Castillo helped out with ethnographic interviews, photography, participant observation and administering IKNOW social networking surveys. Sofia Narvaez-Gete helped with locating respondents, administering IKNOW surveys and translation. Andrea Rincon helped with inputting paper IKNOW surveys into the computer program. Chad Taylor helped with bibliographic research for the project. Celine Vaaler and Rebecca Puckett helped with copy-editing the executive summary and final report.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Creative Networks: Mexican Immigrant Assets in Chicago, a joint research project of The Field Museum's Center for Cultural Understanding and Change (CCUC) and the Team Engineering Collaboratory (TECLab) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, investigated the cultural, artistic and social networking assets of recent Mexican immigrants in the Chicago region. From March through August of 2005, five anthropologists conducted field work in Chicago and its surrounding suburbs, with support from a team of three anthropologists at CCUC who provided expertise on the qualitative asset-mapping component of the investigation and two UIUC TECLab social scientists who provided expertise on the elicitation and analysis of social networks.

Study findings below trace overall trends as described by Mexican immigrants (most of whom arrived in 1994 or later) on aspects of cultural, artistic, and social networking among individuals and organizations in this community. Research illuminated a range of important artistic, cultural and networking activities. Like CCUC's previous work on the informal arts, this study also conceptualized arts and cultural production as existing on an "informal-to-formal" continuum. Informal practices such as singing with a mariachi band at a family gathering, preparing tamales, or listening to Spanish-language radio, often fall outside traditional nonprofit and commercial arts experiences, and occupy a significant place in the social infrastructure of communities. These practices help to build individual and collective identity, bond Mexican nationals within Chicago, and between Chicago and Mexico, and bridge Mexican immigrants with other U.S. born groups. Researchers discovered that key individuals and organizations facilitate this bonding and bridging, from social and cultural organizations that arise from or target the recent Mexican immigrant population, to schools and churches that sponsor arts education with a Mexican emphasis, to individuals who are unusually active or well connected.

The current research builds on recent studies of the informal arts as a force for stimulating civic activism and bridging social divides based on ethnicity and class (Wali, Severson and Longoni, 2002) and as an important facilitator of network-building among immigrants (see Garcia, 2005; Moriarty, 2004; Dominguez and Watkins, 2003; Rajjman and Tienda, 2003; Enchautegui, 2002; Hernandez-Leon and Zuniga, 2000; Menjivar, 1997). The current study further considers the role of artistic, cultural and networking practices in surmounting social barriers due to language and length of U.S. residency, and the consequences of these practices for individuals and communities both in the Chicago metropolitan area and in Mexico (Monge and Contractor, 2003). Ultimately, this research revealed that Mexican immigrants in Chicago possess a wealth of artistic and networking assets that contribute to the social, cultural and economic well-being of neighborhoods, organizations and institutions in the Chicagoland area.

The Mexican Immigrant Assets study had three specific areas of inquiry relating to recent Mexican immigrants' artistic, cultural and social networking practices in the Chicago metropolitan area. The goals of the study were to:

- Identify the cultural, artistic, and networking practices and capacities of recent migrants (post-NAFTA) from Mexico.
- Analyze how these act to buffer challenges or obstacles faced by immigrants as they traverse the transnational landscape.
- Understand the creation of new forms, new applications of existing forms, and emerging hybridities in cultural practices and network formation in order to explore identity formation, community building strategies and creative potential of immigrants.

Researchers conducted 105 qualitative interviews with ninety-four different people and conducted participant observation ninety-seven times at various events and activities resulting in over 1,000 typed pages of notes and interview transcripts. In-person quantitative surveys were administered with seventy-seven individuals and twenty-six organizational leaders. A major strength of the project is its unique combination of traditional qualitative anthropological methods of focus groups, participant observation and interviews with quantitative social network analysis using a computer-based survey to gather information on the structure and content of social relations and to map the relationships between individuals and organizations in the immigrant community. Computer software called IKNOW (Inquiring Knowledge Networks on the Web) enabled the electronic collection of network data from a sample of organizations identified as important to the Mexican Immigrant community in Chicago and, more importantly, from a sample of Mexican immigrants in a range of Chicago metropolitan area communities.

Study findings fall into five interrelated areas.

I. IMMIGRATION AND IDENTITY

Ethnographic Vignettes

As the links to home attenuate, [recent Mexican immigrants] are more likely to actively self-identify as Mexican.

Over there, traditional customs are less necessary to who you are. It's not important to have an understanding of your history and culture when you are a part of it, when you see it all around you. Here...there is more attention to detail and the accuracy of recreations of culture.

The population is majority Mexican in this school. And they don't have much identity... They are in limbo, neither here nor there...the [Mexican dance] project was an example of the positive [influence] that we can give to the students, to make an impact by talking about their roots. The intent was to make them proud of their origins...so that they would know their roots...so that their culture could shine.

"The meaning of the dance was very important. It means to give, and to receive nothing in return.... It's something that happens with our students

in this city, in this country, with others who do not treat them as equals. We come here to work and to give, and we don't get back the same respect."

Study data reveal that the processes of self and collective identification among Mexican immigrants in the Chicago area are intimately related to cultural and artistic production and social networking in environments that encourage cultural and artistic production. In turn, shared cultural recognition and strong networks among Mexicans and Mexican Americans in the U.S. may increase the possibilities for civic and economic participation on a local and national level.

‘Networking’ as a theme emerged over 200 times in field notes and ethnographic information. Most networking behaviors occurred within the context of artistic and cultural activities and organizations. Many Mexican immigrant respondents connected to home and to one another in the Chicago area through re-creating (and, at times, carefully researching) customs, artistic forms, and material culture (including food grown in community gardens) they once may have taken for granted through formal and informal arts. Social network survey data indicate that immigrants who have lived here longer report learning artistic and cultural practices from more members of their support groups (60%) than do more recently arrived individuals (47%). This may provide evidence that those individuals who have lived here longer may consider learning artistic and cultural practices a way to reconnect with Mexican cultural heritage. Further, many parents, educators and community leaders in the study described Mexican artistic and cultural practices as protective factors for children of Mexican immigrants raised in the U.S. Simultaneously increasing young people’s knowledge of and connection to uniquely Mexican customs while affirming youths’ self-worth were described as buffers to negative messages they received in the U.S., where Mexican immigrants are often regarded with ambivalence if not outright hostility.

Many young people’s identities were informed by multiple influences, and their capacity for being bi- (or multi-) lingual, bi-national and/or bi-cultural facilitated the formation of networks across class, race and even nation-state boundaries (examples from the study include youth engagement in leadership development training in Chicago and Mexico through hometown associations, and popular international music and dance forms, such as Reggaetón). Adult immigrants, similarly, transformed their self-definitions as a result of their interactions with other Mexicans in Chicago. For instance, Mexicans from rural and urban areas settled in the same neighborhood or town grew to rely on one another. Respondents described these interactions among diverse Mexican immigrants as catalysts for the exploration and presentation of distinctive regional Mexican artistic and cultural forms in Chicago. In the U.S., social, class and other differences that would have been salient in Mexico lost their potential to divide Mexican nationals. Instead, Mexicans’ increased identification with one another against the backdrop of an Anglo-American and English-speaking majority has tremendous implications for political unity among Mexicans and between Mexicans and Mexican Americans, as was evident in the enormous demonstrations for immigrants’ rights beginning in February 2006 and continuing through the present (for a chronology of immigrant rights marches in this time period, see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2006_U.S._immigrant_rights_protests).

IIa. BUILDING CAPACITY

Ethnographic Vignettes

When people want to have a big event, like a wedding, quinceañera or baptism, the whole community [comes] together to pull it off in grand fashion.

In the program, they helped...my son [to be] more sociable. And there I met other mothers who recently arrived...I've told them that it's sad at the beginning. When you don't know anything or anybody, and some of them don't have papers, then it makes it harder. I told them that I also arrived without knowing anything but when they have problems, I tell them, don't worry, you go here for this and there for that.

The tamales being made were for an order from the Lincoln Park Zoo. The [social service agency] apparently had an agreement to sell tamales there as part of the fundraiser for their summer programs.

Mexican immigrants in the Chicago area often used artistic and cultural practices to break down social isolation, create new social networking relationships, strengthen existing bonds of affinity among group members and, in specific instances, create local and transnational ties with institutions outside the church, school or neighborhood in which an artistic group first formed. These practices help to build individual and community assets by fostering social interactions and skills critical to civic renewal.

These include greater tolerance of difference, trust and consensus building, collaborative work habits, use of innovation and creativity to solve problems, the capacity to imagine change and the willingness to work for it.

Study data suggest that church, school and primary service-based informal arts played unique and important roles as catalysts for Mexican immigrants' (and particularly immigrant women's) development of leadership skills and financial power that ultimately contributed to the expansion of institutional networks both in the Chicago area and between Chicago and Mexico.

For example, one church-based group paid for an artisan in a group member's hometown to create a Virgin of Guadalupe who was brought to the church by a Mexican priest. Gender emerged as an important factor in the study, with women reporting they participate in or attend artistic and cultural events with about 53% of the members of their support groups compared to 46% for men. Activities that seemed particularly female-gender-specific included decorative, textile and culinary arts. The shared creation of food, handicrafts and clothing helped to create camaraderie and trust among group members. This bonding had an important spillover effect; bonds created through women's shared participation in informal arts increased their commitments to one another and to the group, even if the focus of the group was not informal arts but, instead, diabetes management. The collective nature of production, whether making tamales for sale at the Lincoln Park Zoo or knitting caps and booties for newborns, strengthened and

expanded women's social networks, knowledge base and fundraising finesse. These informal artistic and cultural groups, through their increased social cohesion, fundraising talent, and leadership contributed in measurable ways to the well-being of organizations and neighborhoods to which a group was devoted both in Chicago and in Mexico.

IIb. IMMIGRANTS' RIGHTS AS WORKERS' RIGHTS

Ethnographic Vignettes

Life is hard in this country, but if you know your rights, at least you have something to hold on to.

Most [immigrants] were not politicized in any way in their home countries and the center exposes them to ideas and politics that they hadn't previously thought about.

Since I know my rights, he [the respondent's boss] doesn't attack me the same way he does the others.

Study data revealed that men principally engaged in workers' center activities, and in social, cultural and artistic organizations, and increased their social cohesion, knowledge and civic participation as a result.

In particular, church-based worker-center organizing was gaining strength in the years leading up to the study and emerged as a rich arena for the study of artistic, cultural and social networking practices among recent Mexican immigrants. Survey results suggest that 25% or more of Mexican immigrants' support group members have information about work and workers' rights groups. The only subject areas noted with higher percentages were healthcare, social services, and financial institutions. For some respondents, involvement in workers centers marked the first time they had ever learned about civil rights or considered engaging in public protest to demand respect for these rights. During the study, recent immigrants' protests for the recognition of workplace-based rights were deeply informed by Mexican devotional practices that were collective, performative and public. In these devotional protests, recent Mexican immigrant workers asserted their collective presence in a way that proclaimed their legitimacy: by emphasizing a public identity as religious devotees and dedicated workers as opposed to illegal aliens.

Through these public performances, recent Mexican immigrants insisted that social relationships in that public space be marked by mutual recognition of one another's humanity as the basis for mutual respect, not by threat and intimidation. These public devotional performances ultimately carved out precious public space for recent immigrants who may otherwise have felt they had no right or that it was too dangerous to engage in political protest. The particular form of these protests, like other forms of public religious devotion noted during the study, also shifted social relations in the space in which they were performed. By conducting workers' rights devotions outside

businesses, devotees invited spectators to become co-participants or, at the very least, witnesses to a public and deeply Mexican show of faith in the pursuit of social justice. Recent nationwide immigrant rights marches are evidence of the once latent potential of immigrants' social networks fostered through churches, workers' centers and Spanish-language radio to catalyze political action. Though the impacts of these marches on federal legislation are not yet known, the power of artistic and cultural practices to forge social relationships and spur forms of civic participation that are meaningful to Mexican immigrants can no longer be underestimated.

Data suggest that artistic and cultural engagement both encourage and are encouraged by bilingualism.

Bilingual speakers reported the highest number of individuals in their support groups with knowledge of artistic and cultural practices. Interestingly, bilingual respondents reported much higher levels of attendance and participation with their group members (60%) than did monolingual speakers of English or Spanish, and Spanish speakers reported higher levels (52%) of attendance and participation with their support group members than did English speakers (42%). Whether this is due to the increased opportunity to enjoy artistic and cultural events allowed by multilingualism, or to other factors associated with bilingualism remains to be seen. It does suggest that those who are able to hybridize their language (and likely their cultural patterns) emerge as more active in artistic and cultural activities with their support group members.

If artistic and cultural practices are crucial to the formation of both diverse social networks and strong community bonds, which in turn can contribute to engaged and informed civic participants, it appears that bilingual speakers active in artistic and cultural production are uniquely positioned to emerge as civic leaders, which was borne out in the study. Study data reflect that individuals who are social network nodes—who serve as bridges between predominantly English and Spanish speaking communities—are largely bilingual. Survey data reveal that bilingual individuals tended to be the most culturally and artistically engaged as well as the most active in the public sphere; as a consequence, they enjoyed strong political influence in both Anglo-American-majority and Mexican-majority forums.

III. TECHNOLOGY AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF CULTURAL PRACTICES

Ethnographic Vignettes

Cultural practices change. Now, there are several godmothers for quinceañeras: one for the shoes, one for the limo, etc.

There is a small store where Mexican immigrant women in their 70s scan photographs and email them to Mexico.

I send stories about Chicago to my daughter through the internet.

The quinceañera is a much bigger deal here than it was in Mexico and now is being exported back to Mexico. I recently saw some pictures of a quinceañera at a little ranchito out in the middle of nowhere in Mexico and the girls were standing in the horse corral in all of their American finery: bright pink dresses and everything.

Many Mexican immigrants rely upon technology (Internet, cell phones) to maintain transnational social networks.

Furthermore, some seek out Spanish language technology training courses offered by social service providers, libraries and churches, among others. Though Mexican immigrants of many generations in the Chicago area appeared to embrace technology, as evident in the quote above, youth are particularly adept at cultivating technologically mediated social networks. Cell phone text messaging and the Internet site MySpace.com were credited with mobilizing tens of thousands of immigrant youth nationwide in recent months (see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2006_U.S._immigration_reform_protests).

Some rites of passage (many with culture-specific characteristics associated with informal cultural and artistic practices), such as baptisms, birthdays, quinceañeras, and weddings have become more ornate among recent Mexican immigrants in the U.S. Though there are many possible reasons for this phenomenon—lavish large events can convey social status and economic well-being, while affirming uniquely Mexican traditions and forms—the advent of the Internet, email, and digital photography may have contributed in important ways to the transformation in Mexico of customs that Mexican immigrants adapted in the Chicago area.

IV. SOCIAL NETWORKS AND ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION

Ethnographic Vignettes

People attend things with their relatives and their compadres [close friends or associates]. That's a very important social category. And the success is due to word of mouth. 'My cousin did this,' that sort of thing.

[The club manager] made it clear that...the community builds the customer base themselves by word of mouth.

Active engagement in cultural and artistic practices popular with recent Mexican immigrants not only can foster civic engagement, but also can be extremely lucrative.

Survey data have revealed the importance of networking, resource sharing and meetings to coordinate collaborative activities. Many Mexican immigrants are also such avid consumers of music that producers and venues compete actively for their patronage. As a result, certain Chicago institutions that had fallen into neglect, such as the historic 1920s Aragon Ballroom, were revitalized once they headlined bands popular with Mexican immigrants. Of interest is not only evidence of Mexican immigrants' positive economic impacts upon Chicago, but also the shifts in marketing strategy utilized by struggling

business owners eager for Mexican immigrant audiences. Despite the large publicity budgets of some venues, respondents continually pointed to the single most effective way recent Mexican immigrants learned about goings-on: word of mouth. Individuals and organizations that successfully piggybacked on immigrants' personal social networks to promote their own messages and products often successfully revitalized their businesses. The power of personal and community-based social networks to influence the behavior of its members is now recognized as the most influential form of advertising [See www.bzzagent.com and the discussion of BIGresearch's Simultaneous Media Usage Survey (SIMM VII) in December 2005] pursued by Fortune 500 companies.

Recent and other Mexican immigrants' participation in peripheral economies that surround popular artistic and cultural sites has had an important economic ripple effect both locally and transnationally. Live performance venues, such as large theaters or summer festivals, support a related service economy that provides goods (food, popsicles, t-shirts) and services (cell phones and calling cards) to those in attendance. This also was true of churches and a few nonprofit organizations and schools in which popular Mexican artistic and cultural activities were held. Peripheral economies that sprang up around large gatherings of recent Mexican immigrants were so strong that some institutions charged for access to their patrons, such as churches that required vendors buy a permit and pay a monthly fee to operate their carts on church property. These same institutions were besieged by businesses eager for access to their parishioners, and often heavily monitored businesses that wished to market their services. Vendors interviewed during the study reported supporting family members both in the U.S. and Mexico off their vending sales, evidence of the local and transnational impact of these peripheral economies.

V. FOSTERING WELL-EDUCATED AND ENGAGED CITIZENS OF THE FUTURE

Ethnographic Vignettes

The youth of the community mobilize the adults to attend events.

[U.S. born children of immigrants] are not afraid of the United States. They know African-Americans, [whites], and other Latinos.

The chances of being rescued [from high risk behavior] are greater here [in Chicago] than in the suburbs due to all the agencies here and cultural institutions. My greatest concern right now is our Latino males. We're going to lose more and more of them into violence, into drugs. The kind of social isolation they face, combined with all the problems associated with poverty, is like a powder keg waiting to go off for this next generation.

This study points to the ways recent Mexican immigrant families are using social networks and artistic and cultural practices to further the successful acculturation of

themselves, their families and their fellow immigrants (e.g. locating and pursuing ESL classes via a personal support network, in referring youth in a Mexican dance class to empowerment and leadership skills training classes and groups). There were many instances in the study of parents and other members of this group engaging in activities and practices to further opportunities for children of immigrants. This is a particularly powerful finding because of changing demographics in the U.S. Roberto Suro, Director of the Pew Hispanic Center, notes that between 2000 and 2030, the U.S. Latino population will grow by about 17.7 million (Suro 2006). Over the next twenty-five years, the number of second-generation Latinos in U.S. schools will double, with nearly one-fourth of all labor force growth from children of Latino immigrants. As Suro writes,

[These children of Latino immigrants] will be moving into the workforce just as the huge Baby Boom generation of non-Hispanics is moving out... The Baby Boom did not produce a lot of children to take its place. According to Census Bureau projections, in 2004, there were 44 million non-Hispanics between 40 and 50, boomers heading toward retirement, but only 35 million who were 10 or younger to replace them. The gap will be filled by some 9 million Latinos 10 or younger. Latinos, especially the children of immigrants, will play key roles supplying the labor market and then supporting a very large elderly population (Suro 2006).

The education and job readiness of these children of immigrants, therefore, should be a priority for these future retirees, and for all of us in the U.S. Artistic and cultural activities/practices, such as those described in this report, that further the education, leadership development and community/civic engagement of children of immigrants, therefore, should be central components of local, regional, state and federal policies. Policies that support existing cultural, artistic and network assets within this community of recent Mexican immigrants (in Chicago and elsewhere) ultimately will contribute to the positive life chances of children of immigrants, a group of young people that all of us in the U.S. are relying upon to succeed.

Policy Recommendations

This study shows how cultural and artistic practices contribute to identity formation, strengthen collaborative bonds, stimulate economic activity, and extend social networks for Mexican immigrants. Based on these insights into the artistic and networking assets of Mexican immigrants in the Chicagoland area, we offer the following policy recommendations:

1) Support increased access to arts and support local artists in the Mexican community.

Arts practice provides critical opportunities for developing civic skills, building social support networks, and economic participation. Through engaging in informal arts and through continued and constant innovation of cultural practices, Mexican immigrants are creating significant social resources and reaching out to non-immigrants. The broad range of arts and cultural practices documented in this study are a vital part of the social fabric

of the Mexican community. Supporting arts and cultural practices through funding initiatives, more availability of public space, and recognition and validation of their importance will be a major contribution to assuring that Mexican immigrants can continue to contribute to the economic and social development of the Chicago Metropolitan region. Local artists are a growing sector of the community and their efforts to foster creativity, promote transnational relations, contribute to educational efforts and neighborhood vitality should be recognized and supported by public and private institutions.

2) Support institutions, such as churches, social service organizations, public parks, libraries, and small businesses that serve as critical sites for Mexican artistic and cultural practices.

Also support the individuals within them who are bridges between recent Mexican immigrants who are predominantly limited or non-English speaking and non-Mexicans in Chicago communities who are limited or non-Spanish speaking. The cultural bridging that these institutions facilitate and make possible is invaluable to the greater understanding and increased possibility for civic action for the collective good involving both Mexican and non-Mexican community residents.

3) Expand opportunities for immigrants to obtain employment training, English as a Second Language, and information on rights and responsibilities.

This study documented the initiatives and strategies that immigrant workers are taking to improve their livelihood under difficult conditions.

4) Support school-based efforts to use arts and cultural education and increase arts education opportunities for teachers.

Many schools serve as important sites for parents' and students' broader civic engagement, whether in relation to security and community policing, public health, or other issues of concern to neighborhoods and cities. Data from the MIA study indicate that teachers who incorporate the arts and culturally specific content and forms in their classes—including in non-arts focused courses—can simultaneously teach basic concepts, affirm students' family and ethnic/racial experiences and identities, and encourage curiosity among students about their own and other students' cultural uniqueness. Teachers should be encouraged to expose their students and themselves to the diversity of Mexican culture (for example, by taking trips to predominantly Mexican neighborhoods in the Chicago area and to Mexican artistic and cultural events in Chicago). MIA study data also suggest that teachers who incorporate Mexican subjects and forms in bilingual events for parents also provide a point of entrée for parents to engage in the schools and become partners with teachers in assuring children's successful educational development. This approach allows schools, teachers and parents to shift away from a deficit-based to an asset-based relationship between families and schools in which parents are regarded as valuable and knowledgeable practitioners of personal and collective artistic and cultural practices and traditions. Arts education opportunities for parents at schools should also be increased so that they can become equal partners with teachers in the school-based element of their child's educational development.

5) Create an information-sharing mechanism by convening local researchers, government personnel, hometown federations and other immigrant organizations, and social service organizations to facilitate information sharing, improve services to immigrants and strengthen support networks.

Creating an information-sharing mechanism through which organizations, researchers and city government personnel can remain informed of one another's missions, objectives and projects will make delivery of social services more efficient. This information-sharing could catalyze more effective and informed collaboration to build on the assets and meet the needs of the Chicago area recent Mexican immigrant population, including its informal and formal artists and cultural practitioners.

6) Support legislative efforts at the federal and state levels to allow undocumented students in America's junior high schools and high schools to apply for legal status if they have good moral character and have lived in the U.S. for at least five years.

With legal status, these students can go to college and eventually become U.S. citizens. In addition, undocumented students who are college bound would be able to pay in-state tuition (rather than foreign student tuitions, which are typically much higher).

CHAPTER I: CONTEXT AND METHOD OF THE STUDY

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The 2000 Census reports that of the 9.2 million people of Mexican origin in the U.S. (Census 2000), more than 573,000 Mexicans live in the Chicago metropolitan area, constituting 7% of the region's population (Census 2000; Paral and Norkewicz 2003). The city of Chicago is home to more than 292,000 residents of Mexican origin. Next to Los Angeles, the Chicago region has the largest Mexican population in the United States (Ready and Brown-Gort 2005).

New Latino immigrants tend to be young adults of child-bearing age whose birth rates are almost twice as high as among non-Hispanic whites (Suro 2006). As a consequence of this fertility rate, there is now a large second generation of Latinos—about 12.5 million people with a median age of 13—who are children of immigrants but also full-fledged, native-born U.S. citizens (Suro 2006). These second generation Latinos constitute approximately 30% of the Hispanic population in the U.S., and are the fastest-growing component.

This demographic shift will have important consequences on the political, social, economic and cultural fabric of America, particularly in urban areas where Mexican immigrants live, work, and contribute to the city's daily life. The *Creative Networks: Mexican Immigrant Assets in Chicago* study, a joint project of the Center for Cultural Understanding and Change (CCUC) at The Field Museum and the Team Engineering Collaboratory (TECLab) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, used an innovative combination of qualitative and quantitative methods to investigate the cultural, artistic and social networking assets of recent Mexican immigrants in the Chicago region. From March through August of 2005, five anthropologists conducted fieldwork in Chicago and its surrounding suburbs. The support team included three anthropologists in the Field Museum's Center for Cultural Understanding and Change who provided expertise on the qualitative asset-mapping component of the investigation and two social scientists from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Science of Networks in Communities and Team Engineering Collaboratory, who provided expertise and support on the elicitation and analysis of social networks.

The *Creative Networks: Mexican Immigrant Assets in Chicago* study builds on recent studies of the informal arts as a force for stimulating civic activism and bridging social divides based on ethnicity and class (Wali, Severson and Longoni 2002), and as an important community-building dynamic within immigrant communities (Moriarty 2004; Alvarez 2005). Network theory as it relates to migration generally considers "networks" as monolithic support-providing structures. Our research attempts to penetrate the "monolithic" networks that support transnational communities to investigate how variation in network members and network structures affect each of our research themes (Monge and Contractor 2003).

As part of the Rockefeller Foundation's multi-city North American Transnational Communities Initiative, the *Creative Networks: Mexican Immigrant Assets in Chicago* project complements existing studies on the impact of transnational flows of labor and economic resources by focusing on the ways that culture (a term meant to include the entire spectrum of formal and informal arts as well as non-arts beliefs, behaviors and

practices) and social networking in this population enable and enhance life in the United States. Specifically, the project identified the cultural, artistic and social networking practices of post-NAFTA Mexican migrants, uncovered the mechanics of hybridization of these practices in the United States and the roles they play in identity formation, community building and the general creative potential of immigrants. The project revealed many ways in which immigrants use cultural, artistic and networking practices to buffer the burden of immigration-related obstacles and to create strategies for survival and security.

Research illuminated a range of important arts- and culture-related networking activities and nodes, from social and cultural organizations that arise from or target this population, to schools and galleries that facilitate arts education with a Mexican emphasis, to individuals who are unusually active or well connected. After a brief section summarizing the history of Mexicans in Chicago, this report introduces the rationale for completing the project, highlights previous research important to the study, reviews the methods used, and presents initial findings from a series of ongoing analyses based on study data. The report concludes with a series of policy suggestions based on the initial findings reported herein.

A Brief History of Mexicans in Chicago

The Mexican government opened its consulate in Chicago as early as the 1800s (Ready and Brown-Gort 2005), followed by the first major wave of Mexican migration to Chicago in the mid to late 1910s. Scholars attribute this migration to the economic, social, and political effects of the Mexican Revolutionary War and the pull of jobs in industrial and agricultural sectors in the United States (Arredondo and Vaillant 2005). According to *The Encyclopedia of Chicago*, a mostly male Mexican workforce found jobs as unskilled and semiskilled laborers after migrating into Chicago from agricultural fields throughout the Midwest and from towns and villages in Texas and the Central Mexican states of Guanajuato, Michoacán, and Jalisco. It is only in recent years that increasing numbers of women, some unaccompanied by men, have migrated to the U.S. (Alvarez and Broder 2006). Scholars Arredondo and Vaillant note that the early Mexican migrants who came were more likely middle class than poor peasants from the countryside, and add that:

Mexicans founded tortilla factories, restaurants, markets or *bodegas*, and several local newspapers like *Mexico* (renamed *El Nacional* in 1930) and *El Ideal*. By the early 1930s they had founded local chapters of Mexican mutual benefit societies, labor groups (including *El Frente Popular*), and fraternal organizations (Arredondo and Vaillant 2005).

Mexicans in Chicago were predominantly Roman Catholic, though there also were an increasing number who were Protestant; the authors note that “in South Chicago, Mexicans established the first local Mexican church, Our Lady of Guadalupe, in 1924” (Arredondo and Vaillant 2005).

By 1960, Arredondo and Vaillant write that “Chicago’s primarily working-class Mexican community of nearly 56,000 was fractured along lines of citizenship, legal status, and language.” They explain:

Mexicans continued to live in the *colonias* of Back of the Yards and South Chicago, but with the construction of the University of Illinois at Chicago, those living in the Near West Side area moved south to Pilsen, *La Diesiocho* (named for the 18th Street commercial vein). In the mid-1970s, this neighborhood expanded past 26th Street and was known as *La Villita* (Little Village). Together these neighborhoods have become the fastest-growing areas of Mexican settlement in Chicago.

In November 2005, the *Chicago Tribune* reported that the number of Latinos living in Chicago’s suburbs outnumbered those living in the city for the first time (Olivo and Avila 2005). Dr. Sylvia Puente identified this trend as driven by immigration from Mexico and rising urban housing prices (Olivo and Avila 2005). Despite shifting residency patterns, well-established Mexican business corridors, which in recent years have expanded along Cermak Boulevard, remain a popular destination for Mexican suburbanites eager for markets, restaurants and music, clothing and shoe stores that are Mexican-owned and cater to a predominantly Mexican clientele.

Like most U.S. cities, social relations in Chicago’s metropolitan area are shaped by contradictory impulses in regards to immigrants. Within the past forty years, Chicago government and, increasingly, the Illinois legislature, have passed laws in support of immigrants. In the 1980s, Mayor Harold Washington declared that the enforcement of federal immigration laws were outside the purview of routine Chicago police procedures. In 2003, the Illinois legislature was one of the first states in the nation to pass the DREAM (the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors) Act. This act allows U.S.-raised undocumented immigrant children the opportunity for in-state college tuition and provides them with an opportunity to regularize their immigration status. The DREAM Act was recently re-introduced at the federal level by Senator Richard Durbin of Illinois, along with Senator Orrin Hatch of Utah. Juxtaposed with this outright immigrant advocacy, examples abound of anti-immigrant sentiment in the Chicago area, such as television news profiles during the study of Chicago area residents who traveled to the southern U.S. border to join the Minute Men. In addition, the racial profiling of Latinos, among other communities of color, is common as are workplace-based violations against immigrants, including those of Mexican origin.

Literature Review

This study is premised on the idea that globalization is leading to a qualitative change in the way that people move from country to country, changing the way we conceive of transnational social spaces and the individuals who populate those spaces. One of the most useful perspectives on transnationalism is put forth by Faist, who argues:

Transnational social spaces are combinations of ties, positions in networks and organizations, and networks of organizations that reach across the

borders of multiple states. These spaces denote dynamic social processes, not static notions of ties and positions. Cultural, political and economic processes in transnational social spaces involve the accumulation, use and effects of various sorts of capital, their volume and convertibility: economic capital, human capital, such as educational credentials, skills and know-how, and social capital, mainly resources inherent in or transmitted through social and symbolic ties (Faist 2000: 191)

Faist's perspective suggests that individuals who enter these transnational spaces must take advantage not only of the capital that they possess, but also the network ties that they possess and through which their capital is exploited. In many ways, then, this shapes how a researcher may think of investigating an individual's experience in this space. The trajectory of transnationalism and immigration experiences can be divided into three general phases: deciding to migrate, making a living, or enhancing lived experience. "Deciding to migrate" refers to the decision process associated with moving to another country either temporarily or permanently. "Making a living" refers to meeting basic subsistence needs, such as food, shelter, medical care, living wage, etc. "Enhancing lived experience" refers to those activities that move beyond subsistence activities to other tangible or intangible resources associated with greater physical, cultural, economic, or social mobility. These three phases are not independent of each other; in many cases each of these phases is intertwined with the others.

Each family or individual who migrates experiences these phases in a unique combination modified by historical and current contextual variables. It seems, though, that the mechanisms immigrant and transnational communities use to confront the challenges associated with each of these three phases are relatively conserved across groups and individuals. It's fairly clear from previous research that cultural and artistic activities play a role in each of these three phases of the immigration experience (Wali et al. 2002). It is also fairly clear that social support networks play an important role in each of these three phases (Massey 1990; Massey et al. 1994).

These two mechanisms do not comprise an exhaustive list of the mechanisms by which immigrants confront the challenges associated with the immigration experience. However, previous research suggests that these mechanisms do play a significant role. This literature review begins with a brief description of the role each mechanism plays in deciding to move, making a living and enhancing lived experience, independently. Artistic and cultural activities, however, do not occur outside of a social context. They are embedded in a world of social interactions that includes the relationships associated with immigrants' social support networks. Likewise, social support networks must grow and evolve in social space through social interactions. Artistic and cultural organizations provide opportunities for social networks to evolve. Relationships built on shared artistic and cultural practices lead to the growth and development of social support networks. Individuals linked to each other through bonds of social support often participate in artistic and cultural activities together, strengthening bonds and creating new relationships. Thus, artistic and cultural practices may enable social support networks and social support networks may enable artistic and cultural practices. The two mechanisms may catalyze each other, improving an immigrant's ability to make a living or enhance his or her lived experience. In the concluding sections of this paper we investigate this

mutual catalysis more fully, questioning the role of artistic and cultural practices and institutions in the enabling immigrants' social support networks and the role of networks in facilitating cultural and artistic activities.

General Themes

Massey's "network theory of migration" has become a widely accepted framework for understanding all facets of migration (Massey 1988; Massey et al., 1994). In his framework, social support networks (both kin and non-kin) in the sending and receiving countries are sources of information and resources that are integral for deciding to migrate, making a living, and enhancing lived experience. Massey defines networks as "sets of interpersonal ties that link migrants, former migrants, and non-migrants in origin and destination areas through the bonds of kinship, friendship, and shared community origin." (Massey 1988:396). Most people argue that networks of this type lower transaction costs, increasing the opportunity for international movement. While Light and colleagues (Light, Bhachu, and Karageorgis, 1993) and others have criticized network theory for not examining the political, economic and social contexts that these networks affect in the receiving country, network theory, writ large, is considered an improvement over previous "push" and "pull" theories of migration.

Wimmer's study of immigrant communities in Switzerland offers an interesting perspective on immigrant networks that may be worth considering (2004). In his 2004 study, he found that recent immigrants' networks are much more variable in structure and composition than those of immigrants who have lived in the destination country longer. As years pass, networks become more socioeconomically diverse when compared to recent immigrants' networks, but structure and composition seem to stabilize, decreasing variation among longer-term immigrants.

In these next sections, we summarize research on the impact of networks on immigrant communities for each of these phases, noting the role that artistic and cultural activities play in each study, when applicable. These sections also point out limitations in the studies from the standpoint of structural analysis.

Deciding to Migrate

The decision to migrate can be made by an individual or a group. This decision is made given the current political, economic, social and cultural context of the sending location, and in light of information about the political, economic, social and cultural context in the receiving location. This information is gathered from a number of sources such as radio, television, print media, electronic media and, most importantly, from friends, neighbors, and relatives that form a support network for the decision maker(s). Members of these support networks are often in multiple locations, some in the sending location, others possibly in the receiving location. What becomes important, then, is the movement of relevant and accurate information through the network, to enable the best choice in a very important decision.

Light, Bhachu, and Karageorgis (1993) argue that networks span space and time and connect micro and macro influences associated with migration. Especially, they connect macro influences to individuals. Thus, in their perspective, social networks are

bridges between larger political, social, cultural, and economic forces and the individuals who are affected by them. Information that is necessary for deciding to move, then, is largely filtered through the network, suggesting that networks play a key role in decision making, particularly in the decision to migrate.

Reporting the results of a largely ethnographic case study of factory workers in “El Tree” Oklahoma, Garcia argues similarly that, “social networks are critically important to the immigration process (2005). Not only do they facilitate movement to the receiving country, but social networks also help ease adaptation by making the process of finding and securing employment easier” (Garcia 2005:18). Salient to this discussion is the effect that networks have on the decision to migrate.

Davis, Stecklov and Winters (2002) studied domestic and international migration from rural Mexico, and they found that several factors significantly increased the likelihood of an individual’s emigration from Mexico to the United States: having at least one immediate family member currently living in the U.S., having at least one immediate family member who had been to the U.S. but presently lived elsewhere in Mexico, and having personally been to the U.S. Phillips and Massey (2000) reached a similar conclusion, finding that the likelihood of out-migration was highest for individuals who had immediate family members living in the United States and extended family members and friends who had some experience with life in the U.S. Davis and Winters (2001) studied the impact of gendered networks on the decision to emigrate from rural Mexico. They found that male networks had a greater influence on the decision to migrate, while female networks had a greater influence on the migration destination. Thus, in each of these cases, knowing someone with first-hand migration experience—in other words, having that individual in your network—increased the likelihood that a potential migrant would, in fact, immigrate to the United States. This suggests that network ties may have influence on an individual’s decision to migrate.

These studies, taken together, highlight the importance of social support networks in both the sending and receiving locations in the decision to migrate. They also suggest that cultural (and to some extent artistic) behaviors and institutions may play a role as facilitators of information exchange associated with the decision to migrate. Most studies however, fail to investigate the structure of these support networks, stopping short of a valid description of the networks that bring vital information to decision makers. Structural information is important, however. A decision maker who has direct and fairly immediate communication connections to network members in the receiving locations is more likely to receive up-to-date and accurate information than is a decision maker who must rely on second- or third-degree information. Social support networks, then, are important, but network structure must be more critically appraised.

While these studies suggest that artistic and cultural activities may play a role in the decision to migrate, there is very little explicit discussion of those roles. Given the knowledge that cultural and artistic activities play an important role in the lives of many Mexican immigrants, a more thorough investigation of how the decision to migrate is affected by them seems warranted. A more detailed investigation of network structures and interactions will provide detail on the role that cultural and artistic behaviors and institutions play in the decision to migrate.

Making a Living

Once the decision to move has been made and the journey completed, an entirely different phase of immigration begins. Now, the focus becomes more pragmatic, targeted on finding a place to live, finding a job, securing social services and other types of assistance if they are necessary. Social support networks, as Tilly (1990) aptly stated, are a “setting for life”. In the immediate sense they serve as structures that facilitate meeting basic needs. Along with Tilly’s study, other research on this phase of the immigration trajectory shows that network connections can be both a help and a hindrance to recent migrants. Light, Bhachu, and Karageorgis (1993) point out that immigrant networks play a significant role in creating the immigrant economy, suggesting that networks originally used for deciding to migrate, are likely also a source of resources once the move has been made. In fact, they argue that, “In overlooking the economic effects of immigrant networks in the destination economy, Massey and others overlooked a network function of great importance and one, moreover, that complements and expands network theory [of migration]” (1993: 6). This is merely an expansion of previous work by Light, which argues that networks expand economic opportunities in destination economies (1972). Reliance on a homogeneous network composed primarily of people similar to the migrant herself is often a migrant’s first response to the obstacles presented by life in a foreign country (Light et al., 1993).

Several studies focus specifically on Mexican immigrant communities in the United States. Garcia (2005), for example, studied the development of a growing community of Mexican immigrants working in factories. He described the current community structure as three interconnected subnetworks: the traditional subnetwork (i.e. family and friends), the church subnetwork, and the contract subnetwork (based on the recruitment programs and hiring practices of the meatpacking plant). These findings exemplify ways migrants acquire temporary material assistance and help finding employment. Mention of artistic and cultural organizations is absent from Garcia’s study; however, artistic and cultural activities seem to be considered part of the traditional and church subnetworks.

A socioeconomically and culturally diverse network may be more effective in terms of providing access to greater social mobility. In contrast to the ways of making a living that Garcia (2005) studied, Rajzman and Tienda (2003) explored entrepreneurship among Mexican migrants in Chicago. They compared Mexican immigrant entrepreneurs to Korean immigrant entrepreneurs in the same Chicago neighborhood, and found that a preference for seeking materials and information from fellow Mexican migrants seems to limit Mexican migrants’ entrepreneurial success, at least when compared to Korean immigrants. Here, the exploitation of social networks is a key factor in making a living. This study’s focus, however, does not include artistic and cultural activities or organizations.

Though their informants were Latin-American and African-American, Dominguez and Watkins (2003) arrived at findings similar to Rajzman and Tienda. Dominguez and Watkins distinguished between two different types of social networks influencing their participants: networks that yield social support, like kin and friendship

ties, and networks that yield access to resources that change an individual's "opportunity structure" – in other words, networks that yield leverage. Dominguez and Watkins found that, unlike social support networks, leverage networks were ethnically and socioeconomically diverse and included weak ties, supporting Granovetter (1973). One of the most salient points that Dominguez and Watkins raise is the importance of work relationships to the diversification of networks of individuals who may otherwise be socially excluded.

Socioeconomically diverse networks are found to possibly limit employment opportunities in a study completed by Enchautegui (2002). Statistical analyses revealed that recent immigrants were more likely to find suitable employment when living in households with (and thus when members of the social networks were) other, similar recent immigrants. The impact of social networks on making a living remains, but the ways in which networks affect this phase of the immigration trajectory is different.

The findings presented in these studies suggest that immigrant networks, possibly enabled and/or built around cultural and artistic organizations and practices, can be both a help and a hindrance to immigrants whose immediate goal is to secure basic needs and make a living. That finding begs the question, however, of the difference in structure and content between those networks that help and those that hinder. Further, the role of artistic and cultural practices and behaviors in these networks remains to be clarified.

Enhancing Lived Experience

The struggle to meet basic subsistence needs is a hard one, and for many immigrants can consume most of every day. But, however limited, there are opportunities for immigrants to enrich and enhance their lives. Pageants, festivals, church activities, political activism, labor organizing, adult education, and volunteerism are only a few of the countless ways immigrants may enhance their lives. The opportunity to participate in any of these activities, however, is often mediated by geographic location and socioeconomic context, moderated via social support networks.

Work by Fitzgerald (2004) and Ochoa (2000) suggests that the most common "enrichment" activities are those that involve political, civic or labor action. This has been found in a number of other studies focusing on the Mexican immigrant community in the United States. (Interestingly, the prominence of this type of behavior may be directly related to the fact that many Mexican immigrants are economic or political refugees) Fennema and Tillie (2001), in an extensive essay on multi-ethnic political participation and community, suggest that voluntary ethnic and civic organizations build community, trust, and ease immigrants' transitions, enhancing lived experience. In support of Raijman and Tienda (2003) and Dominguez and Watkins (2003), Fennema and Tillie also find that while intra-ethnic are prevalent, inter-ethnic networks seem less frequent, though they are most likely to provide greater access to resources.

Second to political and civic activism, activities that provide psychosocial support seem to be important. Enchautegui's 2002 study of immigrant households begins with this assumption. Gellis (2003) and others suggest that immigrants suffer stresses that social interaction may alleviate. Leslie concurs, suggesting that immigrant networks are small and kin-filled, and more likely to provide emotional support than financial support for immigrants (1992). Interestingly, non-kin network members may play an essential

role for immigrants, providing companionship and emotional support (Gellis 2003). Non-kin social interactions, however, must be found outside the household, possibly through cultural or artistic avenues. Psychosocial support behaviors have been noted across many immigrant communities including populations from Mexico, Southeast Asia, Africa, the Caribbean to name a few.

Just as for the previous phases, network composition, structure and practices affect the opportunities an immigrant has for “enrichment”. However, just as before, social support networks have been considered monolithic, urging a more nuanced exploration of how networks enable these “enhancements.” Further, the role of cultural and artistic activities and practices remains to be investigated, though evidence from studies by Wali and others suggest that informal and formal arts and cultural practices *do* play a role in enhancing lived experience of immigrants.

In summary:

1. Individuals and groups migrate as a result of information and resources from and connections to others in the United States.
2. Once in the United States, migrants use their connections to others to secure basic needs, employment and social services.
3. As migrants develop more (socioeconomically) diverse networks, they gain access to more socioeconomic resources.
4. Cultural and artistic behaviors, organizations, and institutions may enable and facilitate the growth and development of networks, thus easing the immigration process.
5. Time since immigration may affect network composition and structure, with recent immigrants’ networks varying more widely than immigrants who have been in the United States for longer.

Unpacking Network Theory of Migration

As expressed in the preceding section, one shortcoming of the prevailing “network theory of migration” is that social support networks are generally envisioned as monolithic entities. Some attention is paid to the members of an individual’s support network (the demography or composition of the group), but almost no attention is focused on the relationships associated with the support network (friendship, advice, churchgoing, cultural activities) or the structure that evolves through the interactions of individuals and relationships. Further, very little information is provided about the role that artistic and cultural activities and institutions may play in facilitating these networks. Thus it is likely that researchers may learn the frequency of men and women in a group, or the frequency of co-ethnics, co-residents, or cultural organizations, but unlikely that a researcher will investigate whether those men, women, or organizations have different structural positions in the network (such as core or periphery roles), or determine whether artistic practices are interactions that strengthens the bonds among members of a support group.

The *Creative Networks: Mexican Immigrant Assets in Chicago* project had a unique opportunity to begin an investigation of these questions in Chicago's Mexican immigrant community. Social network analysis, combined with other systematic data collection approaches and rapid, focused ethnographic investigation helped us begin to answer a series of initial questions about how social support network composition and structure interact with cultural and artistic behaviors and institutions to enable deciding to migrate, making a living, and enhancing lived experience. This approach breaks open the monolith of "support networks" allowing a more nuanced, though limited investigation of several important yet understudied facets.

Detailed Research Questions

The literature reviewed above, along with anecdotal and ethnographic evidence has led to the following list of questions that may be answered in the *Creative Networks: Mexican Immigrant Assets in Chicago* study. They are as follows:

1. How can we describe or profile the resource sharing network among organizations?
2. What kinds of organizations are most deeply involved in the resource sharing network? (churches, hometown associations, etc.)
3. What do we know about these organizations? How active are they with the Immigrant community? How active are they with artistic and cultural activities?
4. What sort of profile can we create for these organizations?
5. What kinds of organizations are brokers of resources to other organizations? What organizations "bond" organizations together?
6. How can we profile these organizations?
7. What kinds of organizations are brokers of resources to individuals? What organizations are "bridges" between the community and resources?
8. How can we profile these organizations?
9. What individuals broker resources to organizations? What organizations are "bridges" between individuals and organizations?
10. How can we profile these individuals?
11. What individuals broker resources to other individuals? What individuals "bond" their support networks together?
12. What do we know about them? How can we profile these individuals?
13. How robust is this resource sharing network? How vulnerable to external forces?
14. How diverse is this network of individuals and organizations?
15. How likely is this network to provide access to external resources?
16. How important are cultural and artistic organizations in the network?
17. How important are cultural and artistic activities in creating and maintaining this network between organizations and individuals?

Methods

The *Creative Networks: Mexican Immigrant Assets in Chicago* project's research process can be divided into three phases. Phase one consisted of preliminary research, literature review, and instrument creation, approval, and testing. Phase two consisted of fieldwork, ethnography, and survey administration. Phase three consisted of data cleaning, data formatting, initial data analysis and interpretation, and planning for further, more detailed analysis of the data.

At the start of the project, three focus groups were conducted with members of the local Mexican community. Participants, ranging from individual immigrant artists to senior staff from one of the largest Hispanic organizations in Chicago, provided guidance on neighborhood selection, gave overviews of the artistic community in the immigrant population and the services of various organizations, and listed additional interview contacts. Data from early focus groups proved to be important building blocks for the research and facilitated entry into the close-knit Mexican immigrant community.

Through focus group data and research team deliberation, it was decided that the project should be expanded from our original geographic scale from three neighborhoods to include the city and suburbs. Researchers targeted the northern, southern, and western regions of Chicago proper, with a fourth anthropologist targeting the western suburbs. This approach facilitated learning about the immigrant community across the region, and will allow future, comprehensive studies to target their research more effectively. The focus groups also provided information on the boundaries of important transnational networks, the key nodes in organizational and personal networks, the key attributes associated with the individuals and organizations within the Chicago community and the most important relationships to investigate.

In keeping with precedents established by previous success in multimedia dissemination, the team gathered photographs and audio recordings in addition to traditional field notes to document the research effort. Several respondents, including an amateur poet and a Mariachi singer, volunteered their own artistic products for dissemination as a means of demonstrating the important role art plays in their immigration experience.

A major strength of the *Creative Networks: Mexican Immigrant Assets in Chicago* project is its unique combination of traditional qualitative anthropological methods such as focus groups, participant observation and semi and unstructured interviewing with quantitative social network analysis that employs computer-based surveys to map the relationships between individuals and organizations. To obtain information on network patterns of social organization, the team employed social network analysis to explore patterns of social organization among migrants. Computer software called IKNOW (Inquiring Knowledge Networks on the Web) enabled the electronic collection of network data among a sample of organizations identified as important to the Mexican Immigrant community in Chicago and, more importantly, among a sample of Mexican Immigrants in the Chicago communities chosen as the focal points of the study. IKNOW technology provides an innovative approach to capturing participants' perceptions of network structures in their communities, aggregating multiple perceptions into consensus network structures, visualizing these network structures and providing real time analysis of various properties of these networks. The network assets revealed through

visualizations associated with the Network Asset Mapping Exercise also serve as means of validating ethnographic understandings of emerging networking patterns. The IKNOW (Inquiring Knowledge Networks on the Web) technology used in this survey was developed by Noshir Contractor's TECLab and adapted to the specific needs of this project by the TECLab team.

Generally, any social network study, whether it involves people or organizations, contains four primary question modules. The first module elicits a set of network members that will be the targets of subsequent questions. All the members of a particular church may comprise a possible set. This group may be pre-determined or may be elicited from a respondent at the time of the interview. If a respondent is asked to list network members, the list may be bounded (the top ten) or unbounded (free recall). The second module elicits information about how the informant is linked to the individuals or organizations identified in the first questions and about how an individual believes the other network members may be connected. This module may focus on one specific type of relationship or may request information about a group of relationships. Continuing with our example, questions in this module might ask a respondent to identify those members of his or her church with whom he or she works during the week. The third module reveals information about the attributes of the respondent. These questions are usually limited by the research goals of the group. For the purposes of this study, we are interested in whether an individual participates in artistic or cultural activities, or whether an organization supports artistic or cultural activities. The final module elicits information on the respondents' perceptions of the attributes of his or her network members. Here, a possible question is whether an individual believes that his or her network members participate in artistic or cultural activities.

When network data have been collected, they can be summarized or represented in two primary ways: visualizations and indices. Visualizations provide a graphical representation, map, or diagram that represents network information. Network members are represented as nodes that are connected by lines that represent relational linkages reported among the nodes. The nodes themselves may differ in size, shape, or color as a means to represent attribute information collected in other network survey modules. Network indices, as mentioned before, summarize structural properties of the network members and of the network as a whole. Any number of indicators can be calculated using structural and attribute data; however, the research questions at hand guide the appropriate use of network indicators. Generally indicators fall into two classes, those based the number of relational nominations a network member gives and receives (called outdegree and indegree, respectively), and those based on the number of paths between two other network members any network member is on (called betweenness).

In this study, a network surveys was created to assess inter-connections among the organizations and institutions important to the Mexican immigrant community. Another survey was created to assess immigrants' connections to those same organizations and institutions as well as to explore relationships among respondents' support networks.

Organizational Surveys

The ethnographic data gathered during the first three months of fieldwork was used to compile a list of organizations within the following categories: arts centers, banks and financial institutions, businesses, churches, community centers, cultural associations, hometown associations, informal associations, labor organizations, neighborhood associations, schools, news and media organizations, social services, parks and open spaces, and social clubs. From a pool of 159 organizations, fifty were targeted for participation, and twenty-six consented and volunteered their time. Organizations were chosen in a probability proportionate to size strategy, in which the number of organizations of a particular type that were targeted corresponded to the frequency of that type of organization in the larger population. Table 1 below summarizes the organization types, their frequency in the ethnographic and focus group data used to compile the list, and the associated sampling target. Table 2 summarizes the demographics of the organizations that participated in the survey (See page 30.) The particular organizations within each group that were contacted to complete the survey were chosen by the ethnographers and community experts associated with the project because they were identified as the most important and representative organizations within each group.

Table 1: Organizations by Type

Key Players and Organizations	Total	Percentage in Population	Sample Size	Organizations Interviewed
Arts center	6	3.77	2	2
Bank/financial institution	1	0.63	0	0
Business	6	3.77	2	1
Church	16	10.06	5	3
Community center	6	3.77	2	2
Community leader	14	8.81	0	0
Cultural association	25	15.72	8	6
Hometown association	3	1.89	1	2
Informal association	4	2.52	2	0
Labor organization	10	6.29	3	2
News/media	5	3.15	2	1
Neighborhood association	11	6.92	4	0
Park	1	0.63	0	0
School	12	7.55	4	1
Social club	2	1.26	0	0
Social service	35	22.01	11	7
Other	2	1.26		
Total	159	100	50	27

The survey, which took roughly an hour and a half to administer, first collected general organizational demographic information such as age, size, number of employees, number of beneficiaries, percentage of Mexican immigrant beneficiaries and the percentage of funding from grants. Next, the survey elicited the neighborhoods in which each organization operated and the services offered by each organization. The services were divided into eleven general categories: basic subsistence, consumer services, criminal justices and legal services, education, employment issues, environmental quality, health care, financial services, individual and family life, mental health care and counseling services, and organizational and community services. The target audience for each organization was also collected along with the degree to which each service is offered to the target audience. The resources offered and needed by each organization were recorded as well. The nature of connections (or lack thereof) among a pool of 159 organizations in the Chicagoland area that are part of or attend to the Mexican immigrant community was recorded in the final section of the survey. The types of relationships investigated in the organizational study included the provision of materials, services and support; the receipt of materials services and support; and attendance at functions or programs sponsored by other organizations.

A complete version of the organizational questionnaire can be found in Appendix I.

Table 2: Summary of Organizational Demographics

Organizational Demographic Characteristics	Value
Age	21.8
Years working in Arts and Culture	12.89
Number of Employees	70.07
Number of Volunteers	17.04
Number of Projects	10.72
Number of Arts and Culture Projects	5.52
Percentage of Government Funding	17.09%
Percentage of Private Funding	38.82%
Percentage of Individually Donated Funding	38.73%
Percentage of Activities that Support Arts and Culture	46.40%
Percentage of Activities that Support Mexican Community	79.02%

Individual Surveys

The IKNOW program was also adapted to the *Creative Networks: Mexican Immigrant Assets in Chicago* project for use in one-on-one surveys with individual Mexican immigrants. (See Appendix III for a complete version of the survey.) Survey questions were developed and refined through conversations between TECLab researchers and the field anthropologists. Early results suggested that respondent fatigue might become problematic. Survey questions were ordered by priority. Thus, the most essential data were gathered early in the survey administration and less essential data were eliminated if respondent fatigue set in.

Post-NAFTA Mexican immigrants comprise a specialized subsection of the Mexican immigrant population and consequently an even more specialized subsection of the American population. Because they have recently settled in the United States, many without the appropriate immigration documents, these individuals are likely to avoid creating a public identity. They are not likely to appear on censuses or rosters at churches, schools, consulates or other institutions normally considered instrumental in locating immigrant populations. They are similarly unlikely to maintain stable phone numbers and addresses. A completely randomized sampling approach, such as random choice from membership rosters at hometown associations, would identify only a few post-NAFTA immigrants.

The Rockefeller Foundation, however, is specifically interested in this under-represented population. Our sampling frame was stratified to ensure an appropriate number of post-NAFTA immigrants among respondents. Our goal was to collect ethnographic and social network data from approximately 120 respondents. Seventy-seven respondents consented and provided survey responses in this study. We divided our target across two recruitment approaches. The first group of forty responses was chosen with chain referral (which comprised approximately 50% of the actual received survey responses). The second group of eighty responses was chosen using a semi-randomized event-based sampling approach. These surveys, both English and Spanish were approved by the University of Illinois's Human Subjects Internal Review Board as posing minimal risk to respondents. UIUC and CCUC employees are aware of the risks of being undocumented and are determined to ensure that no undocumented participant could be at risk because of it. As an extra precaution, researchers did not ask respondents about their immigration status. Any information regarding this was voluntarily offered by respondents as part of the discussions, interviews, or surveys. Further, all identifying information regarding respondents was kept under lock and key and only pseudonyms chosen by the respondents themselves, if any, are used as identifiers in reports or presentation of results.

The chain referral procedure began with contacts the ethnographic team built with key individuals and organizations in the Chicago area. Ethnographers used information provided by the Rockefeller Foundation about those organizations that provide services to recent Mexican immigrants and information gathered in initial focus groups to create a list of "first contacts". Those first contacts were asked to provide names and contact information for individuals who might be interested in participating in the study. Ethnographers chose individuals to contact based on the referrals they received. Other interviews were initiated through referrals from respondents. Here, the ethnographers' expertise guided the selection of respondents, with the goal of making the sample representative of the population.

The semi-randomized, event-based sampling approach also relied on the expertise of the ethnographic team, who recognized that making random choices at only one type of organization or event would bias the sample. With that understanding, six key types of event were identified: arts and cultural activities, Catholic mass services, sports events, workers' rights activities, social service provision, and English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. Respondents were chosen from these six event-types in proportion to the ethnographic team's evaluation of the attendance and frequency of the events in four key geographic areas of Chicago: North Chicago, South Chicago, Pilsen-Little Village, and

Chicago Suburbs. Table 3 below summarizes the number of respondents targeted for recruitment at each event-type in each geographic division. This approach encourages random choices in the context of events chosen for their importance to recent Mexican immigrants.

Table 3: Individual Survey Sampling Approach

Event Type	North Chicago	South Chicago	Pilsen/ Little Village	Chicago Suburbs	Total
Arts/Culture	1	1	3	3	8
Mass	10	10	10	10	40
Sports	2	3	2	1	8
Workers' Rights	2	2	2	2	8
Social Services	2	2	2	2	8
ESL	2	2	2	2	8
Total	19	20	21	20	80

At each event-type, a tailored spatial randomization approach was used to choose respondents based on ethnographers' understanding of individuals' behavior in each event space. The details of each randomization approach are provided in Appendix II, but in general, a random number table or generator was used to choose an appropriate respondent from within the event space. Respondents were contacted and asked if they would like to participate in the survey and if they agreed an appropriate time and location were chosen.

The individual survey requested information in much more detail than the organizational survey and thus took longer to complete. Most respondents completed the survey in approximately two hours. The survey began with a set of questions about the respondent and his or her artistic and cultural practices. Next was an elicitation of the names of ten members from the respondent's social support network and a set of questions about how the respondent interacted with his or her social support network. The survey continues with a section in which the respondent rates the knowledge of his or her support group members in the areas of artistic and creative activities, citizenship and immigration services, neighborhood information and neighborhood organizing, outdoor activities and open public spaces, church and religious information, jobs and employment, financial issues, health and social services, schools, adult education and ESL, and people and events in Mexico. The next section asked questions about which members of a respondent's support network the respondent participated in social activities with and which members of a respondent's support network the respondent believed to have participated in social activities together. The activities included learning art practices, teaching art practices, planning and organizing social or cultural events, attending church, providing work, getting work, attending work or union meetings, and

participating in arts activities or performances. Subsequent questions focused on the neighborhoods in which a respondent lived and worked; their occupational status; how they traveled to and from work, home and social activities; how often they communicated with or visited Mexico; and basic household information. The penultimate section queries respondents on the contact they have with the organizations identified as important to or providing services for the Mexican immigrant community. The final section concerns the perceived attributes of the respondent's network nominees and their households, gathering data similar to the data collected in the respondent attribute section described above.

Data Analysis

Ethnographic and Text Analysis. Qualitative data in the form of researchers' field notes, audio and video-recorded interview transcripts, and notes from community-based and academic meetings, panels and conferences were analyzed over four months using the software ATLAS.ti. Prior to analysis, the research team collaboratively designed approximately 100 codes with which to organize over 1,000 pages of text. Codes were both descriptive and analytical. Descriptive codes, for instance, related to respondent demographics (e.g. gender, state of origin in Mexico), and types of artistic and cultural practice (e.g. cooking, sewing, dance). Analytical codes reflected more on personal and collective processes of meaning-making that are central to a study of cultural and artistic practice among recent immigrants. For instance, the code "hyper" referred to a Mexican practice that appeared in an exaggerated form in the U.S., or conversely, a Mexican practice that appeared in exaggerated form in Mexico due to the influence of the U.S. The code "hybrid" referred to a practice of mixed origin or composition, and the code "nostalgia" referred to a respondent's remembrance or feeling about one's life in Mexico (either positive or negative).

Initial ideas found expression through the researchers' assignment to a code or memo within ATLAS.ti. A single researcher then studied the relationships that emerged among similar ideas or text selections assigned to the same code. ATLAS.ti provides a highly effective means for quickly retrieving all data selections and notes relevant to one idea. For the purposes of analysis, each code for a specific artistic or cultural practice (for the Artistic and Cultural Practices section) or type of organization (for the Institutions and Organizations section) was taken as the starting point for the organization of each sub-section. In the process of writing each sub-section, overarching ideas and themes related to the centrality of gender, civic participation, technology, and other key points (as reflected in the Executive Summary) emerged, and were compared with findings from the social network portion of the study. All key points from the ethnographic portion of the study were reinforced by social network findings and vice versa.

Survey and Social Network Analysis. The data collected in the individual and organizational studies has been analyzed from two perspectives. First, univariate statistics were calculated for the questions associated with non-relational data. This analysis provides a general profile of the individuals and organizations who participated in the surveys. In general, mean or modal responses with associated minima, maxima and variances will be reported as a means of surveying the distribution of responses.

Relational data will be analyzed from a number of different perspectives. In general, information on each individual's or organization's network size and diversity will be reported. Further calculations associated with higher order structural properties of the overall network structure and of the individuals and organizations that make up the network will be calculated when appropriate.

The research questions stated above will guide further, more detailed analyses that incorporate structural data, organizational characteristics, individual characteristics and other indices as dependent and independent variables in linear regressions, ANOVAs, and other statistical analyses. The goal is to use the data gathered in the structured portion of data collection together with the data gathered in the ethnographic portion of the data collection to determine the most relevant and valid findings.

CHAPTER II: INDIVIDUAL ARTISTIC AND CULTURAL PRACTICES

CHAPTER II: INDIVIDUAL ARTISTIC AND CULTURAL PRACTICES

The *Creative Networks: Mexican Immigrant Assets in Chicago* study had three specific areas of inquiry relating to recent Mexican immigrants' artistic, cultural and social networking practices in the Chicago metropolitan area. The goals of the study were to:

- **Identify** the cultural, artistic, and networking practices and capacities of recent migrants (Post-NAFTA) from Mexico.
- **Analyze** how these act to buffer challenges or obstacles faced by immigrants as they traverse the transnational landscape.
- **Understand** the creation of new forms, new applications of existing forms, and emerging hybridities in cultural practices and network formation in order to explore identity formation, community building strategies and creative potential of immigrants.

Study findings below trace overall trends as described by recent Mexican immigrants (who arrived in the U.S. post-1994) in over 1,000 pages of notes and interview transcripts and in their responses to seventy-seven individual and twenty-six organizational surveys that covered structure and content aspects of social networking in this community. Inherent in this report is an assumption that Mexican people and identities are highly diverse. As one respondent noted, "But what is Mexican? My father is an Indian from Veracruz and also Arabic, and my mother is Mongolian and Spanish." This report understands "Mexicanness" not as monolithic, but as a dynamic and multi-faceted sense of self and other that individuals, families and groups experience and define similarly and differently. This report also assumes that the meanings of "Mexicanness" are dependent upon place; identity is relational, and the possibilities of identification shift as a result of Mexican nationals' presence in the Chicago metropolitan area. This report assumes that the possibilities for Mexican nationals' personal and collective identifications in the Chicago area occur vis-a-vis other groups, including a U.S. born and English-speaking majority, other Mexican nationals, and other immigrants.

Survey respondents were primarily from the immigrant population. The average number of years lived in the United States was 12.8, with half of the respondents having lived in the U.S. ten years or less. Most respondents were female (68%), Spanish speaking (77.3%), married (49%), and employed full time (58.2%). Most had at least one dependent child living in the household (70%) and reported attending some college (32%). The average age was thirty-seven. Table 4 below presents a summary of the demographic information reported here, with further detail provided about the demographics of the individual survey population. Some respondents chose not to answer certain questions on the survey, leading to slight variations in the total number of individuals used for percentage calculations.

Table 4: Individual Survey Respondent Demographics

Gender (n=66)	Value
Female	68.20%
Male	31.80%
Language (n=66)	
Spanish	77.30%
English	15.20%
Both	7.50%
Educational Level (n=69)	
Some College	31.80%
Some High School	28.80%
College Graduate	27.30%
Some Elementary School	12.10%
Marital Status (n=67)	
Married	49.30%
Single/Never Married	35.80%
Separated/Divorced	14.90%
Average Number of Dependents	1.58
Employment Status (n=67)	
Full Time	58.20%
Part Time	13.40%
Occasional	4.50%
Unemployed	23.90%
Average Years in the US	12.8
Average Age	38

Artistic and Cultural Practices: An Overview

This introductory section summarizes what was learned about artistic and cultural knowledge and behaviors among the Mexican immigrant community in Chicago. The “Network Theory of Migration” corpus reveals that for immigrants, most social activity and information exchange is completed in the context of a support group or social network, whether group members are friends, relatives or co-workers. Thus, our analysis of artistic and cultural practices is grounded in an understanding that networking practices are an underlying mechanism for the majority of activities reported in this section. We begin with a summary of the artistic and cultural practices our respondents provided information on, continuing with a brief discussion of the artistic and cultural practices knowledge and behavior patterns associated with respondents’ support groups. The final section of this chapter provides greater detail about the specific forms of artistic and cultural expression most important to the Mexican immigrant community contacted in this study.

With regard to artistic and cultural practices, most individuals reported attending or participating most frequently in informal arts and culture activities, followed by attendance and participation in formal arts and culture activities. This trend is apparent even when responses are broken down by language spoken, gender, educational level, or time of migration. Language does not seem to be a barrier to participation in artistic and cultural activities, but those who speak English are more likely to report participation in all types of artistic and cultural activities. Men were more likely to report participation in all forms of artistic and cultural practices than women were, with more than 90% of men reporting attendance at formal or informal arts and culture events. Education seems to play a large role in an individual's artistic and cultural behaviors. Individuals with only high school experience or lower report very little participation in artistic or cultural activities. As educational level increases, the proportion of individuals participating in all types of arts practice increases. Those individuals who migrated more recently are more likely to report attending formal or informal arts and culture activities or creating arts and crafts as compared to others. Those who migrated more than ten years ago report higher participation in formal and informal arts than their more recently arrived counterparts. Table 5 presents these results in more detail. (See page 43.)

In general, networking portions of the survey reveal that most respondents report that knowledge of artistic and cultural activities is prevalent in their support groups and that many immigrants teach and learn artistic and cultural practices from their group members. Respondents report fewer group members attending or participating in artistic and cultural events with them. These trends hold even when respondents are broken down according to gender, language spoken, educational level or recency of immigration, though the discussion below summarizes the key findings for artistic and cultural knowledge and behaviors with attention paid to the nuances associated with demography. Table 6 presents the quantitative details associated with these findings. (See page 44.)

Respondents answering the personal network module of the survey reported that 73% of their support group members had knowledge of artistic and cultural practices. When appraised by demographic category we see that Spanish speakers report fewer people in their support groups having knowledge of artistic and cultural practices, though bilingual speakers report the highest number of individuals in their support groups with this knowledge. Women report fewer support group members with knowledge of artistic and cultural practices than men, who report 82% of their support group members have such knowledge. As educational status increases, the frequency of individuals in a support group that have knowledge of artistic and cultural practices increases, from 66% for those with some elementary school experience to 80% for those with college degrees. There is very little difference in respondents' reports of knowledge of artistic and cultural practices among their support group members when time of immigration is considered.

Respondents reported attendance and participation in artistic and cultural events with their support group members the least of all artistic and cultural behaviors and practices. In fact, most reported attending these events with just over 50% of their group members. Interestingly, bilingual respondents reported much higher levels of attendance and participation with their group members (60%) than did monolingual speakers of English or Spanish, and Spanish speakers reported higher levels (52%) of attendance and participation with their support group members than did English speakers (42%). Whether this is due to the increased opportunity to enjoy artistic and cultural events

allowed by multilingualism, or to other factors associated with bilingualism remain to be seen. It does suggest that those who are able to hybridize their language (and likely their cultural patterns) emerge as more active in artistic and cultural activities with their support group members. The higher amount of participation and attendance associated with artistic and cultural activities shown by Spanish speakers compared to English speakers may be evidence of stronger networking practices shown by Mexican immigrants specifically, and by most immigrants (as suggested by network theory of migration) in general. Further, it could reveal differences between U.S. and Latin American cultures that are worthy of further exploration. Women are more likely to participate in or attend artistic and cultural events with members of their support groups than are men, a behavior that may have a cultural basis. As with knowledge of artistic and cultural practices, increasing education leads to increased levels of reported artistic and cultural activity with group members. Recent immigrants also report slightly lower levels of attendance and participation with their group members than their counterparts who have lived here in the U.S. longer. Again, this may reflect the conditions associated with recent immigration, when locating employment, ensuring proper schooling and obtaining basic services may take up so much time that little is left for attending or participating in artistic and cultural activities.

Learning and teaching artistic and cultural practices among one's support group seem to be slightly more popular than attending or participating in artistic and cultural activities. Respondents noted that they learned or taught artistic or cultural practices to about 53% of their group members. The details associated with learning and teaching artistic and cultural practices are similar in large part, but slight variations suggest that they would be better presented independent of each other. Bilingual respondents reported teaching artistic and cultural practices to more of their support group members (62%) than did English (59%) or Spanish speakers (51%). Men reported teaching art practice to slightly more members of their support groups than women reported (54% versus 53%). Again, as education increases, the number of people respondents reported teaching artistic and cultural practices increased. Similar to attendance and participation, having lived in the U.S. longer is associated with teaching more individuals artistic and cultural practices (54%) when compared to those who arrived more recently (52%). In an interesting change, English speakers reported learning artistic and cultural practices from more of their support group members (62%) than did bilingual speakers (58%) or Spanish speakers (54%). Further, those immigrants who have lived here longer report learning artistic and cultural practices from more members of their support groups (60%) than do more recently arrived individuals (47%). This may be evidence that those individuals who have lived here longer may consider learning artistic and cultural practices a way to reconnect with Mexican cultural heritage, a trend supported by ethnographic data. Just as for teaching artistic and cultural practices, men reported learning artistic and cultural practices from about the same proportion of their group members as did women (55%). Individuals who reported higher levels of education also reported learning artistic and cultural practices from more of their group members.

Ethnographic data supported the trends present in survey responses, and revealed the following, more detailed socio-demographic trends relating to recent Mexican immigrants' participation in artistic and cultural practices in the Chicago region. Most recent Mexican immigrants who hailed from rural Mexico had worked with their hands

for their own and their family's subsistence or performed low skill and low wage labor, and had limited access to formal education. In the Chicago area, this group tended to invest their energies in informal activities such as celebrating holidays, cooking, sewing, attending public events (neighborhood festivals) or hosting and attending parties with music and dancing within the spheres of their immediate or extended family and, sometimes, their church and other community-based organizations. The exception to this was parents, and mostly mothers, who became involved in arts and cultural activities in schools their children attended. Some parents founded informal arts groups, often within schools or churches, focused on parents and/or children. Some parents performed on stage at their children's school and in other events. Other parents preferred to create art behind the scenes. Young recent immigrants, especially single men from the countryside, engaged most often in listening to music at concerts and in clubs, bars, public events (festivals) or private parties and dancing in homes, churches and, with less frequency, community-based organizations.

Another group of recent immigrants in Chicago could be characterized by their common pursuit of formal or informal training in the arts in Mexico, and residence in Mexico City or other large cities before their immigration to the U.S. Though this group included intellectuals, professionals, and university students (who came to Chicago to attend college), many in this group had not completed college, though the great majority finished high school and received formal training beyond high school in the arts or another field. This group comprised the great majority of recent immigrant artists who created work to be published, performed or displayed publicly, and who were teachers of Mexican artistic and cultural practices in schools, churches and community-based organizations. Some members of this group became the founders of Mexican cultural and artistic groups and collectives, organizers of community events, and political leaders who eventually became widely known and highly valued as key resource people and bridges between recent Mexican immigrants and non-Mexicans (often Anglo-Americans) in the Chicago area.

Many children and grandchildren of Mexican immigrants to Chicago were involved in Mexican artistic and cultural activities, though it was most often young school age children who learned formal Mexican music and dance styles and performed for audiences of recent Mexican immigrants (usually their parents). Adolescents often were DJs, writers, dancers (mostly of dance styles other than traditional Mexican ones), and visual artists of forms that reflected their upbringing as "Chicago Latinos," as one recent immigrant writer and teacher referred to them. As another respondent, a professional musician, teacher and staff person at the Old Town School of Folk Music, asserted:

It is the people who were born here in the U.S. who are searching for their identity and their roots, and by doing so many have gotten involved in the arts. They are seeking to connect with other artists for the most part, but do not usually perform or exhibit work aimed at an audience of recent immigrants.

The artistic practices of Chicago-born children and grandchildren of immigrants often involved a fusion of cultural influences and spoke to contemporary U.S. politics and society; as the author observed, “They are not afraid of the United States. They know African-Americans, (whites), and other Latinos.” This group also included founders of Chicago-based artistic, cultural and political groups and organizations that used the arts as a vehicle to highlight the contributions of Mexican immigrants in Chicago, and to educate and organize against the obstacles they face.

One unifying characteristic of recent Mexican immigrants was the Spanish language, which many respondents described as central to all cultural and artistic activities and events in which they engaged. As one interviewee noted, “language is a big barrier for many. This is why when things are in Spanish there is more of an invitation to people to take part in arts and performance events.” As mentioned earlier, survey data revealed that of the sixty-nine respondents contacted, 77.3% speak Spanish and another 7.5% are bilingual, speaking both Spanish and English. This suggests that Spanish-language events are likely to have a greater impact than English-language events.

The following discussion focuses on domains of artistic and cultural practice, beginning with those activities respondents reported most frequently. Interspersed within domain areas are discussions of broader themes that respondents addressed when discussing their own and others’ engagement in the arts and cultural activities, whether related to identity, obstacles to their success, transnationalism, or hybrid forms that emerged from immigrants’ experiences in both Mexico and the U.S.

Music

Music was one of the most important artistic and cultural forms to emerge in the study and appeared as a theme 175 times in researchers’ notes and interview transcripts. As one informant described, “The music sings the history and experience of the Mexican immigrant community,” and said another, “The first thing that you buy when you get here, before furniture or anything else, is a stereo so that you can listen to your music. The music sings your joy and frustration, your life. It is who we are.” The over thirty styles of music referred to by study participants, however, indicate that recent Mexican immigrants seek numerous musical forms to “sing” their diverse histories and experiences. Musical styles referred to by study respondents included:

Norteño music or music from the north of Mexico (and the Southwest U.S. and Texas):

- *banda*
- *ranchera*
- *corridos* (and, as a subset, *narcocorridos* or *corridos* that romanticize drug traffickers)
- *Tejano*/Texan music (similar to *norteño* music in rhythm, chords)
- *Duranguense*

Caribbean-influenced or “tropical” music, found mostly in the state of Vera Cruz and north along the eastern coast of Mexico:

- *son jarocho*
- la trova Latinoamericana (a type of *son* music)
- *la bamba* (a type of *son* music)
- *cumbia*
- *sonidera* (a derivation of *cumbia*)
- *bachata*
- *salsa*
- *merengue*

Music popular particularly with young people:

- *nuevo canto*
- *rok en Español* or Spanish rock
- Reggaetón (a mix of hip-hop, Jamaican dancehall reggae and Caribbean rhythms)
- hip hop
- rap
- freestyle
- fusion music (a combination of hip hop, Mexican rap and other Mexican rhythms)
- Spanish-language or bilingual pop music (e.g. Shakira, Luis Miguel, Juanes)

Music popular across generations and often incorporated into family celebrations, such as house parties, weddings, quinceañeras and funerals:

- mariachi (there are numerous styles of mariachi that were performed both live by large groups who are often family members, and by a solitary singer with pre-recorded accompaniment)
- medieval love songs sung by *estudiantinas* (groups of young men who wander around serenading, most popular for weddings and quinceañeras)

Sacred music:

- church choirs with musical styles influenced by the nations of origin of the parishioners and musical directors
- performed as part of Aztec, Mexica or other indigenous dance rituals

Other musical forms:

- ska
- rolero (particular to Mexico City)
- huapango
- symphonic (e.g. from Hidalgo and other Mexican states, and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra)
- “old school” (a genre of mostly romantic 1980s dance tunes)

Table 5: Respondents' Participation in Arts and Cultural Activities

		Percentage Participating in Formal Arts	Percentage Participating in Informal Arts	Percentage Creating Arts and Crafts	Percentage Attending Formal Arts	Percentage Attending Informal Arts
Global Measures (n=69)		63.70%	69.70%	56.06%	68.20%	75.75%
Language						
	Spanish (n=51)	58.80%	66.70%	52.94%	66.67%	72.55%
	English (n=10)	90.00%	90.00%	70.00%	80.00%	90.00%
	Both (n=5)	60.00%	60.00%	60.00%	60.00%	80.00%
Gender						
	Male (n=21)	76.19%	71.43%	71.43%	90.48%	90.50%
	Female (n=45)	57.78%	68.89%	48.89%	62.22%	71.11%
Education						
	Some Elementary School (n=9)	28.57%	44.44%	22.22%	22.22%	33.33%
	Some High School (n=20)	50.00%	65.00%	45.00%	60.00%	70.00%
	Some College (n=22)	72.72%	68.18%	63.63%	77.27%	81.82%
	College Graduate (n=18)	83.33%	88.88%	77.77%	94.44%	88.88%
Immigration						
	Pre-1994 (n=33)	63.63%	69.69%	51.51%	69.69%	75.75%
	Post-1994 (n=36)	61.11%	69.44%	61.11%	72.22%	77.77%

Table 6: Percentage of Support Group Members Who Have Knowledge of or Participate in Artistic and Cultural Activities

	Percentage of Friends with Knowledge of Arts and Cultural Practices	Percentage of Friends One Attends Artistic and Cultural Activities With	Percentage of Friends One Participates in Arts and Cultural Practices With	Percentage of Friends One Learns Arts and Cultural Practices From	Percentage of Friends One Teaches Arts and Cultural Practices
Global Measures (n=69)	73.77%	51.60%	51.60%	53.10%	52.96%
Language					
Spanish (n=51)	71.20%	52.24%	52.24%	54.01%	50.88%
English (n=10)	81.50%	41.67%	41.67%	61.83%	59.10%
Both (n=5)	84.00%	60.00%	60.00%	58.00%	62.00%
Gender					
Male (n=21)	82.14%	46.01%	46.01%	55.80%	53.97%
Female (n=45)	69.78%	53.65%	53.65%	55.30%	52.49%
Education					
Some Elementary School (n=9)	66.42%	30.37%	30.37%	38.89%	40.00%
Some High School (n=20)	63.84%	43.81%	47.81%	46.39%	40.25%
Some College (n=22)	78.67%	49.10%	53.64%	51.54%	51.09%
College Graduate (n=18)	80.25%	63.95%	63.95%	69.51%	76.48%
Immigration					
Pre-1994 (n=33)	72.80%	53.02%	53.02%	59.75%	54.11%
Post-1994 (n=36)	73.50%	45.31%	50.31%	46.98%	52.22%

Many respondents described the pervasiveness of music in daily life in Mexico where it is a popular form of recreation and “a way to sustain connection with life in Chicago, recent Mexican immigrants described listening to music in numerous settings, including on the radio at work, at home and in public spaces such as sidewalks (for instance, broadcast from stores in Pilsen and Little Village) and from jukeboxes in restaurants and bars. Study participants attended live performances and performed music in private homes, community-based organizations, churches, schools, clubs, bars, theaters, bars and restaurants. Recent Mexican immigrants also attended and performed music in public parks, outdoor festivals and the alleys of Chicago, such as when an impromptu drumming session in a Little Village backyard drew a crowd that began dancing in the adjoining alley, stopping briefly now and then to allow cars to pass.

Norteño music dominated in clubs, live concerts, house parties and on the radio—a reflection of the mostly northern Mexican population in Chicago. In interviews with a range of respondents, *norteño* music continually was described as a requisite part of any successful event involving recent Mexican immigrants. “You have to have those kinds of acts (*norteño* bands). It’s what draws the crowds,” said one respondent who was an organizer of a summer festival in the Back of the Yards neighborhood. Respondents frequently referenced the popular *ranchero* band *Los Tigres del Norte* (Tigers of the North) who performed in public parks, plazas and large ballrooms in Chicago, and who one respondent in his mid-20s described as “old, basically my parents’ music, but I still listen to it.” *Los Tigres’* music was popular with local cover bands and, as one respondent said, “all the block parties cover *Los Tigres*.” *Banda* music, another *norteño* style, also was popular in Chicago and involves the playing of *corrido*, polka and *ranchera* rhythms on synthesizers and other electric instruments (the term “*banda*” or “band” harks back to traditional Mexican brass bands). According to the Old Town School of Folk Music, Chicago became the birthplace of the “*pasito duranguense*” style of *banda*, becoming one of the first U.S.-based *banda* styles to influence musicians in Mexico (see <http://www.oldtownschool.org/lapena/>).

Some recent immigrants who were not from northern states and expected to find few other Mexicans in Chicago quickly claimed ever-present *norteño* music as representative of Mexico. As one participant who moved from Mexico to marry her U.S. born English-speaking husband said:

I was afraid I was going to come here and never ever speak Spanish again. And then I find Pilsen and...I was so happy! I heard Spanish, and *corridos* and *norteñas* and a Mexican song here and there... A little bit different than what I would hear in Mexico but it’s still my culture.

Other respondents claimed *norteño* music because they could identify with its descriptions of the suffering of undocumented Mexicans who migrated to the U.S. for work (one respondent offered the example of Vicente Fernández’s song *Los Mojados*).

Some study participants who hailed from regions other than the north were frustrated by the generalization of *norteño* music to Mexican music, and insisted on the popularity of Mexican “tropical” or Caribbean music and other styles. Participants also

described the wide appeal of the many variations of *son* music in Chicago with the popularization of one specific form, *son jarocho*, credited to a community of Chicago-based musicians from Mexico City.

Respondents described popular youth music as broad-ranging. *Ranchera* and *banda* music drew young recent immigrant audiences, as did Spanish rock and rock pop groups like Café Tacuba, a well-known Mexican band. Said one interviewee, “The place to find recent migrants who are involved in the arts is with the young people who are into *rók en español, nuevo canto, la trova*.” Another respondent, a teacher and curriculum coordinator, described a popular school event: “We had a group bring in empty paint buckets with drum sticks to do an informal drum performance.” This art form also can be seen performed by young African-American men for (mostly) tourist audiences on Michigan Avenue, suggesting that this form was innovated by and appealed to a broad group of urban youth, many of whom may also share a similar socioeconomic status of working class or working poor. Reggaetón and other fusion forms also were popular, and their form and content seemed to reflect aspects of young immigrant’s own experiences as bicultural (or, in the case of young people with immigrant parents of different nations of origin, multicultural) participants in multiracial youth cultures of Chicago; some singers deliberately called attention to their own transnational identity and appeal. Daddy Yankee’s *Oye Mi Canto* (Listen to my Song) lists Mexicans, along with Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, Cubans and Colombians as those who “want reggaetón”. Transnational artists are at the forefront of reggaetón in Puerto Rico and elsewhere. One young artist, Joseph Rivera, who was born to Puerto Rican parents and raised in Boston, returned to San Juan to launch his career as a reggaetón singer (NY Times, Jan 8, 2006, Julia Chaplin). Similarly, young immigrants sought opportunities in Chicago that otherwise were not available to them in Mexico.

Mariachi, like *ranchera* and *banda* music, was described throughout the study as a cross-generational music form because of its inclusion in nearly all family events, ranging from dinner out at a restaurant to weddings and funerals. Respondents also described adult *mariachi* classes, such as those offered by Benito Juárez High School. *Mariachi*’s influence is so pervasive that, as one respondent said, “even kids born in the U.S. know the words to the songs.” The great number of venues in which *mariachi* performers play in the Chicago area (homes, restaurants, bars, church-sponsored events and so forth), and the high demand for their services, have created a stable economic base from which groups and individual singers have launched careers that span both the U.S. and Mexico.

Over the last two decades, a number of Mexican immigrant and U.S. born families launched their *mariachi* careers in Chicago and now perform in both the U.S. and Mexico, often residing part of the year in each country. A comprehensive but incomplete list of these musicians includes: *Las Perlas de México* (The Pearls of Mexico), *Los Palmeros*, San Miguel, Johan Sebastián and his son Leél, and *Sones de México* (whose *son* music one respondent described as “*mariachi* of the last century”). Groups performing other styles of music, such as *Vasito Duranguense* that has more of a pop sound, also have used Chicago as a springboard to transnational success. Study data suggest this is a very unique phenomenon, and that no other types of Chicago-based Mexican artistic or cultural practices (or practitioners) enjoy this degree of support.

Despite musicians' transnational performance schedules, one respondent, an aspiring *mariachi* singer trained in both Mexico and the U.S., described the ways that Mexico remains at the center of what has become an international and highly commercialized *mariachi* industry. Most Chicago-based *mariachi* musicians still rely on Mexican tailors and haberdasheries for their intricately detailed costumes and hats, and depend on Mexican media outlets such as *Televisa* (that broadcast in both the U.S. and Mexico) for the publicity that will boost *mariachis'* careers to the next level. Guadalajara's international *mariachi* festival in October also serves to bring together *mariachi* groups from Russia, South America, Japan, Europe and the U.S. (including Mexican musicians who earn their livings in those countries), thereby expanding even further the musical networks and performance possibilities of Chicago-based *mariachi* groups that attend.

Despite *mariachi's* international popularity and the great support for it in Chicago, one respondent noted his concern about authenticity: "Here, they're singing the same songs as in Mexico." He emphasized, "The same. Here we're not creating a variation of *mariachi*. No, here we continue singing *México la matriz* (the original Mexico, *matriz* also means 'womb')." Aspiring *mariachi* musicians (particularly those who are not patrilineal members of *mariachi* families), may have more opportunities to launch careers in Chicago than in Mexico, though this requires further study. A potential disadvantage for these Chicago-based musicians of residing far away from the music's origins, however, may be the risk of being perceived as less authentic or legitimate—a perception that can only be overcome after a musician returns to Mexico, the *matriz* of *mariachi*, and achieves success.

Respondents also described the importance of sacred music in their lives, whether performed at church or in Mexican or Aztec dance and other indigenous rituals held in school auditoriums, public squares, parks or as part of Native American powwows. Church-based music varied tremendously in style, influenced by a church's musical director, choir members and church parishioners. One respondent described the diverse choral music of three churches in the Chicago suburbs of Des Plaines and Mt. Prospect: one church had a Mexican choir, the second reflected the influences of its Ecuadoran music director, and the third church had a fusion of musical styles due to the influences of the Cuban choir director, mostly Mexican parishioners, and the young musician who accompanied the choir on an electronic drum set. Musical styles also could be influenced by non-Mexican church members who shared an appreciation for music, such as the Anglo church staff member and professional musician who applied for a grant from the Chicago Archdiocese for traditional Mexican instruments for the church choir. (Unfortunately, the funds were not granted.)

Some sacred music was performed outside a church's formal boundaries. Churches in the Chicago area hosted a traveling wooden statue of a virgin that was given a procession through neighborhood streets before being welcomed into the church by *mariachi* musicians and displayed in an outdoor patio or plaza. During the virgin's stay, recent Mexican immigrants and others serenaded her, often in the middle of the night, and attended early mass. As one interviewee described, "They attended mass at four or five in the morning. It's very Mexican, very of the countryside (*del campo*)."

Participants in indigenous rituals created music through singing, drumming, chanting, the playing of a conch shell (a traditional opening for many indigenous

ceremonies), and shaking hand-held and anklet shell rattles. Some groups used a mandolin, though other pre-Hispanic groups rejected the instrument because of its importation to Mexico by Spanish conquerors.

Folkloric music also was discussed by respondents, but mostly in relation to folkloric dance performances presented in summer festivals, schools, churches and in events sponsored by the federations in Chicago that represent immigrants from specific Mexican states (not all are formally connected to the Mexican government). Folkloric music and dance are discussed in greater detail below.

Live Music and the “American Dream”

Study data indicate that recent immigrants’ attendance at music concerts in the U.S. symbolized two important phenomena experienced by many Mexican immigrants who resettled in the Chicago area—new-found economic power and a related increase in social status, particularly for immigrants from rural areas of Mexico who had occupied the lower rungs on the Mexican social ladder. Many respondents described live concerts and other arts performances as more financially accessible in the U.S. than in Mexico. Said one participant:

There are lots of concerts there [in Mexico] but they are very expensive....In Latin America, for a concert, you have to work for maybe even a month, it is about 1000 or 1100 pesos for a ticket [about \$100 or \$110]....So, in Mexico, only one part of society can attend concerts. But here, anyone who works has enough to go to a concert and buy a t-shirt...it is expensive but still accessible.”

Though the same respondent said that there also are “lots of free concerts”—for instance, the Café Tacuba concert in Mexico City’s *Plaza del Zócalo* in the summer of 2005 that drew an audience of 180,000—only elites could afford concerts requiring tickets.

One young recent immigrant described another motivation for attending concerts—to fulfill his expectations of the “American dream.” Recounted the researcher who interviewed him:

He had grown up with his head full of stories about the U.S., especially about the rock concerts and the women. So when he first came, he wanted to go to rock concerts all the time. He said that the stories about all the rock concerts were true, but the ones about the women weren’t—he wasn’t very lucky with the *gringas*.

Like excited concertgoers the world over, recent Mexican immigrants who attended live *ranchera*, Spanish rock, or other music concerts often displayed memorabilia (such as t-shirts) following the event, though whether this was to signal a new found social status, national pride, or one’s love of music is unclear and requires further study. This practice of displaying music concert memorabilia, however, appeared to be partly class-based and was not appreciated by all, as one study participant described

after attending a party with two different sides of her Mexican immigrant family in Cicero, a Chicago suburb:

A's family are *rancheros*, and they sat with their cowboy hats and boots in one room.... They'd just been to a concert with a *ranchero* band, and the singer signed the brims of their hats. C's family is urban, her mother's from Matamoros, and C's family are Chicago urbanites. They sat in a separate room and made comments about the *rancheros* in the other room. My sisters-in-law have this urban edge. They could be cutting, funny but cutting. For the whole party, the two groups didn't mix, didn't talk to each other.

Dance and Costumes

“Dance” as a theme emerged ninety-three times and “clothing” as a theme (including dance costumes) emerged seventy-three times in researchers' notes and interview transcripts. Dance is intimately related to music, which is likely why many respondents also listed it as among the most important artistic and cultural practices involving recent Mexican immigrants in the Chicago region. Like music, there were multiple and diverse forms of dance performed by and for recent immigrants. Respondents described the following broad categories that encompassed varying styles of dance (determined in part by the dance's place of origin in Mexico):

- folkloric dance
- indigenous dance, such as Aztec and Mexica dance
- dancing to various styles of club music that were not necessarily Mexican in origin, such as “old school”
- hip hop, various forms of youth club dancing (e.g. to Spanish rock) and breakdance
- different styles of partnered dance steps to *banda*, *norteño*, Texas and “tropical” styles of music
- flamenco
- ballet

Dancing to popular *norteña* and other styles of music took place in a range of informal (homes, churches) and formal (clubs and concerts) venues. Churches, community-based organizations and federations organized dances as fundraisers and brought together recent Mexican immigrants unaffiliated with the organization as well as those who were actively involved. For many groups, dances were not only profitable but also contributed to the social cohesion of organizational members, potentially expanding existing social networks. In South Chicago, a neighborhood with few entertainment venues effectively cut off from other parts of Chicago by its geography and ineffective public transportation system, church dances served as a welcome and popular diversion. One South Chicago church whose parishioners are majority Mexican and Mexican-

American organized “family dances” that “everyone” came to and were “wildly successful.” The pastor of another South Chicago church that organized an annual Independence Day dance in September described how they hired a “real Mexican band” that drew “a huge number of Mexican young men.” He continued, “They look like they’ve just come from the fields, taken a shower, put on clean jeans and boots and come to the party without girls...It feels like home to them.” Dances had the power to increase social cohesion among recent Mexican immigrant parishioners as well as to potentially expand church-based social networks, particularly among young immigrants whose lives in the U.S. were devoted to work and otherwise were socially isolated. Dances held by both churches and schools may have contributed to social cohesion among students and young people in general, and served the additional goal of providing them with a safe space in which to enjoy themselves and get exercise. As one teacher commented, “Our kids can’t really go to the park (Douglas). It’s not in their gang area.” A church staff person echoed a similar concern in her discussion with a youth group about the dance party they were organizing: “We also have to have a talk about worse case scenarios—what bad things could happen at the party. Since we don’t want the wrong sort of people coming to the party, we’re going to call it a fundraiser.”

Ballet *folklórico* was performed throughout the Chicago region at summer festivals (e.g. *Fiesta del Sol*, *Viva Chicago*, *Fiesta Aztlan*) and school-based festivals (e.g. the *Creatividad/Creativity Festival* at John Spry Elementary School in Little Village), as well as in parades, schools, churches and events sponsored by federations representing immigrants from the states of Durango, Michoacán, Zacatecas, and others. Dancers ranged from professionals to children and adults who had never danced before immigrating to the U.S. For example, parents performed traditional dances with teachers and a principal at a McKinley Park Elementary School assembly. Besides professional folkloric dance groups brought in from Mexico and a few semi-professional groups, such as Ballet *Quetzacoatl* in the suburb of Aurora, the majority of *baile folklórico* reported by study respondents took place in the schools and churches as part of arts education. Respondents who engaged in folkloric dance as arts education described the care they took to recreate the exact folkloric dance steps and costumes of Mexico—an ambitious task since most Mexican states have their own distinctive dances and costumes.

In some suburban towns, such as Des Plaines and Aurora, where Mexican immigrants were a demographic minority and were residentially dispersed, *baile folklórico* played an important bridging role, serving to strengthen bonds among Mexican immigrant participants and Mexican and non-Mexican observers. Several respondents described having a deeper appreciation for the regional diversity of Mexican cultural and artistic practices because of their involvement in the arts, and *baile folklórico* in particular. For at least one respondent, this increased knowledge of Mexican cultural and artistic practices contributed to a deepening sense of his own Mexican identity. One respondent, a highly respected community leader in Des Plaines and parent of two children, founded a Mexican folkloric youth dance group with his daughter and other families. He described the multiple impacts his involvement with the group had on him:

I come from Guadalajara...it’s a big city. But here, I’ve had more contact with people from the countryside. I’ve learned a lot that I didn’t know. And when there’s a friendship and you talk about things like this: I’m

interested in learning what is it that you do, how do you do it, on what occasions you do it, whether it's a wedding or a special party, if it's for the Day of the Dead, for Christmas, you see? What I know is a *part* of our culture and our art—they've enriched my understanding. It's beautiful... And now I feel more Mexican! Because I knew a part, but now I understand and know so much more, simply because of my relationships with the people through the schools or the churches, you see?

For this and other respondents, connecting with one's Mexican heritage was an active and sometimes transformative process.

Youth dancing took various forms ranging from large-crowd thrashing and jumping to upbeat hard rock—such as during the June 2005 Café Tacuba concert at the Aragon Ballroom—to stately folkloric dance, to grinding to hip hop or reggaetón music. Though some dance forms, like *baile folklórico*, drew cross-generational audiences, other styles were not as eagerly embraced by people of all ages. As one respondent commented, you have “boys and girls dancing together in a way that when we were in high school never happened.” Another study participant commented on the “unnecessarily provocative” dress code of some young female club goers: “That's why we left Guadalajara last time, too many *kids* with nothing on.” Dance—whether folkloric or hip hop—was reported as one of the few forms of exercise that girls participated in. One teacher respondent said she tried to encourage female students to dance because “athletics are very male in this community.” Break dance was popular, with study participants saying it was in the midst of resurgence. Though break dance did not appear to unite different generations of Mexican immigrants, like reggaetón it drew together young people of different races and ethnicities. As one study participant and break dancer said, “When I go to a competition, there's Asians and Blacks and Mexicans and everyone from every culture. Hip hop belongs to everyone, man.”

According to respondents, indigenous dance, such as *Mexica* and Aztec dance, had multiple meanings depending upon the dancer and group—as sacred ceremony, political protest, human rights education, and an opportunity for intergenerational consciousness-raising. Some dances were for “ceremony, not presentation” and discouraged impartial observers, while other groups performed in public spaces to achieve broad political and educational ends through spiritual and artistic means. During one prayer vigil, held in a public square in Pilsen, the dancers and event organizers created an altar containing a portrait of Emiliano Zapata, pagan icons, and *Mexica*, Catholic, and Native American elements. The ceremony and dance performed as part of the event drew on cultural practices throughout the Americas, such as the “*Danza del Sembrador*” (Dance of the Planter) that blended Lakota and *Mexica* traditions. At one point, two dancers (one worked at the popular Jumping Bean Café and studied dance, and the other was a member of the Meztli Gallery Collective) coordinated their movements and stamped, turned, leapt and landed together in the central area, while the crowd of sixty applauded and shouted encouragement. Like the group hosting this event, *Caracol del Tiempo* (Seashell of Time), many indigenous dance groups brought together a mix of people with a range of life and arts experience. *Caracol del Tiempo* began as a loose group of friends—visual artists, musicians, and poets—living in the Pilsen neighborhood. They formed the group recognizing that they shared similar concerns. One group founder

described the group as filling the “crack in between, which all the other Mexican organizations do not fill, (by) linking spiritual and political practice, and Mexicans and (U.S. born) Latinos here.” Another founder added that they want “to cause an awakening to injustice that is sparked by a spiritual moment that speaks more directly to people than political rhetoric.” The injustices referred to throughout the vigil included Mexican paramilitaries’ assault on indigenous people in Chiapas, poverty, hunger and homelessness in Chicago, the poor treatment of immigrants in the U.S., and “the abuse of mother earth.” The blend of dance and sacred traditions in a context loaded with transnational political significance drew a crowd of sixty on a Saturday afternoon, about half of whom were recent, low-income migrants, some of whom appeared to just have gotten off work, or were on a break.

One recent immigrant who began dancing four years after moving to Chicago compellingly described how his own awareness of Mexican society shifted as a result of his engagement in Aztec dance. A member of a group that regularly practiced in the basement of the social service organization he worked in, the respondent told of attending and performing with his group at a powwow outside of Chicago. While there, American Indian dancers asked him questions about indigenous Mexican groups, which he was unable to answer. Having been born and raised in Mexico City in a family that did not identify as indigenous (this respondent, like most Mexicans, self-described as *mestizo* or of mixed Spanish and indigenous heritage, among other groups) he became painfully aware of his own lack of knowledge about Mexican indigenous populations and of the persistent racism indigenous people endure there, and committed himself to learning more.

Though study data, such as the story above, indicate that recent Mexican immigrants were engaged in important ways with indigenous dance as both participants and observers, further investigation is required for a deeper understanding of the individual and collective meanings of dance and the implications of individuals’ involvement in this and other dance forms in Chicago and in Mexico.

Connections to Home

For many recent immigrants, music in particular retained its central role in their lives and took on new significance as they resettled in Chicago. Respondents described listening to Mexican music for a connection to home; one respondent said the music is “an umbilical cord back to their origins” and another said, “One feels equal when one listens to those (*ranchera*) stations because one feels we’re in our own country.” Yet another respondent, a stay-at-home mother who described her mobility as limited because she did not drive, said: “My music makes me feel less alone.” For many respondents, Mexican music reaffirmed a sense of belonging amidst the unfamiliar surroundings of Chicago, and offered a reminder of a nation to which they could lay claim as a native son or daughter (unlike the U.S., particularly for those who had not naturalized).

Respondents described music as offering important personal affirmation as well. For those immigrants who worked long hours in jobs that were low pay and low status—as one woman commented, “One has to take what is given instead of what one wishes for or deserves. I clean [houses and now a church]. If you don’t have papers, you clean.

Cleaning is a healthy job, but it's not what one desires to do, what one feels one is worthy of." Music, whether over the radio or live, had the power to temporarily transport the listener away from the challenges of everyday life to a place, whether real—a club or concert—or imagined in the listener's mind, where one's worth as a person was not determined by one's job, language skills or legal status.

Music's role in vicariously connecting recent immigrants with home was so powerful that it translated, in one instance in the study, into a catalyst for political mobilization. In July 2005, two DJs named Pistolero and Chokolade organized an immigrants' rights march in response to increased Minutemen activities (citizen militias that patrolled the U.S.-Mexico border and were featured in news stories throughout the summer) and to general conditions for undocumented immigrants. A respondent and president of a community-based organization said that he "was shocked", as a researcher recounted in his fieldnotes, "that there had been so many people and he explained that the two DJs were the only ones who had the power to bring so many people together because of the nature of their job." As the respondent described it, "they help immigrants maintain ties."

Study data suggested that this potential of music to spur political engagement was transnational. One respondent commented that "the youth of the community mobilize the adults to attend events" and perhaps it was this phenomenon that compelled Comandante Marcos in Mexico to embrace youthful Spanish rock as a positive and politically resistant form of expression.

Many study participants reported that, upon immigrating to the U.S., they experienced the loss of a cultural milieu they had previously taken for granted in Mexico, and actively worked to connect with and recreate various customs and cultural practices in the Chicago area; as one respondent observed, "As the links to home attenuate, [recent Mexican immigrants] are more likely to actively self-identify as Mexican." Said another interviewee in a discussion with two researchers:

I don't know if this happens in your countries (referring to the two researchers' Puerto Rican and Venezuelan nations of origin), what in Mexico we call "*malinchismo*"—when we live in our home countries in Latin America and someone brings something from the U.S. and everyone says "Wow! It's from over there!"... Here we have that same phenomenon but reversed. We live in the U.S. and we say "Wow! Something from my country!" and we buy it even if it's more expensive because like you always miss that.

Researcher 1: Because you can't find it.

Interviewee: Because you can't get it exactly.

Researcher 2: And it's not everywhere.

Some respondents' desire to reconnect with home was evident in the great care they took to research and reproduce practices they previously took for granted, but with which they were familiar. As one respondent put it:

Over there, traditional customs are less necessary to who you are. It's not important to have an understanding of your history and culture when you are a part of it, when you see it all around you. Here...there is more attention to detail and the accuracy of re-creations of culture. It's more authentic due to the lack of having the culture here.

For other respondents, reclaiming connection to one's culture meant exploring Mexican art forms they had never experienced before immigrating to the U.S., as in the case of one recent immigrant who joined a Chicago-based Aztec dance group. He had never participated in Aztec dance in Mexico, he said, because "it is something that is looked down upon in Mexican society. People who do Aztec dancing have the reputation of being 'druggies'." Reflected the researcher who interviewed the respondent, "but when he came here to Chicago, he felt Aztec dancing was part of...his roots." In these instances and many more in the study, recent Mexican immigrants in Chicago engaged in Mexican artistic practices (sometimes for the first time) and simultaneously connected with and reinvented the meaning of "home."

For Mexican immigrants, contact with Mexico remains important. Though many report being unable to visit Mexico regularly (if at all), connections remain. In fact, nearly 100% of survey respondents mentioned having contact with people in Mexico at least once a year. Even when demographic characteristics are taken into consideration, these frequencies do not seem to change, apart from two particular instances. Of those immigrants who have only had some high school education, just 89% report communication with Mexico. Only 80% of English speaking respondents report communication with Mexico.

Survey respondents also reported that, on average, 68% of the members of their support groups had knowledge and information about people and events in Mexico. When language spoken is considered, bilingual respondents reported that 84% of their support group members had knowledge of people and events in Mexico, far more than the 64% of support group members reported by English or Spanish speakers. Interestingly, those individuals at either end of the educational attainment scale (those with some elementary school and those with college degrees) reported that about 77% of their contacts had knowledge of people and events in Mexico. Those with some high school reported that 59% of their contacts had knowledge, while those with some college experience reported 65% of their contacts had this knowledge. Men reported that 74% of their support group members had knowledge of people and events in Mexico, while women reported only 62% of their network members had that knowledge.

Visiting Mexico and having visitors from Mexico comprise more personal and immediate connection and communication. However, the expense of travel and heightened risks of border crossing may make this form of contact less likely or less relevant for Mexican immigrants in the U.S. (particularly for people who are

undocumented). Only 33% of respondents reported travel to Mexico. A higher number of respondents (65%) reported visitors *from* Mexico. With respect to visiting Mexico, 29.41% of Spanish speakers reported visiting Mexico, compared to 40% of English speakers and 80% of Bilingual respondents. Gender and time of immigration both seem to play no role in the opportunity to visit Mexico, with the same percentages reporting visits in each category. When education is considered, the pattern is not as straightforward. It seems that only 5% of those with some high school and 27% of those with some college experience report visiting Mexico. Of those respondents who list only some elementary school experience, 33% report visiting Mexico. More than 72% of college graduates reported visiting Mexico at least once a year.

With respect to visitors *from* Mexico, similar, but slightly different, patterns emerge. More than 65% of all respondents reported having visitors from Mexico. Again, gender seems not to play too large a role in having visitors, with about 67% of men and 64% of women reporting visitors. Only 55% of Spanish speakers report having visitors from Mexico, while 100% of English-speaking and bilingual speakers reported visitors from Mexico. When education is considered, we learn that 33% of respondents with some elementary school experience have visitors, compared to the 75% of respondents with some high school experience, the 59% with some college and the 78% of college graduates. Further detail regarding contact with Mexico is reported in Table 7. (See page 56.)

Study data indicate that cellular telephone and other communication companies responded to Mexican immigrants' desire to reconnect with family and friends in Mexico through their marketing. A researcher attending an outdoor festival wrote:

Of all the *puestos* (stalls) there was one that seemed to be a cell phone distributor offering plans for cell phones. But as part of their advertisement they allowed people to use their phones. I thought of the opportunity they had to call their family in Mexico. There were men huddled around phone booths calling someone, again I cannot be sure if they were calling family in Mexico or friends but the scene of all these men and some women waiting to use the free phones was good advertisement.

Of all forms of advertising, cell phone flyers and brochures were ever-present in nearly all venues researched as part of this study, including churches; (they were distributed to parishioners before and after mass).

Holidays, Rites of Passage & Other Events

“Events” as a theme that included holidays and other occasions appeared 107 times in researchers’ notes and interview transcripts. The most common refrain among recent Mexican immigrants was that holidays were important reminders of their own and their children’s identities. As one woman emphasized, “It’s important that they [her children] never forget that they are Mexican.” When asked how they could remember this, she responded, “They can celebrate the holidays.”

Table 7: Summary Data for Contact with or Knowledge of People and Events in Mexico

	Percentage Who Talk to Others in Mexico	Percentage Who Visit Others in Mexico	Percentage Who Have Mexican Visitors	Percentage of Friends with Knowledge of People and Events in Mexico
Global Measures (n=69)	98.53%	33.33%	65.22%	68.35%
Language				
Spanish (n=51)	98.00%	29.41%	54.90%	64.25%
English (n=10)	80.00%	40.00%	100.00%	64.56%
Both (n=5)	100.00%	80.00%	100.00%	84.00%
Gender				
Male (n=21)	100.00%	33.33%	66.67%	73.60%
Female (n=45)	100.00%	35.56%	64.44%	62.10%
Education				
Some Elementary School (n=9)	88.89%	33.33%	33.33%	77.04%
Some High School (n=20)	100.00%	5.00%	75.00%	59.32%
Some College (n=22)	100.00%	27.27%	59.09%	64.78%
College Graduate (n=18)	100.00%	72.22%	77.78%	77.53%
Immigration				
Pre-1994 (n=33)	96.88%	33.33%	72.73%	66.14%
Post-1994 (n=36)	100.00%	33.33%	58.33%	70.43%

Respondents discussed the following holidays: Christmas (and *posadas*); the feast day of the Virgin of Guadalupe (December 12); *el Día de los Reyes* (Day of Kings, January 6); Mother’s Day (May 10); Mexican Independence Day (September 16); Easter and the Stations of the Cross (*Via Crucis*) and other events leading up to it; *Cinco de Mayo* (5th of May); *Día de la Raza* (Day of the Race that acknowledged the contradictions for Mexicans of Columbus Day on October 12); *Día de los Muertos* (Day of the Dead on October 31); baptisms; presentation of children on their 3rd birthdays; first communions; quinceañeras; graduations; weddings; funerals; and birthdays. According to respondents, recent Mexican immigrants also organized and attended parties in homes, backyards and parks; festivals organized by hometown federations, neighborhood associations,

churches, schools and other groups; political rallies and marches; school-based assemblies and talent shows; cultural weeks, with each hometown federation hosting a different week; beauty contests; housing summits; and lectures.

Survey respondents reported that they planned social and cultural events with almost 76% of the individuals they listed in their support groups, suggesting that this type of behavior is an important facet of Mexican immigrant life. English speaking respondents reported that they planned social events with 84% of their support group members, while Spanish speakers reported that they planned with about 75% of their group members. Bilingual respondents planned events with 72% of their support group members. Women planned these types of events with 77% of their support group members; men with 72% of their group members. In general, increasing educational attainment is associated with having more friends with whom one plans social events. Those with some elementary school reported planning with only 61% of their support group members, while those with college degrees reported planning with 80% of their support group members. Further detail is provided in Table 8.

Table 8: Percentage of Respondents with Whom One Plans Social Events

	Percentage of Friends with Whom One Plans Social Events
Global Measures (n=69)	75.90%
Language	
Spanish (n=51)	74.63%
English (n=10)	84.44%
Both (n=5)	72.00%
Gender	
Male (n=21)	72.04%
Female (n=45)	77.77%
Education	
Some Elementary School (n=9)	61.24%
Some High School (n=20)	78.10%
Some College (n=22)	76.57%
College Graduate (n=18)	80.37%
Immigration	
Pre-1994 (n=33)	77.06%
Post-1994 (n=36)	75.03%

Many respondents referred to Christmas, and the days leading up to it, as filled with cultural and artistic activities imbued with Mexican history and tradition. One interviewee described her experience of Mexican Christmas traditions:

[There are] *nacimientos* (nativity scenes). It's a crèche [and can be] very elaborate. It's a Mexican panorama and reflects the role of the Catholic church in the formation of national identity. It includes the images of

peasants, Juan Diego, the Virgin of Guadalupe, there are symbols of Mexican peasant life, like donkeys, chickens, pots, Montezuma, pre-Columbian images, there are mountains made of papier-mache. There are ceremonies in which the *nacimiento* is at the center. They're like electric trains in the U.S., they can take up an entire room. There's the *acostada* to set up the *nacimiento*. Then the *nacimiento* on Christmas Eve, and the *levantado de niño* when [baby] Jesus is old enough to sit in a chair, and *el Día de Reyes* (the Day of Kings when children open presents). First, there's the whole rosary and cycle of songs. Candles are lit and everyone kisses the baby Jesus. Then the *madrina de niño* (baby's godmother), which is an honor—it's usually the sister or mother in the family who plays godmother to Jesus—changes baby Jesus' clothing. She and other women have been all year crocheting outfits for Jesus. They make little caps, little booties, sweaters. There can be enough that Jesus' clothes could be changed every day for a month. The *rosca de reyes* is a circle of pan dulce. If you get the piece with the (plastic) baby, you have to host the party next time. Mole is always served on Christmas Eve.

Priests and church members interviewed for this study reported hosting *posadas* before Christmas to reenact Mary and Joseph looking for housing. These celebrations are a “*novena*” or held over the nine days before the 24th, which is referred to as “*Noche Buena*” or the “Holy Night” (from website of *Assunta Montes de Oca de Marshall*, <http://www.nacnet.org/assunta/Welcome.html>). Traditionally, children, teenagers and adults played the roles of *peregrinos* or pilgrims who, on each of the nine nights, traveled to three homes and sang a simple song at each to request lodging before being admitted to the third. Four teens carried statues of Joseph leading a donkey on which Mary sat sidesaddle. Upon receiving entry to the home in which the *posada* for that evening was held, the guests gathered around the *nacimiento* to pray the rosary. Then children enjoyed a party with a *piñata*. Some respondents described this tradition as substantially changed among recent Mexican immigrants in the U.S. The interviewee who described the *nacimiento* above said that these rituals in her family became “less elaborate with time,” especially after her mother-in-law died. As she explained, “She was the matriarch. There is less care put into the details now,” she concluded. In addition to the loss of an older generation who were the purveyors of cultural memory, one priest reflected on another reason less care might be taken with holiday details among recent immigrants:

The family unit is tremendously pressured. Weakened, often crashed. There are fewer celebrations. There is pressure from economics, from long hours of work, alternating shifts for spouses, people working way over forty hours.

Another respondent reflected: “Now there's not much more to the celebration than for everyone to come together...It's still not as secular as it is here in the United States,

where it's an occasion to shop. But it's possible that the same is happening there [in Mexico]." Despite these cultural shifts, the *posadas* organized by churches with recent Mexican immigrant parishioners were well-attended—perhaps, as one respondent said, because these events “linked people culturally” and spiritually. Whether these *posadas* also were less elaborate than those traditionally held in Mexico was undetermined.

Some rites of passage, such as baptisms, birthdays, *quinceañeras*, and weddings, respondents said, had become more ornate among recent Mexican immigrants in the U.S. One interviewee commented, “When people want to have a big event, like a wedding, *quinceañera* or baptism, the whole community pulls together to pull it off in grand fashion.” Another respondent said, “The celebrations themselves have become huge now.” Church groups were described as getting “really involved with *quinceañeras* and baptisms. They make all sorts of handmade gifts and they are into decorating the space. They sew those little baby clothes, you know, like the ones that have the baby's name sewn on it.” Another interviewee noted, “Cultural practices change. Now, there are several godmothers for *quinceañeras*: one for the shoes, one for the limo, etc.” Another respondent added, “*Quinceañeras* are more important here than in Mexico and are actually being exported back to Mexico—at least the grand style in which they are done here.” One priest suggested that:

Quinceañeras are now more for girls born and raised here who don't have a strong sense of themselves. There's an amazing number of girls who are overweight or don't feel very pretty and they're the ones that want the *quinceañeras*. The girls don't feel very good about themselves, but this party helps them, I think.

This quote suggests that informal artistic and cultural practices also may serve to resist discrimination and rejection reported by many recent immigrants and their children, and offered an alternative image of Mexican immigrants and their children as uniquely valuable.

Further study is needed to determine what is contributing to the growing lavishness of *quinceañeras* in both the U.S. and Mexico. It is possible that *quinceañeras* are evidence of social cohesion among Mexican immigrants in the Chicago area who bond through a common language, shared sense of national histories and traditions, and who “forged relationships of solidarity in political and social environments where they felt targeted,” as one respondent noted. Study data revealed a number of instances when recent Mexican immigrants pooled their reserves of energy, time and money in order to “pull off” events that would have been impossible for an individual or family on their own. Immigrants' social networks are of key importance in these types of collective activities.

Another likely reason for increasing lavishness might be the same phenomenon that enabled new immigrants to buy rock concert tickets—recent immigrants' increased economic power in the U.S. This same economic power, when in the form of remittances to Mexico, might make possible more fancy (and costly) *quinceañeras* there. The increasing pageantry of some *quinceañeras* may also serve another purpose: to reinforce

the perception of Mexican immigrants in the U.S. as upwardly mobile, both economically and socially. Study data indicate that the reality was often more complex, with recent immigrants making ends meet through survival strategies such as saving rent through residential overcrowding and relying on sales for the purchase of groceries and basic household goods.

Despite these obstacles, most recent Mexican immigrants were economically better off than their counterparts in Mexico and, through remittances, often improved the economic (and social) standing of their families back in Mexico. Popular perceptions in Mexico that family members in the U.S. were highly successful, an image reinforced by regular remittances, may have contributed to the desire for elaborate U.S.-style *quinceañeras* in Mexico in order to reinforce an image of upward mobility. As one respondent observed: “The *quinceañera* here is a much bigger deal here than it was in Mexico and now is being exported back to Mexico. I recently saw some pictures of a *quinceañera* at a little *ranchito* out in the middle of nowhere in Mexico and the girls were standing in the horse corral in all of their American finery—bright pink dresses and everything.” Some immigrants went to great lengths to project success to family and friends at home, while concealing their economic hardship in the U.S. An ethnographer paraphrased scholar Dr. Luis Rodolfo Morán Quiroz who observed at a 2005 conference on Zacatecas in Chicago convened by the Department of Latin American and Latinos Studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago that some immigrants took “U.S. cars to Zacatecas to show off,” but then had to return the car to the dealer for lack of funds.

Respondents talked about the importance of Mother’s Day among recent Mexican immigrants. Many described church and school-hosted events, such as assemblies, held to honor mothers. Teachers recounted class activities where students wrote Mother’s Day poems that they performed for parents during these assemblies. Other respondents described flower and other gift vendors who were certain to do well on that particular day.

Some Chicago area churches responded to their growing recent Mexican immigrant congregations by developing hybrid forms of worship that resonated with the religious and cultural histories of their Mexican immigrant parishioners. One example is the tradition practiced by many recent Mexican immigrants in the Chicago area involving “the presentation of children when they turn three.” Though this event was very popular, it presented challenges to some U.S. clergy. One priest explained:

Unfortunately, I can’t find a good liturgy or prayers for this. The [children] come in with their *padrinos* (godparents) and [receive] little gifts. I’ll mention the children during mass, and then afterwards do a blessing. This is a practice from Mexico, because Jesus was presented at the temple when he was two years old, but somehow Mexicans do this when they’re three.

Similarly, another respondent told of the incorporation of a Mexican saint’s day into the holidays celebrated at her Des Plaines church: “This year we celebrated *las mañanitas* (the birthday) of St. Stephen. It was the first time it was ever celebrated here in this

church.” To provide a final example, a staff member at a suburban Catholic church described the first time his church welcomed a statue of the Virgin of Candelaria from Quitupan, Jalisco:

Four people carried the Virgin on a litter and sixty or seventy people followed the procession of the Virgin through [the neighborhood], in the blocks around the church. We got a city permit to be on the sidewalks, and the people in the procession were mostly Latino but there were definitely some white people too—and she was welcomed at the church by mariachis [and] *Sol Aztecas* (folkloric) dancers [that] dance in steps of three, the sign of the Holy Trinity.

The respondent described that though there were usually two masses held on Saturday, an English mass at 5 pm and a Spanish mass at 7 or 7:30 pm, the mass after the procession of the Virgin of Candelaria was combined into a “really beautiful” bilingual mass and held instead at 6 pm.

Data from this study indicate that artistic and cultural practices provided opportunities for shared devotional experiences that bridged different nation of origin groups—such as in the example above of Mexican and non-Mexican parishioners taking part in the Virgin of Candelaria procession. This procession offered a stunning example not only of a bridging of different groups, but of the way in which a specifically Mexican devotional practice that is inherently public shifted social relations in the space in which it was performed. By conducting a public procession through the neighborhood, devotees invited spectators to become co-participants or, at the very least, witnesses to a public and deeply Mexican show of faith. This social relationship may have differed substantially from mostly indoor and private devotional practices (parishioners have to intentionally attend a service, as opposed to simply coming across a procession in the street) traditionally carried out in predominantly Anglo-American churches in which parishioners’ roles as spectators and participants are often clearly demarcated by the liturgy and cued by the priest. Not only did this form of devotional practice blur boundaries between the church and surrounding community, but it also had the potential to shift parishioners’ relationships with one another, the priest, the liturgy and the church itself. In this way, artistic and cultural practices conducted by recent Mexican immigrants served as doorways to new forms of social relationship and collective experience.

The decision to step through these doorways, however, remained with individuals and groups, and new hybrid forms of worship were not welcomed by all. The staff member above described that not everyone was happy about the priest’s openness to Latino members of the congregation, willingness to offer Spanish masses, and readiness to incorporate unfamiliar cultural practices. He said,

There are some white parishioners who’ve been attending [the church] since a million years ago and they showed up at 5 pm, and stormed out

when the English mass wasn't held because it had been combined with the Spanish mass at 6 pm. They knew very well that mass was changed for that day. They just wanted a reason to be upset.

Though some priests, church staff and parishioners welcomed church traditions introduced by recent Mexican immigrant parishioners, conflict also resulted from the simultaneous presence within a single church of worshippers with different nations of origin, native languages, and devotional practices rooted in distinctive cultures and traditions. As a priest who had worked for decades with Mexican immigrant and Latino parishioners and their churches in the Chicago area reflected, "it's been a struggle in almost every single parish." Study data suggest that resistance to hybrid practices—whether devotional, artistic or cultural—may have been informed by fear of change, uncertainty about the future of their church, school or organization and neighborhood, unexamined stereotypes, and other factors.

Respondents also commented on the ways their own holiday celebrations had become hybridized fusions of traditional Mexican and U.S. customs. One respondent described Day of the Dead and Halloween as holidays that were increasingly more melded in the lives of recent Mexican immigrants in the U.S. This interviewee delighted in the joining together of these holidays, which he perceived as two holidays derived from a single history of conquest that, because of Mexican migration to the U.S., had finally come full circle:

Day of the Dead forms a part of your life as a Catholic Christian [and] this celebration combines with Halloween, here in the United States. I know that they're very distinctive things, but perhaps they have the same roots. Ireland had a celebration that was very similar to Halloween [and it] celebrated ghosts or demons. When the Roman Empire overcame the European nations to the north...the attitude was that we Christians don't celebrate demons or witches, we're going to celebrate our dead. So the Catholic Church, during its time of expansion in the north, transformed Halloween to a Christian holiday. And they imposed it so that anyone who was Catholic had to celebrate Day of the Dead. Later, this celebration arrived in North America with influences from the north of Europe, and it was considered Halloween. I think this history is very interesting. So, you realize that Halloween took hold in North America and the Day of the Dead took hold in Latin America and in the rest of the world, where the Roman Empire had its holdings. And now? Eight centuries later, more or less, these two currents meet up again and come together here.

According to respondents, other Mexican holidays, such as *Cinco de Mayo*, have not fared well in the U.S. This holiday commemorates the victory of the Mexicans over

the French army at the Battle of Puebla on May 5, 1862; for further information, see <http://www.mexonline.com/cinco.htm>. As a frustrated interviewee expressed:

Yesterday I was seeing the news for *Cinco de Mayo*...and it really gets me mad and sad to see that people have to have it explained to them. It's not our Independence Day. Mexico has very, very strong civic education. They have *Cinco de Mayo* parades in cities, of course in Puebla. Maybe we could do a play to explain the meaning of *Cinco de Mayo*. It's not commercial like here.

Despite the common misrecognition of this holiday in the U.S., respondents described both *Cinco de Mayo* and Independence Day as popular days for neighborhood, church, school and hometown federation-sponsored festivals, parades, music, dancing and feasts. Though these festivities were often fund raising events, they may have provided recent immigrants with an opportunity, as one respondent said, "to celebrate their achievements here in the United States." These days also may have contributed to solidarity among Mexican immigrants and Mexican Americans. As the head of an advocacy organization said:

In [some] social situations, people of Mexican origin see themselves as one group despite their generational differences or amount of time spent in the U.S. If you get in a room with a bunch of Mexicans, half of whom are from here, and half who just arrived, I don't think they would identify the difference.

The political implications of Mexican and Mexican-American unity are potentially far-reaching, and many groups in the Chicago area, such as Latinos United, the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights and *Latinos Progresando*, to name just a few, sought to build on this solidarity in order to move forward agendas for civil and immigrants' rights.

Respondents described participating in marches and rallies in support of immigrants' rights and other issues of relevance to recent Mexican immigrants. Many respondents, however, expressed concern about the motives of some politicians and political groups in relation to recent Mexican immigrants. One school teacher and curriculum coordinator, whose students were nearly all recent Mexican immigrants, expressed a sentiment that echoed throughout the study:

I am not willing to have the kids put on a...t-shirt and drive down to Springfield if it is meaningless for them, if they are not consulted, if nothing is explained, and if there are no follow up activities. "Let's get some brown faces in the crowd behind you," is all the politicians are thinking. You have to set your boundaries...to protect the [students] from

being used...Little Village has suddenly become flooded with organizations looking for kids for a press conference or something. I'm not saying [outside groups] are not credible, but I'm not here to satisfy your political agenda.

Most recent Mexican immigrants attended public events that were not political, but instead emphasized family and cultural activities. Some of the popular festivals and parades respondents mentioned attending included parades held for Independence Day and *Cinco de Mayo*, Back of the Yards "Fiesta 2005," Viva Chicago, *Fiesta Aztlán*, hometown associations' cultural weeks (*Durango Unido* in November, *Michoacán* in June, *Zacatecas* in July), and events held as part of Hispanic Heritage month (which begins September 15). Many state federations, such as Durango United and the Hidalgo Federation, and some hometown associations, such as *Casa Guanajuato*, annually crowned a beauty queen who became, as a federation staff member described, "a hostess for events, and part of the youth club." Said a staff person from Durango United, the federation then took "her to Durango for a tour. They visit the state fair and parade. Last time we marched with the *incapacitados* (disabled). She got to see the difference [between Mexico and the U.S.]" Through public events, federations like Durango United reinforced its role as a bridge between Mexicans "back home" and in the Chicago area. By sending young people (such as the beauty queen) of Mexican descent to Mexico, federations may have sought to strengthen transnational networks, and bonds within Chicago's Mexican immigrant community through fostering the development of young people's "intelligence, leadership capacity and service [through volunteer work]" as well as their cultural knowledge and senses of self in both Mexico and the U.S.

For other recent Mexican immigrants, large festivals and other public cultural events were designed to feed the commercial interests that organized them. One respondent who also was a co-organizer of a neighborhood festival said, "In the end the point was to get those crowds to eat at the local food stands, since after all this festival was put on by the chamber of commerce so the point was to get business for the *taquerías*, cell phone companies, etc." The cultural and artistic events at the festival he concluded, were "brought in [to further] the selling." This respondent and others objected to the highly commercialized aspects of many Mexican cultural and artistic venues in the Chicago area. This same interviewee was very involved in Mexican artistic scenes in Chicago and a researcher noted after one of their conversations:

Right now there are four new "recently arrived" young people he said that I should meet. He seemed particularly excited about a young poet/musician who he had met at Café Mestizo recently. He said that there were always people coming in, people who were involved in the arts in Mexico: singers, actor, poets; but that they would usually return to Mexico after a while because they would become disappointed with the cultural scene here... these artists would come here and find it too commercialized, like with the neighborhood festivals.

The majority of this study's findings support previous studies that discovered that cultural and artistic groups facilitated network-building among immigrants (see Garcia, 2005; Hernandez-Leon and Zuniga, 2000; Raijman and Tienda, 2003; Dominguez and Watkins, 2003; Menjivar, 1997). In this example above, however, some recent Mexican immigrant artists apparently found the Chicago area's cultural scene to be so disappointing that they felt compelled to return migrate or re-patriate to Mexico. This phenomenon begs further questions as well, namely whether the class, education level, and U.S. immigration status of these artists afforded them opportunities to return to Mexico that may not have been shared by other recent Mexican immigrants who stayed.

The respondent above continued to point out three other elements of the Chicago area Mexican artistic scene that he felt were obstacles: the cost of events (cover charges or requests for donations), lack of creative spaces, and lack of an infrastructure for promoting activities: "You basically have to go to cafés to look at flyers all the time, there aren't up to date web pages with listings or progressive radio stations, the way there are in Mexico." Though this respondent and others were highly critical of many Chicago-based artistic and cultural events that sought to draw Mexican immigrant audiences, their commitment to stay in Chicago, whether for economic, family or other reasons, compelled them to remain involved and, in some instances, to make a positive difference in the Mexican cultural and artistic circles in which they took part. The respondent above, also a computer programmer, used his skills to design web pages for local artists—a first step, perhaps, toward the creation of an on-line social network or infrastructure for the promotion of Mexican artistic and cultural activities in the Chicago area.

Arts Education

"Arts education" as a theme emerged 106 times in researchers' field notes and interview transcripts. Many respondents emphasized the importance of Mexican "cultural preservation" in the Chicago area, particularly in regards to children of immigrants whose cultural knowledge and interests were informed by what one interviewee called the "*vida de gringo*" (gringo life) of the Chicago region and of larger U.S. society. Respondents distinguished between the "*vida de gringo*" (often referred to as a set of social values and hierarchy of power relations in the U.S.) and individuals who were U.S. born, many of whom played central roles in programs involving Mexican artistic and cultural practices. As one respondent said, "A lot of arts programs exist primarily to teach children born here about their heritage, and those programs are established by people who have been here for more than twenty years or by non-Mexicans, interestingly." Another respondent drew attention to the motivation for children's art and cultural education programs: "Most...begin as a concern for the children of recent immigrants, who are not being exposed to their parents' culture [and] a language and cultural barrier begins between children and parents." For some respondents, the arts also were a way to affirm children and young people's self-worth and identity. One parent at McKinley Park School who sewed costumes for arts events in the school explained:

The population is majority Mexican in this school. And they don't have much identity...They are in limbo, neither here nor there...the [Mexican dance] project was an example of the positive [influence] that we can give to the students, to make an impact by talking about their roots. The intent was to make them proud of their origins...so that they would know their roots...so that their culture could shine.

Other respondents valued arts education as a protective factor; one popular priest in Pilsen described young people's use of the arts as "a tool to maintain themselves, their pride, as opposed to the street, getting involved with gangs."

Youth study participants who were born to Mexican parents in Chicago also described actively learning about Mexican artistic and cultural traditions after realizing these parts of their own family culture remained unexplored and, therefore, simultaneously familiar and foreign. One woman who was born in South Chicago described her perception as a girl that *ranchera* music was "boring" until she went to Mexico as a young adult "*y se entró*"—she got it. She concluded, "I tried to leave it [the music] behind but I just can't, so now I'm teaching it." Despite this respondent's deep knowledge of Mexican artistic traditions and practices, it also was clearly hard won; it required her to move to Mexico, endure the reactions of others when they realized she was not a fluent Spanish speaker, and engage in a struggle to understand her own identity. Much of the study data reflect the disconnect children of immigrants experienced with the cultural traditions of their Mexican immigrant parents, particularly if the children were U.S.-born or brought to the U.S. as small children. Though further study is required, preliminary data support Mexican immigrants' concerns about the corrosive effects of U.S. society on the next generation's knowledge of Mexican artistic and cultural practices.

Study respondents who were teachers described the care they took to preserve culture by teaching about the diversity of Mexican styles of music and dance to the children of Mexican immigrants and other school children. As one teacher commented:

There are dance classes in the schools, but they are completely wrong, so I start with the two most common dances in Mexico—*son de la negra* and *jarabe de patito* (the Mexican hat dance). It's amazing! I ask the kids who the dances belong to and they think they are Puerto Rican or Colombian. They don't know they are Mexican. I do it to teach them where they are from...The kids are curious about the music, so I teach them what the [dance] movements mean with the music.

The staff person in a popular church in South Chicago also emphasized the importance of Mexican arts education in the preservation of culture among children of immigrants when she said:

We had an organist who was also a violinist and offered free lessons to the children in the area. Parents snatched that offer up like crazy! People want this for their children. We want to develop a cultural life with children and adults. We had a parishioner who moved to East Chicago, Indiana and learned to play the violin. And then he started a youth mariachi group there and it's really successful. We want to start a program like that here.

The need for teachers was echoed through the study, with one priest saying:

The only thing that holds Mexican dance back is the lack of teachers. We could guarantee to fill five groups of students for classes in traditional Mexican folkloric dance if we had teachers to offer it here. There are not enough teachers, so there are not enough groups.

Unfortunately, those teachers who do commit themselves to teaching Mexican arts to children are often under-resourced. As a teacher and founding member in the 1970s of the professional *Baile Folklórico de Chicago* told a researcher (who also had classical dance training):

The problem...is that there aren't any funds and I can't get shoes for the kids. The shoes are so important—I know that you understand this. They can hurt themselves without the shoes. We improvise things, but we just don't have shoes and costumes...For now, we dance in the reception area of the [community center]. We move the chairs and carefully clean the floor so that we don't get hurt and we dance there.

The strong desire among many recent immigrants to transmit Mexican cultural practices to their children combined with few trained teachers who usually were under-resourced in some instances compelled parents, and particularly mothers, to become involved in the arts in their children's schools.

Two of the most innovative examples of parental involvement in Mexican arts education were reported by respondents at Spry Elementary School and McKinley Park Elementary School, both schools with a majority of recent Mexican immigrant students and located on the near southwest side of Chicago. Both schools paid teachers and school community outreach staff (many of whom were also parents) to travel to Mexico to learn more about specific artistic and cultural practices. As one respondent, a parent who became a community liaison for McKinley Park School, described, she and a group of teachers from the school traveled to Oaxaca for three weeks to learn more about a dance and its costumes, which they had only seen in photographs. While there, they

witnessed another new dance called the “Pineapple Flower.” Upon their return from Oaxaca, the mothers of the school sewed the costumes and six teachers and the principal learned and performed the “Pineapple Flower” dance as part of an evening performance for the community.

Practices that had a particular significance in Mexico sometimes became imbued with new meaning when performed in a U.S. context. In this new context, Mexican arts not only served to honor the histories and traditions of Mexicans in Chicago, but also spoke to their experiences of alienation and rejection as immigrants in the U.S. As a parent at McKinley Park School said when describing the significance of the “Pineapple Flower” dance:

The meaning of the dance was very important. It means to give, and to receive nothing in return...It's something that happens with our students in this city, in this country, with others who do not treat them as equals. We come here to work and to give, and we don't get back the same respect.

(This explanation was not included during the formal performance in the school auditorium.) Ultimately, McKinley Park School's arts education program became an avenue for recent immigrant parents' greater involvement in the life of the school in general. Since the performance described above, the community liaison expanded the group of mothers from three to twenty-five, and they were raising money through nacho sales for a school trip.

Spry School sought to expand their arts program by bringing in a professional dancer and dance scholar. Polo García, from *América Baila*, came for a long-term dance residency that was hoped to positively influence children, school arts staff, teachers and parents. As one teacher at the school said, “I want to have professional development for parents. We need to create an arts buzz within the family. [Otherwise], how are we going to have an ally at home?” García taught Aztec dances to Spry sixth graders. The research for these dances involved his spending time with indigenous residents in a small town in Mexico who taught him the dance steps and details of the costumes, which he made in Mexico and brought back with him to Spry. It was telling in interviews with parents and teachers that they emphasized teaching children about their responsibility for the care of hand-made and often delicate costumes as part of the larger lesson of teaching children respect for Mexican arts and culture. Children's education in indigenous dance, with its multiple cultural influences, also may have allowed them to become acquainted with the complex histories that contributed to modern-day Mexican *mestizaje*, a mix of Native Mexican, Catholic, and European genealogies and customs stemming from Spanish conquest.

The desire for training in Mexican artistic traditions was so great within the Chicago area Mexican community that individuals with experience and talent were quickly identified and in high demand. In this way, the support of a single artist, by a school for instance, had the potential to create a ripple effect in which Mexican arts practices were transmitted throughout the area. For example, McKinley Park School's

success in securing a sponsor in Little Village for its *Nobleza Azteca* (Aztec Nobility) dance group allowed the school to hire a talented seamstress and parent, as she said, “to work, and to buy the right materials.” She then sewed six collections of Mexican folkloric dance costumes with cloth and other materials she purchased during the school-sponsored trip to Oaxaca. She said in an interview, that after “people saw the dresses [and] the word [got] out,” she was asked repeatedly to sew “costumes for festivals and parties.” Similarly, another respondent, a professional musician and staff member at Old Town School of Folk Music, described being invited to a small town in downstate Illinois to assist in the development of a Mexican folkloric group. Differences between group organizers ultimately resulted in the formation of two groups that, to this day, continue to perform distinctive repertoires of Mexican dances with their respective costumes. Chicago-based Mexican immigrant artists may play a crucial role as catalysts for the development of Mexican art forms within and outside of the Chicago region, particularly in those towns where recent Mexican immigrants are a smaller proportion of the population and have fewer cultural institutions or resources to draw upon.

Visual Artistic and Cultural Practices

“Visual arts” as a general theme emerged ninety times in researchers’ notes and interview transcripts. Recent immigrants reported participating most actively in the visual arts through taking photographs and shooting video at events involving family and friends, such as graduations, school performances, *quinceañeras* and weddings. Informal photography created a visual record of life transitions and events that, when emailed or mailed, could be vicariously accessed by family and friends in Mexico. One researcher reported coming across a small store where a young Latino assisted Mexican immigrant women in their seventies who busily scanned photographs of a *quinceañera* before emailing the photographs to Mexico. Though further study is needed to confirm this, the advent of digital photography may have contributed in important ways to the transformation in Mexico of this rite of passage for fifteen year-old young women. Portrait photography also serves to formalize important events, such as graduations held in community-based organizations that mark personal and educational achievements.

For example, at Erie Neighborhood House, a backdrop, staged lighting and a column for poses had been set up in the hall outside the large room where the Technology Promoter’s graduation was held. Technology Promoters completed six months of training in Spanish in computer hardware and software, and would go on to volunteer assistant teach with another, more experienced Technology Promoter before teaching their own course. At least half the graduates were women and nearly all were recent Mexican and other Latino immigrants. Formal photographs, when framed and on display in homes, also may have served as payoff, to some extent, for the pain and suffering endured in the U.S., and as reminders of the possibilities of the U.S.—opportunities that may not have been available in Mexico.

One study respondent was a trained photographer. He studied computer graphics in college and combined the two to create a website design business for other Chicago-based photographers and for artists in Mexico with whom he communicates via email. Though he often was paid only fifty *pesos* (about five dollars) for designing Mexican

artists' sites, he did the work to strengthen his connection with the artists and their networks.

Apart from family photography, other visual art forms reported by study respondents involved a small proportion of recent Mexican immigrants as producers, with most recent immigrants participating in the visual arts through their display of images, and as observers and consumers. Murals are an important artistic, cultural and political form in Mexico, and they abound in the established Mexican and Mexican-American neighborhoods of Pilsen and Little Village in the Chicago area. It is possible to take a guided tour of the murals in Pilsen from the Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum. The murals were created by professionals or as part of children's and young adults' arts education programs in churches, schools and community-based organizations. Spry School considered mural making a powerful education tool because it encouraged young people to learn from artists to create public art and "to leave their mark." In this way, Spry School not only honored a Mexican artistic, cultural and political tradition, but also may have worked to co-opt the practice of graffiti or tagging that often is related to gangs and youth violence. As one respondent, now in his forties, reflected:

Since many of us are invisible because we don't have papers, we write down our...names on the wall...gang names, whatever. Down there on 18th [Street] is still my brother's name and he was killed ten years ago, shot to death. I remember thinking maybe he's doing that [writing his name on the wall] because he knows [he's going to die]. And I think of him every time I walk by. He found a way to leave something behind, to know that he was here.

Other respondents commented on the conflict surrounding the practice of painting in public spaces in order to "leave a mark"—in most suburbs, there were few "permission walls" (walls that were designated for painting), and the police "immediately intervened" if anyone tried to create a mural or graffiti art. Mural content was as diverse as the Mexican immigrant artists who created them, and included scenes of Mexican villages blended with urban Chicago apartment buildings, Aztec symbols, commercial logos, abstract designs, *Virgen of Guadalupe*, and teens' depictions "of the good and bad in life: gangs, drugs, opposing domestic violence, images of a peaceful community."

The image of the Virgin of Guadalupe is a powerful Mexican cultural and religious icon that stems from Mexico's particular history of colonization and past and present-day cultural politics. One respondent described the origins of the Virgin of Guadalupe to a study researcher, just as he had related them six months earlier during the mostly Anglo English-speaking mass held in the church he attends in Des Plaines:

The first appearance of the Virgin of Guadalupe occurred following the 16th century arrival of Spanish to Mexico, and was a response to the violent confrontation between the Catholic faith and Mexico's "pagan world"...I think that God wanted to send us his mother to help, to offer more protection to those

who were the most oppressed. And in that case it was the Mexican, it was the Indian!...God sent us his son to save us, but after that he [Jesus Christ] returned to his reign. But God sent us the Virgin, the mother of Latin America, and she stayed for us! She found us and that's a great source of pride...Mexicans identify with her.

Another respondent disagreed with this assessment, attributing the appearance of the power of the Virgin of Guadalupe to the conquest and to Catholic evangelization:

The Virgin of Guadalupe was actually placed by Jesuits, or any of those brotherhoods... Unlike in the U.S. where [indigenous] people just were wiped out or actually almost extinct...in Mexico, they actually kept us alive and they [conquered us] through evangelization.

Some respondents described recent Mexican immigrants' devotion to the Virgin of Guadalupe as stronger in the U.S. than in Mexico:

Because being outside of Mexico, we learn to appreciate more what is ours. We're far away from our families, from our roots. When we came here, we encountered many obstacles, hardships, work, and many times when we think of the Virgin we ask for her to help us with our needs. In my opinion, devotion to the Virgin has increased outside of Mexico... [because] there are so many needs that we have [here].

This devotion is evident in images of the Virgin found throughout the Chicago area. Typical mural depictions included the Virgin with various Aztec symbols, though one mural above a used car lot near the "L" Blue Line on Chicago's west side showed the Virgin in the center of several old car models. Young men at a south side flea market spray painted the Virgin's image on car doors, with the Virgin flanked by a girlfriend's name or image on one side and the name of the immigrant's home state in Mexico on the other. Small images of the Virgin also hung from the rear view mirrors of cars (perhaps as a protection to the driver and passengers), and may have been reminiscent of the public buses in Mexico that were blessed by their own prominently displayed saint. Numerous types of traditional crafts and other objects held her image, with tin punched *artesanía* (handicrafts), cloth pictures, calendars, enormous carved wood statues, and candles among them. The display of the Virgin was often highly innovative; one researcher noted a Mexican flag that "had the Virgin in place of the Mexican coat of arms in the middle white stripe" and another described a wall painted by young members of a South Chicago community art center where "'Guadalupe' was spelled out in tagged graffiti script."

Churches in the study that had large Mexican denominations often prominently

displayed the Virgin of Guadalupe along with other traditional images, such as the three portraits of John Paul II on the altar at one South Chicago church, which a study researcher described as: “one when he was a young man, one in the prime of his papacy, and one that was a painting of the Virgin of Guadalupe cradling his tonsured and capped head to her shoulder as if she were a mother comforting her child.” Despite this example, numerous conflicts erupted within churches and public spaces over the image of the Virgin. As the Des Plaines respondent above commented, “It’s not common in the Anglo churches, you don’t see the paintings or figures there...at times they misunderstand us because we adore the Virgin, because our devotion is very big. And [they think] that we push Christ to the side.” Indeed, recent Mexican immigrants’ devotion to the Virgin was so strong that when a Salvadoran-born Methodist minister placed a large statue of the Virgin in the sanctuary of his church, Catholic Mexican immigrants, according to the Des Plaines respondent, “changed their denomination [in order to] continue their devotion to the Virgin of Guadalupe.”

In addition to reflecting struggles over religious iconography, study data suggest that the Virgin may be an important proxy for Mexicans in the U.S., with responses to the Virgin serving as a gauge of sorts for non-Mexicans’ rejection, tolerance or support of Mexican and Mexican Americans in the Chicago region. Study data indicate that the Virgin may also serve as a symbolic way for Mexicans and Mexican Americans to push back against racism and other obstacles they encounter, and to mobilize Mexicans, Mexican Americans and other allies for political change. As study respondents reported, groups that went to Springfield to advocate for change for Mexican immigrants brought the image of the Virgin with them “to ask for her assistance to help us with things that Latinos need—amnesty, licenses, health care services, so many things.”

Even further, feuds over the Virgin also may reflect larger conflicts over the rights of Mexican immigrants to remain present in the U.S., regardless of legal status. An example of this might be the battle over the “Virgin of the Underpass,” which occurred during the study. The Virgin was identified in a water mark at the Fullerton Street underpass to the Kennedy Expressway that quickly became the site of a flower- and candle-filled shrine until police and city employees swept it away and painted over the image. Workers from a nearby car wash returned and scoured off the city’s paint to once again reveal the image, which met with further protest on the street and in the papers. Eventually the controversy died down. Like the undocumented recent Mexican immigrants who revered the Virgin because she served as a symbol of national pride, spiritual comfort and the persistence of hope, the “Virgin of the Underpass” occupied a marginal and vulnerable physical and conceptual space in the public sphere. Recent Mexican immigrants, through working to protect the Virgin from ultimately being rendered invisible by powerful others (such as police or city employees), perhaps also waged a quiet protest against the forces that threatened to render them invisible through detention and deportation. Though some recent immigrants are bold enough to protest openly—such as those who carried bilingual signs at a rally (in support of an amnesty for undocumented immigrants currently in the U.S.) that said, “We deserve to have our families here,” and “We are workers, not terrorists”—study data show that many recent Mexican immigrants chose to remain invisible and under the radar, working long hours and earning money to support themselves and their families in the U.S. and in Mexico.

Respondents reported that recent Mexican immigrants were much less directly involved in other visual arts practices, though a few respondents described engaging in the following: painting (on canvas, paper, tile, the walls of a teen's room at home), sketching, drawing, spray painting, tattoos (such as a boyfriend or girlfriend's name; Aztec and Maya symbols), watching Spanish-language films, and the publication of art in a self-published magazine. Recent Mexican immigrant artists, and children of immigrants (such as the artistic members of a South Chicago youth group) had both formal and informal venues in which to show their art including Café Jumping Bean, Meztlí Gallery, Colibrí, and Mestizarte that "gave the opportunity to local Pilsen artists to exhibit their work for free." The Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum also displayed visiting and local artists (though few if any local artists were recent immigrants). Federations also hosted art exhibitions with visiting artists from their home state, such as that sponsored by the Federation of Hidalgo. Despite these and other venues, as one priest commented, class, education and scarce free time influence recent Mexican immigrants' decisions of whether to attend visual arts event:

Many are from the countryside. They come with very little education. "An *avant garde* depiction of their experience" is not normally what they want to see in their free time. "It's not a waste of time, though." People say that places like the Mexican Fine Arts Center are not really for them but when they do go, they are so happy to see so many things they remember. But usually people prefer a backyard picnic over a museum. (fieldnote with verbatim quotes from interview with the priest)

It is due to the limited formal schooling of many recent Mexican immigrants in Chicago, that one Mexican writer, poet and recent immigrant to Chicago decided to found a Spanish arts magazine, with "a little poetry" and an emphasis on images. "We think that migrants don't value reading, but they need to have it brought to them the right way," he concluded.

Performance Arts and Street Performance

"Theater" as a theme to describe forms of dramatic live enactment emerged seventy-five times in researchers' notes and interview transcripts. Respondents reported that recent Mexican immigrants participated in or observed many more informal events with performative elements than formal theater productions. Formal productions reported during the study included those produced by community-based organizations, hometown associations, churches and schools. Plays were used as tools for education and leadership development, personal and collective expression, cultural identification, and as a catalyst for political advocacy. Some play texts were published works and others were dramatizations of literature, such as the show created and presented by students at Spry Elementary School that was "60% (based on)...unearthed Latino literature." Still other productions were entirely original and drew on the experiences of the cast who were not professional actors. An example of this from the study was the

play produced by United Durango in Chicago, Federation of Duranguenses with graduates of Enlaces America (a Chicago-based project that focuses on developing the leadership capacities of Mexican and Central American immigrants who are the heads of organizations). The idea to do a play originated with a member of the group and head of Family Focus, a social service organization, in the Chicago suburb of Aurora. The group hired a well-respected artist and recent Mexican immigrant to work with them. As the coordinator of the group summed up, “basically it was acted, written, and directed by the group.” The closing performance was at the Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum in October of 2003, demonstrating the range of arts activities – from informal to formal, from paintings in galleries to live theatre – that the institution undertakes.

Respondents identified other formal theater groups and productions that catered, to some extent to recent Mexican immigrant audiences, as *Teatro América* on the Southwest Side, and periodic theater productions in Pilsen by professional actresses who were brought in to do specific productions, such as *Mujeres de Arena*. Finally, one interviewee described a now defunct theater group in the Chicago suburb of Elgin that was organized by Armando Trejo, a librarian who one respondent said “works to promote culture [and] storytelling.”

During the study, *Latinos Progresando*, a community-based organization, produced the play *La Victima* (The Victim, originally written by California-based Teatro Campesino in the 1970s) as a way to encourage dialogue and activism among recent Mexican immigrants and others regarding the conditions of Mexican immigrants’ lives in the U.S. The production played to consistently strong audiences (with an unidentified number of recent Mexican immigrants in attendance). *Latinos Progresando* took care to present the play in a variety of venues, including a church basement in Little Village and a theater in Pilsen. As the executive director of *Latinos Progresando* said:

Churches are where the families are, so we’ll put on the show in places where people already are, where people already go. We’ll do the show in a church in La Villita, and at a high school in Back of the Yards and the outreach will be to parents through the students. We want to present in communities where people wouldn’t normally go to theater but do go to church.

In addition to serving as a vehicle for raising political awareness, *La Victima* broke through the social isolation experienced by some recent immigrants, and tried to create a bridge between immigrant parents and their children. As the director described:

Three people came up to me and cried and said, “I was touched... The scene where you smuggle the mother into the U.S...I went through that. I was in the car and my mum was naïve enough to put me in the trunk [but] I could breathe because there was a little hole where the [spare] tire should have been.” Also the scene, I think the second to last scene, where the mother, Amparo, faces her long lost son, Sammy. It’s very touching to

everyone because it's a confrontation of the Mexican identity with the new American identity, really...So a lot of people get very emotional with that and I didn't realize it until people come to me and tell me...that we are telling their story. I think that's why people cry, because they realize that "Oh my God, just when I thought that I went through this all by myself, I didn't...They actually put my story up there." (ethnographer's fieldnotes with verbatim quotes from her interview with the director)

The executive director of Latinos Progresando and the producer of the play added that he hoped it increased the appreciation of children for their Mexican immigrant parents:

I look at my father and I think to myself, "My goodness, I don't ever think that I'll have the courage to pick up my things and leave Chicago and go live in another country where I don't know the language, I know only one person in the entire country." Would I have the courage to do that? I don't know. I know my father did and I am thankful for that...it's something that's very courageous that I think people in our community should be very proud of. The children should be proud of their parents for doing this, sacrificing for them. I want the kids to realize that. (from ethnographer's fieldnotes with verbatim quotes from her interview with the producer)

Respondents mentioned several factors that may have influenced the small number of formal productions and discouraged recent immigrants' attendance at plays. One producer described his organization's struggle with the high costs of mounting a production, though he said they discovered a solution: community sponsors who pooled their money to "pay for everything together...It's more difficult to make something on your own than with the community behind you." Another respondent offered this observation: "In many edgy local performances, there is too much swearing for it to be a family thing." In addition, she described her own and other artists' (many of whom are not recent Mexican immigrants but were their children) reluctance to perform for recent Mexican immigrants, stating that many artists do not find their niche in their own communities. "When I get to 26th [Street] I am out of my comfort zone." She continued on to say that she preferred "the political environment" where there was more respect for women. Another interviewee pointed to the dearth of relevant content in typical theater pieces saying, "Romeo and Juliet is a masterful play but to Maria and Juan down on 26th Street, it may not be as relevant." Finally, a priest respondent pointed to another form of recreation that competed for recent Mexican immigrants' time, energy and money—frequent family parties that were informal get-togethers or occasions to mark rites of passage such as baptisms and funerals. As the priest described:

Saturday I went to go bless a house. This was in Marquette Park, on the Southwest Side...There must have been about fifty people in the backyard...with music, joking, sometimes dancing (and)...at least twenty-

five kids in the front yard...This particular party they had restaurant catering in these huge tins. Other times the extended family will bring huge amounts of food to share...People are having a great time. I do about two hundred baptisms and about twenty funerals a year...They're having the time of their lives, so why would they rather be at a play?

Recent Mexican immigrants more frequently reported being involved in performative public events, such as religious processions and political protests. One respondent offered an explanation for this, describing the role of performance as a critical component of both indigenous practices (“the Aztecs would do sacrifices—it was theater”) and the Spanish conquest and Catholic evangelization of indigenous people. As she described:

When they were making sure we became Catholic, they used theater and especially what they called *misterios* (mysteries), they're a kind of play, and of course *pastorelas* (a traditional Christmas play). I love *pastorelas*. We have this whole huge theater tradition in Mexico because we were taught to believe in God, and to be “civilized” through theater. We learned everything through theater.

Theater as a vehicle for religious devotion continues today in both Mexico and in the Chicago area. As one interviewee summed up:

What's the most popularly performed theater representation?...Our Passion of the Christ. Do you see? We do it in Ixtapa and it's *humongous!* And the guy will train for one year to be Christ. And the other guy will train for one year to be Judas. And the other guy will train to be Pontius Pilate.”

Study data confirmed that these religious performances remained immensely popular in the Chicago area and, like other arts forms described above, took on new meaning for both participants and observers.

On December 12, the feast day of the Virgin of Guadalupe, hundreds of recent Mexican immigrants and others make the pilgrimage to the Church of Maryville in Des Plaines, the site of the “Second Tepeyac of North America.” Studied extensively by scholar Elaine Peña, “the Second Tepeyac is literally a (smaller scale) replica of Mexico City's most sacred space: the hill of Tepeyac where *la Virgen de Guadalupe*...first appeared to the Indian Juan Diego in 1531” (Peña 2004). Peña described devotees' celebration of the Virgin's feast day this way:

[They celebrate] with a *novena*, or nine continuous days of prayer, as well as with an intense thirty-hour celebration filled with food, music, dance, and a didactic theatrical reenactment of la Virgen de Guadalupe's 16th century apparition on the hill of Tepeyac. The climax of this celebration occurred at 5:30 a.m. when a pilgrimage of two hundred devotees arrived on foot from their Chicago parish. They entered the gymnasium-cum-*iglesia* frozen and battered in, at best, ten degree weather. Some devotees had little more than a sweatshirt or windbreaker to fight the bitter cold. Nevertheless, they arrived full of faith and happiness. A devotee who participated in this walking pilgrimage, publicly proclaimed, "The journey was long and cold and I am tired, but my love for *la virgencita* is so much greater than my discomfort" (Peña 2004).

Another respondent and Mexican community leader in Des Plaines commented that the severe weather (a phenomenon that does not typically exist in Mexico in December) provided an even greater opportunity for pilgrims to show their devotion. Though the Second Tepeyac was only established in 2001 by proclamation of the Institute for Historical and Theological Worship of la Virgen de Guadalupe, by 2003, Peña reported that 50,000 pilgrims arrived at the shrine: "these devotees, many of whom are Mexican nationals, journeyed to the shrine on foot, by bus, by plane, and on bicycles from all over the United States" (Peña 2004). Peña also observed that pilgrims traveled from Mexico, the Philippines and Spain. The implications of the massive and growing annual migration to this site for local and transnational economies, social networks, and artistic and cultural practices are discussed by Peña in her ground-breaking work, and warrant further study (Peña 2004).

Evidence from the *Creative Networks: Mexican Immigrant Assets in Chicago* study indicated the emergence of another new religious and performance-based event in the Chicago area that relied upon the involvement of recent Mexican immigrants: public displays of devotion and protest organized by church-based workers' rights centers. To provide one example, on Good Friday, a coalition of church-based groups staged an observance of the Stations of the Cross in downtown Chicago. One station was the plaza just outside the Chicago Board of Trade, and there a recent Mexican immigrant spoke to the assembled crowd of approximately 100. He described the unsafe work conditions he and other workers were subjected to and said that "workers like me are organizing to create safer, fairer, more dignified conditions for day laborers and to strengthen Illinois' Day Labor Services Act." He concluded with a call to onlookers to join the observance of the Stations of the Cross saying, "Please walk with us as we struggle for justice." This respondent reported that he had never engaged in anything like this before moving to Chicago.

In another example, a priest described when he and a group of congregants decided to hold mass on a street corner as part a "pre-intervention" campaign to discourage gangs and "to get the people out and build trust, and to build on [positive] interactions in public." In a final instance, workers at a large market staged a rally in front of the store to bring attention to workplace violations they suffered. The rally was peaceful and had religious components, including offerings of freshly cut flowers that were left at the site, along with a large hand-crafted frame that one of the workers had

made. In the frame was a large copy of the fair labor practices notice that the National Labor Board had required the owner to post at the store. When the owner ordered his employees to gather the flowers and then sold them, along with the (now empty) wood picture frame, workers were afraid and demoralized. The owner's sale of these offerings not only was a denial of workers' efforts to secure better working conditions but, for devout workers, may have been a frightening sacrilege, violating unspoken ethical codes that govern religious observance and possibly perceived as a rejection of the presence of God.

As a recent Mexican immigrant observed, "Life is hard in this country, but if you know your rights, at least you have something to hold on to." As another respondent and the director of a worker's center echoed, "most [immigrants] were not politicized in any way in their home countries and thus the Center exposes them to ideas and politics that they hadn't previously thought about." In some instances, increased knowledge translated into greater respect; as one immigrant said of his boss, "Since I know my rights he doesn't attack me the same way he does the others." The form in which recent immigrants demanded respect for these rights, however, was deeply informed by Mexican devotional practices that were collective, performative and public. In these devotional protests, recent Mexican immigrants asserted their collective presence in a way that offered them legitimacy—by emphasizing a public identity as religious devotees as opposed to illegal workers—and protection through the involvement of the church and, at large events, the anonymity offered by crowds. These public devotional performances ultimately carved out precious public space for recent immigrants who may otherwise have felt they had no right or that it was too dangerous to engage in political protest. Through these performances, recent Mexican immigrants insisted that social relationships in that public space be marked by mutual recognition of one another's humanity as the basis for mutual respect, not by threat and intimidation.

Food

"Food" as a theme emerged seventy-four times in researchers' notes and interview transcripts. Respondents described a wide range of foods, often emphasizing and taking pride in regional differences in food preparation and taste. Respondents described eating, preparing and selling the following: *tamales* (including green and red, served at Christmas, and during holidays and parties); *elotes* (corn on the cob); *raspados* (snow cones); pizza; snack foods (such as peanuts, small bags of chips, candy); *paletas* (ice cream bars and popsicles); tacos; fruit (mangos and papaya); soda; Philly cheese steak sandwiches with jalapenos; rice and beans; *licuados* (shakes or smoothies made with fruit and water or milk); baked goods; *pan dulce* (sweet bread, for instance, baked in the shape of crocodiles and gila lizards with sharp crusty spines); *churros* (sugary deep fried dough); *panvazo* (funnel cake); *quesadillas*; *gorditas* (fried stuffed tortillas); *enchiladas*; *flautas* (corn tortillas rolled around a filling, such as beef, chicken, or cheese, into thin cylinders and sometimes deep-fried); *suegras*; *carnitas* (braised pork) served with corn tortillas, avocado slices, homemade refried beans, lime wedges and homemade *salsa verde*; herbs such as chiles, and "one that is similar to cilantro, but stronger; *nopal* (cactus); *menudo* (soup made of tripe, hominy and chili, and a typical dish for New Year's morning); *tomatillos* (husk tomatoes); *chicharrones* (fried pork rinds); *torta*

ahogada (a meat sandwich originally from Jalisco that often is submerged in chile); homemade potato chips; garlic, lettuce and other greens, beans, tomatoes, corn, raspberries, peaches, quince and rhubarb grown in a South Chicago community garden; *carne asada* (marinated and grilled steak); *barbacoa* (barbequed meat, often made of cow head or cheek); *guaraches* (a breakfast pancake); *tortas* (omelettes); *bombazas*; *atole* (a warm almost porridge-like drink thickened with corn dough); *champurrado* (chocolate atole); *carne con mole* (meat with any of various spicy sauces with a base of onion, chiles, nuts or seeds, and unsweetened chocolate); tequila; *empanadas*; rotisserie chicken from the local supermarket, and sheet cake.

According to respondents, certain foods were prepared for specific times of the year or for special occasions. *Tamales* often were staples at parties and during holidays, such as Christmas. As one respondent said, “You can’t have a party without *mariachis* and *tamales*.” *Tamales* required a group effort for their preparation, as one researcher recounted:

When I arrived upstairs there were about four people preparing *tamales* assembly-line style in a very hot kitchen. It smelled heavenly. One woman was seated at the table wrapping the completed *tamales* in aluminum foil. Another woman was spreading the filling inside and a man was folding them closed. One other person was standing at the stove boiling the corn leaves to wrap the *tamales*...I offered to help with the *tamales* but when it became apparent that I didn’t know how to prepare them, she politely declined my assistance. I probably would have slowed them down considerably.

Other respondents described the family assembly lines that formed in kitchens throughout the Chicago area as families prepared their Christmas *tamales*. Like many other types of informal arts (such as handicrafts above), this collective experience of food preparation may have served to bond its participants, and to transmit and reinforce Mexican cultural knowledge among people, and between generations. As one respondent noted, “The food is folklore.” Like other types of informal arts in the study that were incorporated into school activities because they were important transmitters of Mexican arts and culture, parents intentionally sought opportunities to teach their children to cook distinctive Mexican dishes, such as the cooking classes mothers taught at the Catholic Immaculate Conception School in South Chicago.

Not only did the preparation of food provide a time to share stories, but the specificity of the dishes prepared for certain occasions also may have reflected particular family, hometown, regional, and larger cultural meanings. Interviewees often referred to highly prized regional differences among dishes. One respondent talked about when his mother visited from Mexico in this way:

The only thing she brings his brothers is special *mole* and bread. When I asked if they couldn’t get that stuff here, he said they could but that these

were special because they were from their little town so they had a regional difference.

This same respondent later lamented that he missed a boring party because, as the researcher who attended the party described:

The highlight was the *carne con mole*. I noticed that the *mole* tasted differently than what I had had at local restaurants. It tasted like a mix of *mole* and barbeque sauce. I was told that it was the kind of *mole* made in the Yucatan and I was introduced to the woman who made it.

The preparation of special meals also was part of some institutional cultures and traditions. At one church, women served *menudo* for breakfast on Sunday after mass. Though many congregants had moved out of the neighborhood, a respondent described this particularly Mexican breakfast as part of the reason “people came from a distance to attend mass and have breakfast...the church was the center of their community.”

It is perhaps because of the power of food as folklore and a contributor to group cohesion that one recent Mexican immigrant respondent who did not follow “traditional” expectations described herself as a “bad Latina” and went on to explain, “My grandmother tries to get me to shop, cook, be more of a girl [but] I’m not very traditional.” This respondent’s lack of involvement in family food preparation may have been perceived as disrupting those cultural practices (such as food preparation) that helped ensure the continuity of family and larger community customs, histories and knowledge. Also, the respondent’s pursuit of higher education—she was an undergraduate at the University of Chicago—and her choice not to devote herself to cooking (which may have been unrelated) seemed to be construed as a rejection of one for the other. It’s as if, she said, her grandmother was concerned that “my academia will replace my womanliness.” In this example, cooking was a cultural and artistic practice that conferred feminine legitimacy. Though some male respondents in the study reported that they cooked, male respondents who did not cook did not report being penalized for not cooking or being perceived as less manly.

Many respondents described Mexican dishes, and the cultural knowledge that informed their preparation and consumption, as dynamic. For one young respondent, eating Christmas *tamales* was a hybrid family tradition: “my family’s part Irish, so we have Guinness with our *tamales*.” Youth respondents, in particular, pointed to other examples of fusion food; as one respondent said:

In some of the South side restaurants [there is a fusion of] Mexican, American, and African-American. For example, Mr. G’s restaurant at Commercial and 72nd Street has Mexican art all over the walls and serves a Philly cheese steak sandwich with *jalepeños*, if you want them.

Study data suggest that food was a continual element in events that brought together people of diverse nations of origin, and may have contributed to bridging people of different groups, though further study of this phenomenon is required. An Albany Park church whose congregation was made up of recent and not-so-recent Mexican immigrants, Filipinos, whites, and other Catholics, held an international festival to raise money for church activities. The festival encouraged its congregants and other attendees to bring food from their nations of origin by admitting for free all people who brought a main dish for twelve or dessert for twenty-four (otherwise admission was \$8 per adult). Food tables were set up along the wall of a large room with parishioners seated with their families at long tables in the center. Signs above the food tables read: Ecuador, El Salvador, Mexico, Guatemala, USA, and the Philippines. This intentional celebration of distinct national cuisines and the incentive to attendees to contribute dishes appeared to be an effective fundraising strategy (approximately 3,000 people attended the festival), but also may have been a response to ongoing conflict between parishioners of different nations of origin. Though it is unclear in this instance what role food played in bridging differences between nation-of-origin groups, it appeared to be part of a larger effort on the part of church leaders to simultaneously highlight cultural uniqueness and shared religious commitments and, thus, to bridge parishioners together in common cause. Respondents offered numerous examples of the benefit to churches when parishioners felt church leaders welcomed and supported their cultural and artistic traditions. As one respondent explained:

There is a disconnect when they come here. And it isn't always their fault. If churches are not all that welcoming, then people learn not to go. St. Stephen's refused to have a Spanish mass until the day they closed their doors.

Churches that embraced and encouraged Mexican immigrant parishioners often benefited greatly from the creative ways congregants used Mexican cultural and artistic activities in service to the church. To offer one example, *tamales* were so popular both within and outside Mexican immigrant communities in Chicago that community centers made and sold them as part of their fundraising efforts. One center in South Chicago formalized their production and sale of *tamales* on a surprisingly large scale. In the description at the beginning of this section, the *tamales* being made were for an "order from the Lincoln Park Zoo. The [center] apparently had an agreement to sell *tamales* there as part of the fundraiser for their summer programs." Another respondent said that proceeds from her church group's *tamale* (and baked goods) sales paid for "a priest to come up from Mexico and head special devotions." Like the handicrafts and textile arts described earlier, church groups' preparation and sale of food led them to form ties with local institutions outside the church and the neighborhood (such as the Lincoln Park Zoo) and to concretize transnational social networks, for instance, with priests and congregations in Mexico. Study data suggest that church-based informal arts played unique and important roles as catalysts for Mexican immigrants' (and particularly

women's) development of leadership skills and financial power that ultimately contributed to the expansion of personal and institutional networks both in the Chicago area and in Mexico. Further research is needed, however, to determine the nature and implications of this phenomenon.

Street vendors are common throughout Mexico, and some respondents reported working as food vendors for a living in the Chicago area. Unlike many parts of the U.S., where food vendors are confined to discrete spheres such as sports stadiums and circuses, recent Mexican immigrant food vendors walked or set up their carts in residential neighborhoods, public parks, and business districts. One respondent reported walking up to ten miles a day through different parts of the city. Some vendor carved out creative niches for themselves as providers of food to other vendors. For example, one respondent sold his homemade potato chips to the owners and managers of other food wagons or *guaguaitas*. Making a living as a food vendor in Chicago was potentially lucrative—with one scholar noting that popsicle sellers from Zacatecas have contributed to some Mexican towns becoming “rich” from their profits alone—though the cold Chicago winters might serve as an obstacle to what, in Mexico, could be a year-round occupation.

Another example demonstrated the way food vendors served as important social network nodes through their provision of information and even resources to customers. While visiting a flea market in the Chicago suburb of Aurora, a researcher came upon a *licuado* stand. After a customer requested artificial sweetener, which the owner no longer had on hand, the following conversation, as noted by the ethnographer, ensued:

The vendor had a working knowledge of diabetics because his wife has diabetes and says he normally has a box full of sweetener for people who need it. But recently a pregnant woman came by his *puesto* (stall) and had discovered she had diabetes but did not know where to purchase the sweeteners. He figured she was new to town and was probably from some *rancho* in Mexico and didn't know where to go for these supplies so he gave her [his] entire box.

This example suggests that Mexican vendors, whose vocation requires them to be highly accessible to the general public, might serve as important social network nodes for recent Mexican immigrants in the Chicago area as they dispense information and, in some cases, material resources, along with ice cream bars.

Clothing and Textile Arts

Sewing, knitting, crocheting, embroidery and other types of textile arts (coded under both “clothing” and “crafts”) appeared approximately sixty-five times in researchers' notes and interview transcripts. These were among the most commonly performed informal arts (along with cooking) by recent, adult, female, Mexican immigrants in Chicago. As one priest said, pointing to an embroidery piece on the wall of a room in the church, “That was made for me by a group of women here. Each one did

a piece of it. There is a tremendous amount of cloth work going on in the neighborhood. Wedding dresses are a fraction of what you'd pay in a white community." Much of the clothing and textile arts described in the study occurred as part of groups or workshops held in churches or community centers. As one organizer noted, "If we offer that crafts can be done at a class or meeting, we attract more people. The ladies come to get together and do their crafts." Women created textile art for recreation, as part of diabetes management classes, as gifts for new immigrant mothers in the U.S., as gifts for children in hospitals in Mexico, to teach to a younger generation of young women and girls, and for sale to raise funds for group projects such as the purchase of a statue of the Virgin of Guadalupe from arts workshops in Mexican hometowns. Some groups that committed themselves to creating clothing or blankets for Mexican organizations wound up strengthening transnational social networks through facilitating the travel of Mexican partners to Chicago, such as when a group "brought up a statue of *Nuestra Señora de Soledad* from Mexico and a Mexican priest came up to help with that."

Groups were at times flexible with the type of textile art they created, and would adjust in response to a newly identified need. As one member of a South Chicago church-based group explained, "We started by getting together to sew on our machines. To make our Christmas dresses. Now we make hats, slippers, and blankets for kids in the hospital." Another group member chimed in, "You know, the poor families at the hospital, sometimes they don't even have a towel to take their baby home in, so we make blankets and little hats to wrap them in." Another added, "We also make hats and slippers for the seniors at the hospital because it's so cold here and they don't have anything warm to wear." As one member explained, active arts education took place in this group, "We teach each other the crafts that we know." As a result, the groups often expanded in number and in projects. Ultimately, these groups served an important social function and facilitated group members' discovery of other activities and events outside of the immediate mission of the group, such as when groups went on field trips together to places individual women might not have traveled to on their own.

T-shirts also emerged in the study as a popular "canvas" for artistic expression, particularly for younger respondents. Two recent Mexican immigrant interviewees described why they created original designs for their t-shirts:

The t-shirts are a tool that works in U.S. society... I mean they grab people's attention. People stare at you when you wear them so we use them as a tool to make a political statement. So it's a combination of our culture and their framework.

These respondents created designs that acknowledged and commented on their and other recent immigrants' everyday experiences, including that of migration, as they described to the ethnographer:

You should visit our website... there is a radar that says "Mexican border" and shows a bunch of little dots moving, like people running. Then there is

a *mica* [Mexican Consular ID card]. The icon for borders is a box, the t-shirts are hung on a line in the desert...So, I mean, everything is related to immigration and to both the U.S. and Mexico.

Their use of pointed humor served to undercut popular perceptions of recent Mexican immigrants as docile in that “one of the t-shirts says ‘Kiss me I’m Mexican’ and shows a *nopal*, a cactus,” and simultaneously recognizes Mexican immigrants as part of a larger history of immigrants to the U.S. One of the designers commented, “That shirt sort of compares Mexican immigrants of today to the Irish immigrants of the early 20th century.” Some t-shirt designs may surreptitiously push back against the discrimination experienced by many recent immigrants, such as the shirt with a symbol of a stop light and the words “Green-go,” an allusion to “*gringo*,” a derogatory term to describe whites, particularly whites who take their race, class and/or national origin privilege for granted.

Handicrafts/Manualidades, Decoratives/Decorativos and Craftwork/Artesanía

“Crafts” as an artistic theme emerged fifty-two times in researchers’ notes and interview transcripts. Study data showed that many recent Mexican immigrants—the majority women and school-aged children—engaged informally in the creation of decorative crafts, though a few respondents made crafts for sale. One researcher described decorative crafts as central elements in most celebrations:

Crafts appeared in weddings, baptisms, *quinceañeras*, anniversaries, Mother’s Day, birthdays, and every family and religious event. Predominant were doilies, buttons, figurines, decorative photo frames, and a type of object that, if it has a proper name, I do not know it. It consists of an amalgamation of some combination of ribbons, cloth, plastic or metal icons, lettering, plastic flowers, and all form of trimmings fastened together or to a plastic or foam base. These *decorativos* (decoratives) are an essential part of myriad social gatherings, as table ornaments and as mementos of the occasion itself. I have at least three from attending a wedding, a first birthday, and a baby shower.

Other types of crafts mentioned by study respondents included: tin punched images, or painted tin pictures; cloth pictures; parade floats made from a mix of flowers and other materials; candles; calendars; carved and painted wood statues of all sizes (including life size); floral bouquets (with real flowers, or those made from clay, paper, bread or other materials); woven and painted tortilla baskets; beaded necklaces with the colors of the Mexican flag; shiny metal military dog-tag style necklaces with various images engraved on them; and grains of rice, each with a single name painted on it (a common street side attraction in Mexico City and at Chicago area festivals). Recent Mexican immigrant women most often reported creating crafts in homes, in groups at churches and health centers, and for special school events and school projects. For some,

this “deeply embedded form of cultural arts,” as one ethnographer put it, was little acknowledged, such as in the case of a woman who “knits and does home decorations with a group of other wives,” and who stated that “these things...are really not that important to me.” She continued that she would rather spend her time going to classes for English or computers with the shrinking time she had as her five children grew older. It is possible that the relatively low status this respondent and others in the study accorded handicrafts may have two possible reasons: the association of handicrafts with the Mexican countryside and *campesinos*, and their association with women’s labor, which in the domestic sphere was often assumed and taken for granted. This same respondent, however, also hinted at another attribute of handicrafts and their production when she said that on Sundays, when her husband played soccer, she shared crafts techniques with other players’ wives. Handicrafts, like many other creative and collective endeavors, also had the potential to strengthen existing ties or create new ties among participants.

In many instances in the study women described bonding with one another through learning and sharing craft techniques. As with informal visual arts production, the shared creation of handicrafts helped to break social isolation experienced by some women and to foster camaraderie and trust among group members. This bonding had an important spillover effect; bonds created through women’s shared participation in informal arts increased their commitments to one another and to the group, even if the focus of the group was not informal arts but something else, such as diabetes management. In one church, a group started by Mexican immigrants—which grew from six to twenty members in two years—inspired a group of U.S.-born, English-speaking parishioners to start a similar group. When women made crafts for sale, bonds often grew even stronger through the group’s achievement of collective goals, such as raising money to sponsor the visit of a Mexican priest for the holidays or through raffling off hand-made objects in a school fundraiser for children’s arts activities.

Some respondents also described purchasing handicrafts as a way to connect to Mexico, though this could be costly. Said one respondent:

You do want to retain as much of your culture as possible, even though formal arts may not be the direct means you do it. Check out the Little Village Discount Mall, which has an *artesanía* shop. [Though] if you have x amount of dollars to spend, that becomes a luxury.

Some objects, such as *piñatas*, were available in stores such as the chain *Dulcelandia* (or “Candyland,” perhaps also a play on “*Chicagolandia*,” the “*Espanglish*” word for the Chicagoland area), and in small often family-owned businesses that imported them from Mexico. One respondent described visiting his family in Guadalajara, and bringing back gifts of clay figurines, a cornhusk doll, and an Aztec calendar painted on leather, among other objects. His gifts of these Mexican handicrafts (which he said he appreciated more since immigrating to the U.S.) to family, friends and co-workers, may have strengthened his bonds with them. This respondent’s willingness to explain the symbolic meanings encoded in many of these objects also increased recipients’ knowledge of and

engagement in Mexican cultural and artistic practices, even if they were not themselves Mexican.

Respondents described children's creation of crafts in school and after-school programs as primarily cultural and educational; "we do crafts and events that deal with the *Virgen de Guadalupe* tradition, and with the Day of the Dead... a lot of the arts in the school are about kids doing art, and about us asking them to reflect on their culture." These projects could range from small in-class activities to large-scale and time-intensive labors of love, such as the scale model of Tenochtitlán, the product of a year's work by students, parents and teachers at McKinley Park Elementary School. Favors created by parents for school events also reflected parents' pride of culture, their children, and the school. When two researchers attended an evening performance at McKinley Park, their fieldnotes described it as such:

We were greeted by a Mexican woman who pinned a blue and red striped ribbon with a small pine apple and the school's name on it to Sarah's t-shirt. Upon closer inspection, it turned out that the ribbons were all hand made. Two one-inch wide ribbons (one red and one blue) were glued together, with a chevron cut at the end for a decorative finish. The pineapple was fashioned from art clay and was complete with pineapple texture and three dimensional leaves. The McKinley Park name was printed on a small bit of white satin and ironed on to the ribbon. It was quite painstakingly created and she had a box with at least twenty ribbons in it. There were likely others with just as many ribbons at other places in the school. They served as favors for the guests at the event.

An after school program in South Chicago also worked to create an environment of pride and respect for self and for others and, in this way, sought to buffer children from negative interaction styles that took place in the neighborhood. The founder of this program, an art teacher and therapist, told of one project in which children worked with war veterans to paint a mural on the wall of the Claretian Associates' building. She said, "The kids really identified with them. They'd been through a war and the kids felt that they are in a war, too. This is a really dangerous neighborhood." Informal arts, in this example, served to bridge veterans with children, some of whom benefited through their positive identification with the veterans as survivors. Finally, when children created murals for public areas, such as community gardens or schoolyards, their presence may have served to positively remind children of their own creativity, initiative, and resilience.

There were several examples in the study of crafts for sale by local and international artisans. One respondent reported that in the past the Hidalgo hometown federation organized "some talks by native women from Hidalgo who brought some of their craftwork to sell." Flea markets popular with recent Mexican immigrants often had a stall with *artesanía* and *decorativos*, and sellers were invariably willing to do custom orders, such as creating specialized party favors and small crowns for flower girls. One researcher visited a South Lawndale crafts shop that was very popular with recent

Mexican immigrant women. In addition to selling supplies, the owner offered free courses at two long work tables behind her front counter, and at local churches and a senior home. She described that many of her customers came to her to learn several techniques in order to assemble, for example, decorative doilies for a twentieth anniversary party. They would buy the materials from her and then invite several family members for a weekend at home sewing, pinning and fastening together the anniversary favors. Though her customers were nearly all Mexican and low income, the owner expressed interest in expanding her client base, commenting that “white Americans pay a lot for cultural objects.” In addition to this modest shop, the same researcher observed:

The design, assembly and sales of decorative objects formed an informal economy that thrived in South Lawndale and other parts of the Chicago area, providing supplemental income mostly to women with families. A woman I know who tutors at Spry Elementary School only three blocks from the shop also does this kind of work for extra income on evenings and weekends.

Decorative arts’ widespread popularity, and the collective nature of their production, provided recent Mexican immigrants with economic and social inroads and, in many instances in the study, strengthened and expanded participants’ existing social networks, knowledge base, and financial power. These informal arts groups, through their increased social cohesion and finances, contributed in measurable ways to the well-being of organizations and neighborhoods to which the group was devoted.

Sports

“Sports” as a theme emerged forty-nine times in researchers’ notes and interview transcripts. Respondents described participating in and observing both informal and formal sports activities. Soccer, basketball, baseball, dance, bicycle riding, running, yoga, tennis, and swimming were the activities recent Mexican immigrant respondents most frequently described, with soccer appearing in notes and interview transcripts substantially more often than any other type of sport. Though men were the majority of participants in sports—as one priest said, “the soccer world is a great unifier for the men”—girls and women participated as well. The priest said, “It’s really big in this community, even with the young girls. A woman who graduated from a team in the neighborhood is now on a professional team in Mexico.” In addition, one researcher, while attending a Chicago Fire game (which preceded the Mexican Chivas versus Real Madrid game she had come to see), noted:

During half time...a member of the Latino press came over to the seats near us and started taking pictures of a very stylish Latino couple and then of the woman from the couple with various other people. I leaned over and asked him who the woman was that he was taking so many pictures

of, and it turned out that she plays on the Mexican Women's team here in Chicago.

Professional soccer matches were well-attended by Mexican immigrants and others in Chicago. While Mexican teams played, the stadiums in which these matches were held transformed into Latino majority bilingual, if not mostly Spanish-language dominant, microcosms. As the researcher and soccer fan wrote:

Chivas entered the field and was greeted by a huge cheer from the crowd. From this point forward, all of the announcements before and during the game were in Spanish, even though there was a good number of non-Spanish speakers present. Maybe this was because both teams playing were Spanish speaking though the announcements are for fans, not for players.

Professional sports events served to forge trans-border bonds between "sister" teams in Mexico and Chicago: "*Amigos Michoacanos* were invited over the public address system to visit the Chicago Fire website because of the partnership that the Fire has with *Monacas de Morelia*, the Michoacán team." These matches also created bonds among soccer fans, as evident in the ongoing banter between strangers. Researchers who attended various matches noted this conversation recorded at the Chivas-Real Madrid game:

They were wearing Chivas jerseys and [the researcher] teasingly pointed out his own Madrid jersey. The father replied that that jersey was OK, because they love Madrid, but they're Mexican and had to support Chivas. But they were for both teams at the game, saying that Real Madrid is the best in the world. The son said that even though he was wearing a Chivas jersey, he holds Real in his heart. As we exited the train and walked toward the stadium, the son told us that when he goes to the stadium in Mexico City (probably Jalisco Stadium because that's where the Chivas play), he only pays 250 pesos for a ticket, which is about equivalent to \$25.

The researcher continued, "Tickets to our game here started at \$40, so there seems to be a difference, though I don't know what that difference is in real purchasing power. It could be a month's salary for all I know. Seats with cushions cost 450 pesos, but none of the seats are assigned, like they are here."

Whether professional sports, such as soccer matches were, like music concerts, more financially accessible in the U.S. than Mexico was undetermined. However, the popularity of soccer in the U.S., particularly with a growing Latino population (which is

majority Mexican) sparked the creation of a new U.S. soccer team: Chivas U.S.A. One recent Mexican immigrant respondent described the Chivas as “the best known and best loved soccer team in Mexico (and) from (my) hometown of Guadalajara. The Chivas U.S.A. team that just started in California has players born both in Mexico and in the U.S., but the coaches are all Mexican.” The fact that a Mexican team started in the U.S. was a source of pride for him (and he said to all Mexicans), because it meant that Mexicans were having “a visible influence in this country.” Like ballrooms and clubs that were revitalized through Mexican immigrant patronage, Mexican immigrants (along with other Latinos and immigrants) spurred the creation of a new U.S. soccer team, thus further energizing a national league that continually has been overshadowed by the national football, baseball and basketball leagues.

Youth centers and after-school and church-based programs offered sports activities, and state federations organized a popular soccer league throughout Chicago. One church organized an adult baseball league in Calumet Park on Chicago’s south side. A respondent who once was involved in a Seventh Day Adventist church described his participation in a swim meet:

So I don’t know how it came about but there was a swim meet and they found out that I was a Marine in Mexico and know how to swim, so they asked me to participate in this meet. I went to the swim meet [in Springfield] and won.

This same respondent described learning to play tennis with a translator and former competitive tennis player he met while studying ESL at a Chicago social service organization. The tennis games strengthened their friendship and became a time for lessons in English slang. As the respondent related laughingly, “E. is ‘schooling me.’” This clearly was a joke between them, and [the respondent] went on to explain that E. taught him to say, ‘I’ll school you’ as a joking way of saying, ‘I’ll teach you a thing or two. The same social service organization offered yoga classes that were popular with Mexican immigrants, and the Associate Director of Adult Education commented that she saw “spirit intertwined with human development and well-being.”

Parents described leading sports activities in schools, and participating themselves in parent-oriented sports activities. A suburban interviewee said that in her spare time, “I take aerobics classes for parents in Aurora.” Another respondent and staff person at a community-based organization said:

We carried out a survey on whether students participate in [after school] programs [and looked at] the barriers to access for these programs and what interests they had. We found that there was a real interest and not a lot in terms of youth sports and recreation.

Those programs that did exist were described by some respondents as prohibitively expensive or having limited facilities. One respondent and parent commented, “We don’t play any sports due to the cost of the programs.” Said one sports program organizer:

Going back to resources that we need...in the area from Highway 41 to Commercial and 87th Street to 93rd Street there isn’t one baseball diamond. There’s some green space and some basketball courts at schools, but there isn’t a diamond that kids can just walk to. There’s no room for little league or T-ball. They have to go to Cal Park, which is far away.

Requests for athletic facilities were sometimes met through the creation of humble common spaces. One staff member at a church happily described how children at her church now had a place to play: in the new parking lot adjoining the church.

Respondents spoke about informal pick-up and family games of soccer and basketball, and frequently used public swimming pools in public parks. One respondent described restaurant set-up workers who converged in Loyola Park on Chicago’s north side at 5:30 am to play basketball. A researcher, upon strolling through Douglas Park, described the following:

Here a family group was playing soccer in the open picnic area between an open arcade and the pond, surrounded by low flowering trees. There were two male adults, two women, several apparent teenagers, and children (a boy and girl) who were toddlers, barely walking but still chasing the ball along with everyone else. A woman in her thirties was handling the ball with a good deal of control, sending it on a long pass to the far end to a younger male player. The family group stopped playing after a few minutes and settled into a small group, talking and eating. Soon an adult and adolescent male, maybe father and son, rounded the smaller oval jog path here on bikes, and began doing leisurely circuits around the picnic area.

Continuing along the path I found to my right an informal soccer game at the west end of the field that could not be seen for the intervening baseball bleachers. A group of men in casual clothing, mostly jeans and jackets, were playing haphazardly, joking and teasing each other. Their goal lines were set up by sticks in the ground. One wild kick sent a soccer ball straight up in the air.

On the boulevard just south of the park an adolescent girl and younger boy were passing a basketball back in forth using their legs and torsos but not their hands, as if playing soccer. The young woman was keeping the ball up in air for repeated kicks and showed good form.

At various times throughout Chicago area parks, uniformed league teams played one another and drew crowds of observers while, in adjacent fields, informal soccer games were simultaneously underway.

Formal and informal sports events, like music events, provided support for peripheral economies, such as vendors who made their livings selling drinks, food, sweets and memorabilia to sports fans outside the stadium, and to soccer players and onlookers in the parks. It is possible that these peripheral economies were bolstered not only by the continual presence of Mexican immigrants in the parks, but also because of social networks and ties of affinity that formed between vendors and their customers; said one vendor, “We sell to the players in the parks, because they know us.”

Reading and Writing

“Writing” as a theme emerged forty-five times in researchers’ notes and interview transcripts. Many respondents described the importance of literacy for recent Mexican immigrants, many of whom, as one priest summarized, “are from the countryside [and] come with very little education.” Another respondent identified reading and writing as essential to a democracy, “The fact that a whole sector doesn’t know how to read...that’s a problem in Mexico. They have the people in poor rural communities, [and they] didn’t vote! They didn’t know how to read to know who to vote for.” Several respondents pointed to challenges new immigrants face learning to read and write, including poor public schools and a lack of literacy classes. As a volunteer writing and literacy teacher at Casa Aztlán (and a published author in Mexico) noted in relation to his recent teenage Mexican immigrant students, “They hardly read. They almost do not know how but they are discovering.” Another study participant commented on poor families’ decreasing access to high quality education due to increased privatization saying, “Education should be free. Free in any nation. And something that’s happening here is they’re emphasizing more on private education than public. And that’s happening in Mexico too.” Study data indicate that Chicago-based literacy programs were available to recent Mexican immigrants through community-based organizations, churches, libraries and federations. One respondent decided to teach a literacy class at the organization where he was once an ESL student; as he told a researcher, “How can you learn English if you can’t read or write in your native language?”

These literacy classes not only benefited students, but also the organizations that sponsored them, as the head of one state federation described:

Because of the literacy program, it brings us to a stage of trust and linkages between organizations. We found we had the same struggles, the same structure. We have become friends, working together, Michoacanos, Zacatecanos, Duranguenses...have more trust [and] because of that trust, we support each other.

Though few respondents reported that they wrote as an art practice, the select few who did were accomplished, such as the author and writing teacher above, and another

writer who submitted a poem to a competition (sponsored by the International Library of Poetry) and won a runner-up prize. This writer, a recent immigrant, ESL student at a community-based organization, and part-time college student, submitted his poem in English. Though he was invited to attend their annual poetry conference in Philadelphia, he did not have the money to attend the conference; but reported being pleased to simply receive the honor.

Respondents also described reading aloud, whether impromptu or in a formal event, and about the power of this act to unify a group and as a chance to offer pointed social critique:

During a bus trip of activists on the way to march for immigrants rights, a woman in her twenties took out a poetry book and started reading poems out loud. The whole bus became quiet and listened to her. One of the poems that got the most applause was a parody of the Creation story from the bible. It explained how God created urban ghettos in seven days. (from ethnographer's fieldnotes of her interview with an activist)

Children's reading with their parents was encouraged in a creative way by one suburban school that a respondent said "sent home a Spanish/English newspaper, *El Conquistador*, with the children [so that] the parents could read with the child while also themselves learning about events and news happening in the area."

Respondents described reading Spanish language newspapers in the Chicago area, and listed the following as among the publications they read: *Hoy*, *La Raza*, *Extra*, smaller papers such as *El Conquistador*, *El Valor*, *Reflejos Bilingual Journal*, *El Sol de Chicago*, *Más* (a free entertainment magazine featuring *norteño* bands/music) and Spanish language sections of major papers such as *The Chicago Tribune*. Respondents reported reading newspapers for a variety of reasons, including finding employment, learning about local events, and keeping up to date with current events. Respondents, including journalists, expressed frustration at the general lack of coverage of "Latino issues" in the mainstream press, with one reporter noting that "news coverage of Latinos is still very ghettoized [to] channels sixty-six and forty-four. These issues were addressed during the study at a roundtable hosted by the Community Media Workshop at Columbia College Chicago titled *El Enigma Latino: Improving Coverage of Latino Communities and Issues*. Some publications, like the *Tribune*, were trying to expand their coverage, as demonstrated by their hiring journalist Oscar Ávila to increase the reach of the *Tribune's* Spanish language news into the suburbs. (According to Ávila, each suburban *Tribune* bureau now has at least one Spanish-speaking reporter on staff.) Similarly, Jorge Mederos, a journalist from *La Raza*, said that his company had "different papers for different regions of the city and the suburbs." Rey Flores, a journalist from *Hoy*, noted that "30% of their business is in the suburbs." He continued, "The future of Spanish media is in the suburbs," mirroring demographic shifts of new Mexican immigrants' increasing settlement in the suburbs (and decreasingly in Pilsen, Little Village and other Chicago neighborhoods), and growing residential relocation of Mexican immigrants and Mexican Americans from the city to suburban towns.

These settlement and resettlement patterns were accompanied by changes in audience perspectives, as illustrated in the response to a controversial American Girl story about Marisol Luna, a young Latina whose family left Pilsen (described in the story as a dangerous and high crime area) for the suburbs. One reporter said, “To give an idea of the differences between the city and suburbs....American Girl [Marisol Luna] was celebrated in Des Plaines, but not in Pilsen.”

Some newspapers reported a high number of Mexican immigrant readers, with one ethnographer describing what a newspaper staff member learned from a recent audience survey the paper conducted:

Audience is everything...We just did a study to find out who reads our publication and 80% are from Mexico. Those who are here longer also prefer to read in Spanish. They come mainly from five states in Mexico. They are looking for a human-interest story.

This journalist counseled other journalists to “pitch your story with a human face...tell stories and tell them why it is of interest to readers.” Some immigrants turned to newspapers for help, such as one staff person on a paper recounted: “People drop by the office with their problems...They are better off talking to others, so I refer them to the appropriate community organizations.” He continued to say that he often wound up writing stories about the problems people brought to the paper, “There are always aspects of community coverage that are missing.”

Journalists reported experiencing challenges to knowing “what is happening and why” in the lives of Mexican immigrants, and described a limited number of journalists “with community connections” and an “access point” for stories. One reporter who often wrote in English about Latino communities in Chicago for *The Chicago Reader* said she “listens to [the program] *A Dia* on the radio to hear about problems.”

Respondents who studied Spanish language literature, either formally or informally, commented on the importance of these works in transmitting Mexican, Latin American and Spanish cultural knowledges and histories. For this reason, schools such as Spry and McKinley Park incorporated this literature into their classes. Some respondents were frustrated, however, by the lack of available texts. One teacher described her work to “unearth some of the unseen Latino literature,” which became the foundation for a stage production performed by students, and may have inspired students’ own bilingual poetry and stories that they read to parents during the school’s Curriculum Night. One respondent who professionally trained as an actor and dancer in Mexico commented on the marginalization of Spanish language literature in the U.S. as a reflection of the overall imbalance of power between the U.S. and other Latin American and Caribbean nations:

But here [in the U.S.], I come here, and no one’s bothered to really check [out] the Mexican playwrights or any of the South American playwrights, and there’s wonderful texts out there. And the Americans don’t know

about them, and I really kind of feel angry because we took the time to learn about you guys, why don't you guys take the time to learn about us?...Of course, they know the great old classics, like L6pez de Vega, Alarc6n, Cervantes. But they don't know the most recent ones that are *great!* They're awesome! They're...writing about stuff that's going on right now, and you can easily take that text and put it here and stage it here and it's relevant to the times. And I kind of feel frustrated that you guys don't know any of our playwrights or much less South American playwrights, you know there's great Cuban playwrights, there's excellent Colombian, Argentinian, and Brazilian-Portuguese, and even from Spain right now there's contemporary playwrights that are good...what's the deal?

Other respondents used their experiences as recent immigrants in the Chicago area as material to write about the U.S. and Mexico. As the writer and Casa Aztl6n teacher told a researcher, "Two months ago I was in *Contratiempo* magazine...I wrote about having two poles, one being in Chicago, and another in my country. This is something that is new to me, and to all immigrants." The theme of migration, he continued, is something he encouraged his students to write about because "all of us left something in Mexico. To begin with, we left the land, urban or not urban makes no difference...We have something in common [and] they write with this new element."

Two recent Mexican immigrants who had college educations proposed starting a magazine as a means to bring together other university-educated immigrants and discuss issues of common interest. They proposed articles based on their areas of expertise, health, nutrition and economics, and hoped the magazine would work against the trend they saw in printed Spanish language press—that it is *hacia abajo* (dumbed down). The magazine also "would include a section on cultural places, cultural activities, cultural entertainment, also recreation, or concerts" to, as the researcher interviewing these two men summed up, "advertise events and bring together the community." Finally, the two prospective publishers talked about their goals:

We want to publish the stories of people who have stood out in this country, who—on the basis of their studies and dedication—have been able to accomplish something. Not just as a product of good luck, not like one day they invented some magic juice that takes away your gray hairs and they struck it rich...not lucky strikes, but rather that on the basis of education and hard work you can make something out of yourself in this country ... And there are a lot of us here in the U.S. who have an education and who like all these things but it's like we are all spread out and we are trying to get them together.

Some respondents reported learning to read, write and speak English as personally empowering and as an act of resistance to racism and stereotypes. As one respondent said:

It surprises me that at times [a] person who doesn't know the meaning of a word also can think, "You're Latino, you're not deserving [of respect], you're less." More than once one of them has approached me and asked things like, "What is the present perfect tense?" And it makes me proud that I can say, 'the present perfect is this and this and this', because I'm studying it.

A few respondents described libraries as critical cultural and community centers, especially in suburbs where recent Mexican immigrants had few resources. As the actor and dancer recalled the few years as a child when she lived in Boulder, Colorado (where her father was studying for his Ph. D.):

I loved going to public libraries and *knocking* myself out with books!... In Mexico you don't have access, we don't have the money to have the public libraries that the U.S. has, which is quite sad. On weekends [my family would] go, and we'd sit for five or six hours [in the library]. Rent movies, go watch old movies. I remember seeing Charles Chaplin, I sat down one time [and] rented all his movies. You know, that's one of the most beautiful things here, you know, this money that goes into society and you actually see it [in public institutions].

Interviews with librarians revealed the recent formation of a transnational network initiated by a Des Plaines Public Library librarian (who immigrated from Argentina in the 1980s) to support cultural and literary exchange between Mexican and U.S. librarians. The first conference will be held in Guadalajara in 2006. The Des Plaines librarian formed the network, he said, to strengthen ties between librarians in both countries, so that U.S. libraries located in largely Mexican neighborhoods can have further resources for their programs and outreach to this population.

Writing also played a role in maintaining and strengthening personal relationships, including transnational ones. The writer and teacher reported that he sends "stories about Chicago to my daughter through the Internet," and the actor and dancer quoted above corresponded via email for four years with the man who eventually became her husband and was the reason she immigrated to the Chicago suburb of South Elgin a year before she was interviewed as part of this study. New Internet cafes that cropped up in Pilsen and other predominantly Mexican neighborhoods helped facilitate this email communication.

Only one respondent described his work as a songwriter. He wrote twenty songs, and copyrighted one song in the U.S. with the intention of recording it later. Following

the 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center, which occurred a year after he arrived in Chicago, he wrote the song below (English translation provided by his friend and former ESL teacher at Erie Neighborhood House). This singer/songwriter appeared motivated by multiple impulses in this compassionate song—to offer comfort and solidarity to his adopted countrymen and women; to express his own shock, horror, and loyalty to the U.S. through his evocation of a particular U.S. style of patriotism; and to demonstrate his willingness to embrace elements of U.S. society that were new to him, such as the English language. The song’s form, however, was traditionally Mexican. As he described prior to singing the song, “It’s a type of song called a *corridor*.”

Life is not the same
Since September 11
All the world saw it
An apocalypse it was
Nobody could believe it
But it was a reality
In New York and Washington
Where many people died
For that, America cried.

Nobody can forget it
Nobody must forget it
So that it doesn’t return
Nobody must forget it

America trusts in God
Now and forever
For that God blesses America
Now and forever
America trust in God.
America in God we trust
God bless America.

Gardens

“Gardens” as a theme emerged nineteen times in researchers’ notes and interview transcripts. During the study, respondents invited researchers to a few gardening plots and community gardens located in predominantly Mexican and Mexican-American neighborhoods. The gardening experience of one respondent was described this way in the researcher’s fieldnotes:

Her family now owns a plot of land where they grow vegetables for the family and she gave me two cucumbers to bring home with me. A few

years ago in another home, she and her husband had a little garden in their yard but the neighbors stole the vegetables from it. Her husband's friend told them that the Aurora Park District leased plots of land in a park, so they now pay \$10 to plant a bunch of food. The family goes out there all the time to pick what they grow.

Another researcher joined a respondent in several visits to a community garden located in a South Chicago neighborhood. This researcher wrote:

Behind the tree is a good stretch of plot...There were several deep, evenly spaced rows and they had *tomatillo* plants growing in them that were already waist high and flowering. Some even had fruit on them already...As I was standing talking to (respondent and his wife), I heard a rooster crow, which didn't phase me, until I remembered that we were in Chicago. The garden is in the middle of a block and has lots of trees around it. The corn plots are tall now, so you don't really see the houses alongside the lot. I'd forgotten where we were for a moment.

The garden's coordinator later commented to this researcher that the garden "wouldn't be anything without the immigrant men. They really know what they're doing and they love doing it." Recent immigrants who hailed from rural Mexico applied their skills not only to grow food that fed their families and neighbors but created beautiful natural spaces within an area known for its abandoned buildings. This site also served as an arts space for local children who created, as the coordinator put it, "mosaic sculpture that served both as objects of beauty and as seating places to rest while working in the garden." Finally, these immigrant farmers ultimately took over abandoned adjoining land, planting fruit trees and eventually winning over city administrators through their formal petitions for ownership. Recent Mexican immigrant farmers who applied their knowledge and skills toward the flourishing of this community garden ultimately created an organic form of urban renewal. The Mexican immigrant farmers' efforts ultimately received broader support when an organization began to pay them to farm abandoned lots. Apart from community gardeners, few individuals said they gardened. One respondent said that she was dedicated to her garden and flowers, and contrasted her interest in gardening with TV-watching, saying, "I've never been the type of person who is stuck to the television."

Conclusion

The pages above describe in some detail the kinds of artistic and cultural practices that the Mexican immigrant community engages in. Within that description is mention of many reasons why immigrants participate in formal and informal artistic and cultural practices, how immigrants participate in those practices and where those immigrants participate. Underlying many of the reasons why are bridging and bonding activities that

are important in the formation and strengthening of social network ties. Underlying how Mexicans participate are the social structures themselves that provide information about artistic and cultural activities, enable access and transportation to activities, and facilitate participation in American culture in ways that isolated individuals would not have. These social bonds serve to unite Mexicans and Americans living in Chicago's environs and to tie America more closely with Mexico with every passing day. These interactions occur in homes, in schools, in churches, at public parks, and in many other locations. In fact, almost any type of gathering-place one can imagine (even a highway underpass) is likely to have been a location for artistic and cultural practices for the Mexican immigrant community. In the following chapter, the institutions and organizations that foster artistic and cultural participation are explored in more detail, not only in their connection to immigrants, but also in their connection to each other.

CHAPTER III: INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

CHAPTER III: INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Based on information gathered during the study, institutions and organizations play key roles in the lives of the Mexican immigrant community. In this chapter, we summarize the kinds of organizations that the immigrant community interacts with and what types of relationships they have with those organizations. We extend our analysis with a brief summary of how organizations and institutions interact with each other, noting levels of collaboration, exploring the kinds of collaborative relationships organizations report, and mentioning some reasons organizations reported for not collaborating. In this chapter, as in the previous chapter, ethnographic and survey data combine to provide richer analyses of these interactions. The final section of this chapter provides a set of questions and brief answers that outline the trends for immigrants' interaction with the institutions and organizations that serve the Mexican immigrant community. Ethnographic respondents described specific types of organizations and institutions that were important to their engagement in artistic, cultural and networking practices, and to their processes of creating a life and making a living in the Chicago area. These organizations and institutions included: churches; social service organizations; workers centers; schools; restaurants, cafes and grocery stores; radio stations and other media; venues for live performance (such as ballrooms and outdoor festivals); hometown associations; community centers; social clubs; cultural associations; artistic and cultural groups; financial institutions used for remitting money to Mexico; and Chicago area Park Districts (and the parks and open natural spaces they maintain). These organizations and institutions were also investigated with more systematic survey questions.

The Individual Perspective

Respondents spoke of organizations and institutions as facilitators for what they immigrated to the U.S. to achieve: economic opportunities and financial stability for themselves and their families in the U.S. and Mexico, and access to greater educational opportunities, most often for children though for adults as well. Respondents also described these organizations as providing critical assistance in overcoming the obstacles they encountered, including language barriers; lack of familiarity with and access to information, people, systems, and material resources; immigration status (specifically, being undocumented or without papers); social isolation; racism; lack of familiarity with U.S. laws and vulnerability to exploitation; and the weather. Finally, respondents described these institutions as important buffers to the losses many recent Mexican immigrants experienced of home and of connection with the language, music, foods, customs and natural surroundings that offered daily reminders of their own individual and collective identities, while providing a sense of belonging.

Survey responses provided insight into the general trends associated with these interactions. Respondents were provided with a list of 160 organizations that had been identified as important to the Mexican immigrant community through focus groups, ethnographic interviews and contact with institutions that had been active in the Mexican community. Ethnographers asked respondents which organizations they received resources from and which organizations they provided resources to. In this instance,

resources were broadly considered to be information, physical resources, monetary support, space, transportation, or any other type resource that may have been needed by the organization or the individual. Responses were then aggregated by organizational type. The responses reported here reflect the fraction of organizations that respondents noted as providing resources to or receiving resources from out of the total number of organizations of each particular type. Based on all responses, respondents noted receiving resources more often than providing resources to each type of organization, as the first lines of Tables 9 and 10 reflect. (See page 107 and 108.) In many cases respondents noted receiving resources more than twice as often as they provided resources. One could easily interpret this as a reflection of limited resources on the part of the Mexican immigrant community in Chicago. An alternative explanation may be that many of these immigrants are not aware that they may have resources (particularly cultural and artistic assets) that are needed and wanted by these organizations. Further, the immigrant community may not know *how* to go about sharing their assets. Ethnographic information provided in the previous chapter and in subsequent sections of this chapter suggests that the latter explanations may be more plausible, implying that some activities aimed at facilitating the exchange of assets or making the mechanisms for exchange more apparent could change the balance of resource provision and reception. In the next few paragraphs, the patterns of resource sharing are investigated in more detail.

Providing Resources

In general, survey respondents provided resources most often to media (most importantly radio stations), banks and financial institutions, businesses (including cafes, art galleries, restaurants, markets, etc.) and community centers, though resources were provided only for about 10% of those organizations identified in each group. Table 9 provides a more detailed breakdown along demographic lines for the respondents. (See page 107.) It is noteworthy that bilingual speakers reported far more support for businesses than English speakers or Spanish speakers. The small number of bilingual respondents, however, urges caution in the interpretation of this result. English speakers reported more support for community centers than did Spanish speakers or bilingual respondents. Men reported receiving more support than women from these four types of organization. As educational levels rose, the amount of resources provided to businesses and media increased, mirroring patterns identified for artistic and cultural practices. Those respondents with only some elementary school reported providing resources to banks and financial institutions far more than respondents with higher education levels, nearly twice as often than college graduates. Recent immigrants also reported providing resources to businesses and community centers more often than others, but provided resources less often to banks and media.

Social clubs, churches and schools formed the next set of organizations receiving support from survey respondents, who reported providing resources to between 6% and 7% of the organizations in each class. English speakers reported providing support to more social clubs, while Spanish speakers reported providing more support to churches and schools. Ethnographic findings suggest that this may be because of the key role that churches and schools play in the lives of the immigrant community. Women report providing more resources to these types of organizations than do men, though the levels

of support for schools are nearly even for the genders. Again there is a general increase in levels of support as educational experience increases. Recent immigrants provided resources less often than did their longer-tenured counterparts.

Social service organizations, hometown associations, cultural associations and artistic and cultural groups are the least supported of the eleven types of organizations represented in the survey, with only about 4% of the organizations in each class receiving support from survey respondents. English speakers provided more support to social service organizations and artistic and cultural groups than did Spanish or bilingual speakers. Spanish speakers provided more support to hometown associations, while bilingual speakers provided more support for cultural organizations. Men provided more support for social services, cultural associations, and cultural and artistic groups; women supported more hometown associations. The trend of increasing educational attainment associated with increasing support is also evident for this last set of organizations as well. Longer tenured immigrants provided more support for social service organizations, cultural associations and cultural and artistic groups. More recent immigrants supported hometown associations more frequently.

Looking at the resource provision patterns of recent immigrants, we see that recent immigrants provide resources to businesses, hometown associations and community centers more often than do others. It may be worthwhile to investigate the reasons why these types of organizations receive support over other types, the types of things immigrants receive from these organizations, and what these resources are being used for. From our understanding of the immigrant experience, it may be that these organizations represent a connection to home or a connection to community that longer-term residents need less.

Receiving Resources

Patterns of resource reception by survey respondents were similar in many ways to patterns of resource provision, with media, financial institutions and businesses reported as providing the most resources to respondents, followed by community centers and social clubs. The pattern of support received from the remaining six organizational types differs however. Rather than churches and schools, we see hometown associations and social service organizations as greater providers of resources than churches and schools. Artistic and cultural groups and cultural associations remain in the lower third when one considers resources provided. Table 10 provides more detailed information about receiving resources. (See page 108.) It should be noted, however, that these questions did not consider service brokerage, referrals, or other types of networking activities.

Survey respondents reported receiving resources from media more often than from any other type of organization (28%). Ethnographic information suggests that the resource most often received is information. English speakers report receiving resources more often than Spanish speakers or bilingual speakers do. However, the differences between English speakers and Spanish speakers are relatively small. Men reported receiving resources from media more often than women did. Respondents with more educational experience also report receiving resources from more media sources than others. Recent immigrants also report receiving more resources from media sources than

do longer-tenured respondents, which does not seem unusual. Those respondents who have lived here longer have had more time to cultivate social networks and other means for gathering information and thus may rely less on media for important resources.

Respondents reported receiving resources from between 17% and 10% of the banks, businesses, community centers and social clubs listed in the survey. Bilingual speakers reported receiving more resources from businesses and community centers, followed by Spanish speakers and English speakers. English speakers reported receiving more resources from financial institutions and social clubs, followed by Spanish speakers and bilingual respondents. Men reported receiving more resources than women did for all four types of organizations except for social clubs. In general, as educational experience increased for respondents, so did the amount of reported resources received. There are two deviations from this pattern that deserve note, however. Respondents with some elementary school report receiving resources from financial institutions nearly eight times more often than did respondents with some high school experience, and reported receiving resources from social clubs nearly twice as often. Recent immigrants report receiving resources from organizations in these four classes more often than their counterparts, though in some cases (such as support from community centers) the differences are not very large.

Hometown associations, social service organizations and churches were reported to provide resources in about 7% of cases. Spanish speakers reported receiving more resources from hometown associations than English speakers or bilingual respondents; but English speakers reported receiving more resources from social service organizations than Spanish speakers or bilingual speakers. Spanish speakers also reported receiving more support from churches, followed by bilingual speakers and English speakers. Women reported receiving resources from more hometown associations, social service organizations, and churches than men did. Again, respondents with higher educational attainment reported receiving resources from more hometown associations and social service organizations, with one deviation: individuals with some high school experience reported receiving resources from hometown associations almost four times as much as those with some elementary school experience and more than twice as much as those with some college. Recent immigrants reported receiving resources from hometown associations more often than did others, but reported receiving resources from social service organizations and churches less often.

Artistic and cultural groups, schools and cultural organizations were reported to provide resources in about 6% of cases. English speakers reported receiving resources from more artistic and cultural groups (followed by Spanish speakers and bilingual speakers). Spanish speakers reported receiving resources from more schools (followed by English speakers and bilingual respondents). Bilingual respondents reported receiving resources from more cultural associations (followed by English speakers and Spanish speakers). Men reported receiving resources from more artistic and cultural groups and cultural associations than women did. Women, however, reported more support from schools. Ethnographic evidence provided in the previous chapter as well as later in this chapter may provide more insight into the relationship between women and schools. As before, those respondents with higher educational attainment reported receiving resources from more artistic and cultural groups, from more schools and from more cultural

associations. Those respondents who have lived in the U.S. longer also report receiving resources from these types of organizations more often than do more recent immigrants.

The patterns of resource sharing (both providing and receiving) reflect differential access to resources for recent immigrants, for Spanish speakers in general, and for women. It is our contention, based on ethnographic data and survey responses, that networking practices are mechanisms for accessing these resources. Individuals and organizations in immigrants' support groups become bridges linking people to the services they need. In the next section we report on how individuals use their support groups as linkages to the information and resources that organizations provide. Information in the 'Organizational Perspective' section of this chapter provides more detail about how different types of organizations may become key conduits between the immigrant community and important community resources and services.

Social Networking Practices: Connections to Institutions through Others

Respondents discussed their extended families, workplaces and neighborhoods as important entities through which to meet new people, establish social networks, and gain valuable knowledge about formal institutions and organizations. One respondent noted, "I had siblings here [already] and through them I learned about school, jobs, the church." Another said, "My female neighbors taught me where to take the children to school, to the doctor and how to take the bus. Without them, I wouldn't have found anything."

These quotes, in many ways, summarize most of the literature reviewed earlier in this report. Network theory of migration seems to rest almost entirely on statements like this. In our study, ethnographic support for individuals as bridges to institutions and organizations and the services they provide was so strong even in the early weeks of the project that we included survey questions to investigate this trend in more detail. After survey respondents provided us information about their support group members, we asked them how many of them had any knowledge of the following groups: arts centers, informal arts groups, social clubs, churches, schools, parks, cultural centers, community centers, hometown associations, businesses, media, banks and financial institutions, healthcare providers, neighborhood associations, social service organizations, and work and workers' rights groups. In this section we summarize the results of these questions. The results appear primarily as the fraction of individuals in each respondent's support group they believe have information about each particular organizational type. We provide global averages for these fractions, as well as group means for the demographic variables of interest to this study: language spoken, gender, educational level and recency of immigration.

Survey respondents reported that the largest fraction of their support group members had knowledge of schools, parks, churches and social clubs (40% or more of each respondent's support group). Between 30% and 40% of survey respondents' support group members had knowledge of arts centers, informal arts groups, cultural centers, community centers, social service and healthcare providers, and financial institutions. Support group members of survey respondents were reported to have less knowledge of work and workers' rights organizations, businesses, media, neighborhood associations and hometown associations (Twenty to 30% of each respondent's support group, excepting hometown associations, for which respondents reported only about 15% of

their networks having knowledge.) More detail on these findings is provided in the following paragraphs and in Table 11. (See pages 109-110.)

With respect to languages spoken, English speakers reported more support group members with knowledge of parks, social clubs, arts centers, healthcare providers, financial organizations, businesses, and media. With the exception of social clubs, bilingual speakers reported the fewest support group members with knowledge of these subjects. Spanish speakers reported more support group members with knowledge of churches, cultural centers, workers' rights groups, neighborhood associations, and hometown associations. In the case of the former two types of organizations, English speakers reported the fewest support group members with knowledge. For the latter three types, bilingual speakers reported the fewest support group members with that specific knowledge. Bilingual speakers reported the most support group members with knowledge of schools, community centers, social services and informal arts groups. With the exception of informal arts groups, English speakers reported fewest support group members with knowledge of these organizational types. The differences among monolingual Spanish and English speakers and bilingual speakers are noteworthy, particularly with respect to knowledge of arts groups and primary services. They are incorporated into the policy recommendations made at the end of this report.

When gender is considered, men reported more support group members with knowledge of social clubs, arts centers, informal arts groups, cultural centers and businesses. Women reported more support group members with knowledge of schools, parks, churches, community centers, social service providers, healthcare providers, financial institutions, work and workers' rights centers, media, neighborhood associations and hometown associations. These gender-based differences suggest that women stand in important places to broker resources for their support group members, at least in the case of primary services. Men seem to maintain the business, artistic, cultural and social contacts.

Trends associated with educational experience are harder to summarize, but in general those with less educational experience report knowing fewer support group members with organizational knowledge and those with more educational experience report knowing more support group members with organizational knowledge. This pattern is clearest when social clubs, arts centers, informal artists groups, schools, parks, financial institutions, healthcare providers and businesses are considered. Those respondents with some high school experience report most support group members with knowledge of churches, community centers, hometown associations, neighborhood associations and media. Those with some college report the highest number of support group members with knowledge of social service organizations and workers' rights groups. Differences here may reflect the kinds of relationships those with differing educational status have access to, or may reflect the relative importance of these kinds of organizations to these particular groups.

Recent immigrants report more support group members with knowledge of schools, parks, cultural centers, and media. They also report marginally more support group members with knowledge of social services, healthcare providers and banks. Survey respondents who have lived in the U.S more than ten years report more support group members with knowledge of churches, social clubs, arts centers, informal arts groups, community centers, workers' rights groups, neighborhood associations, and

hometown associations. They also report marginally more support group members with knowledge of businesses. Again, the differences associated with time of immigration are important and are factored into the policy recommendations at the end of this report.

The individual perspective summarized above suggests that individuals in different phases of the immigration trajectory have different resources to provide, need different resources, and have differential access to organizations. Their support groups also differ. These findings suggest that in the larger view, more recent immigrants may struggle to find access to primary services, but may ameliorate that through the networking opportunities provided by social groups, hometown associations and other cultural and artistic activities.

The Organizational Perspective

While the focus of ‘network theory’ of migration tends to be on individuals and the friends, family and co-workers that comprise their support groups, organizations also play an important role. In many cases they provide direct access to services that make it easier for immigrants to make a living or improve their lives. In other cases, they act as bridges, linking individuals to other organizations that they may have limited access to otherwise. Or, they may provide an important location for immigrants to meet others and create relationships that are the basis for networking. In this section we briefly summarize the collaborative activities of the kinds of organizations identified as important in the Chicago-based Mexican immigrant community. The focus here is on how these organizations interact, what kinds of resources or services they may exchange (and how frequently), and the reasons why many of these organizations may not collaborate.

Our survey respondents, speaking for their organizations as a whole, provided basic information on the services they offered the Mexican community and at what level (moderate or frequent). The services offered most frequently were associated with education, organizational and community services, individual and family life, health care, and basic subsistence. Summary data on these and several other types of services offered are presented in Table 12 (see page 111.) More detailed information about the organizations themselves, the activities they support and how they engage directly with the immigrant community is beyond the scope of this report.

Table 9: Summary of Individuals' Resource Provision to Organizations

Percentage of Times Respondents Providing Support for:	Businesses (n=5)	Banks (n=3)	Media (n=5)	Community Centers (n=5)	Social Clubs (n=3)	Churches (n=12)	Schools (n=11)	Social Service Organizations (n=28)	Hometown Associations (n=3)	Cultural Associations (n=23)	Artistic and Cultural Groups (n=8)
Global Measures (n=69)	10.60%	10.30%	10.10%	9.84%	7.20%	5.99%	5.88%	4.44%	4.40%	4.38%	3.82%
Language											
Spanish (n=51)	9.67%	11.20%	9.46%	7.14%	7.41%	7.22%	3.80%	3.99%	5.30%	3.55%	2.51%
English (n=10)	7.14%	13.30%	13.57%	18.89%	11.10%	1.12%	3.29%	6.61%	3.33%	4.95%	9.76%
Both (n=5)	24.76%	0.00%	10.86%	10.00%	0.00%	6.16%	1.67%	4.86%	0.00%	10.62%	5.00%
Gender											
Male (n=21)	15.16%	16.67%	11.75%	9.94%	3.33%	4.37%	3.23%	5.44%	3.33%	6.54%	6.38%
Female (n=45)	8.35%	15.26%	9.47%	9.21%	9.41%	6.93%	3.72%	4.03%	5.13%	3.28%	2.70%
Education											
Some Elementary School (n=9)	0.00%	33.30%	0.00%	10.00%	0.00%	1.79%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.99%	0.00%
Some High School (n=20)	7.29%	0.00%	7.23%	6.50%	3.70%	4.63%	2.16%	3.88%	1.96%	3.13%	4.04%
Some College (n=22)	10.78%	5.20%	11.52%	10.80%	11.10%	5.96%	2.81%	5.10%	3.51%	3.51%	1.32%
College Graduate (n=18)	17.18%	18.40%	14.47%	12.09%	9.80%	9.33%	7.03%	6.09%	9.80%	7.76%	7.95%
Immigration											
Pre-1994 (n=33)	8.84%	14.30%	10.30%	7.71%	10.00%	7.18%	4.66%	5.19%	3.33%	6.04%	5.34%
Post-1994 (n=36)	11.90%	6.67%	9.93%	12.07%	4.40%	4.84%	2.33%	3.68%	5.56%	2.59%	2.25%

Table 10: Summary of Organizations' Resource Provision to Individuals

Percentage of Times Respondents Noted Receiving Support from:	Media (n=5)	Banks (n=3)	Businesses (n=5)	Community Centers (n=5)	Social Clubs (n=3)	Hometown Associations (n=3)	Social Service Organizations (n=28)	Churches (n=12)	Artistic and Cultural Groups (n=8)	Schools (n=11)	Cultural Associations (n=23)
Global Measures (n=69)	27.59%	17.20%	12.10%	11.76%	10.00%	7.22%	7.18%	6.91%	6.15%	5.99%	5.95%
Language											
Spanish (n=51)	28.30%	18.90%	11.36%	13.00%	10.37%	8.33%	7.13%	8.26%	5.71%	6.71%	5.02%
English (n=10)	31.27%	18.30%	8.99%	5.00%	14.82%	6.67%	9.31%	2.15%	9.46%	4.96%	7.75%
Both (n=5)	19.43%	0.00%	24.76%	16.67%	0.00%	0.00%	4.87%	6.16%	5.00%	1.67%	10.66%
Gender											
Male (n=21)	29.85%	18.33%	18.20%	14.17%	8.30%	5.00%	5.98%	5.46%	7.72%	5.58%	6.74%
Female (n=45)	27.06%	16.58%	9.20%	10.83%	11.10%	8.55%	7.98%	7.79%	5.55%	6.20%	5.55%
Education											
Some Elementary School (n=9)	8.89%	16.67%	0.00%	6.25%	9.52%	4.76%	2.70%	3.57%	0.00%	1.19%	1.53%
Some High School (n=20)	26.07%	2.94%	6.86%	9.38%	5.50%	19.61%	6.58%	6.35%	6.82%	4.95%	3.54%
Some College (n=22)	30.50%	20.18%	14.07%	15.79%	14.80%	7.02%	9.36%	6.59%	6.58%	5.72%	6.70%
College Graduate (n=18)	31.94%	27.25%	18.97%	12.09%	18.97%	13.73%	7.20%	9.33%	7.77%	8.95%	9.00%
Immigration											
Pre-1994 (n=33)	25.97%	10.80%	9.42%	11.11%	9.42%	5.56%	8.62%	9.05%	8.52%	6.58%	8.29%
Post-1994 (n=36)	29.26%	22.78%	14.39%	12.37%	14.39%	8.89%	5.74%	4.84%	3.71%	5.20%	3.42%

Table 11: Respondents' Support Group Ties to Organizations

Percentage of Group Members Who Have Contact with these Organizational Types	Schools	Parks	Churches	Social Clubs	Arts Centers	Informal Arts Groups	Cultural Centers	Community Centers
Global Measures (n=69)	54.22%	47.19%	46.88%	39.69%	38.13%	35.56%	35.31%	34.69%
Language								
Spanish (n=51)	58.43%	49.83%	56.01%	40.73%	41.44%	38.30%	39.12%	39.14%
English (n=10)	57.78%	60.67%	38.72%	55.72%	42.22%	43.06%	31.78%	27.56%
Both (n=5)	70.00%	42.00%	44.00%	50.00%	40.00%	44.00%	38.00%	48.00%
Gender								
Male (n=21)	50.96%	49.80%	43.81%	49.48%	44.69%	48.23%	42.97%	36.10%
Female (n=45)	63.06%	51.38%	56.53%	41.01%	39.99%	35.36%	35.57%	38.97%
Education								
Some Elementary School (n=9)	32.59%	20.74%	46.30%	16.17%	24.44%	25.93%	22.72%	28.02%
Some High School (n=20)	56.72%	52.62%	63.39%	40.92%	35.62%	25.67%	30.76%	42.92%
Some College (n=22)	55.61%	48.94%	51.14%	41.74%	42.58%	43.56%	42.88%	37.42%
College Graduate (n=18)	69.81%	57.90%	38.21%	55.68%	48.15%	49.94%	41.11%	32.10%
Immigration								
Pre-1994 (n=33)	53.89%	39.67%	54.60%	44.08%	41.15%	40.12%	33.39%	42.48%
Post-1994 (n=36)	59.15%	56.91%	47.10%	39.72%	37.68%	35.14%	38.92%	30.82%

Table 11 (con't): Respondents' Support Group Ties to Organizations

Percentage of Group Members Who Have Contact with these Organizational Types	Social Service Providers	Healthcare Providers	Financial Organizations	Work and Workers' rights Groups	Businesses	Media	Neighborhood Associations	Hometown Associations
Global Measures (n=69)	32.81%	32.03%	31.41%	25.56%	25.47%	25.00%	24.06%	46.49%
Language								
Spanish (n=51)	38.71%	37.92%	37.16%	28.86%	28.11%	27.11%	28.91%	16.75%
English (n=10)	26.17%	43.28%	42.33%	28.72%	41.00%	32.89%	24.82%	15.00%
Both (n=5)	40.00%	20.00%	12.00%	24.00%	12.00%	22.00%	22.00%	10.00%
Gender								
Male (n=21)	33.76%	27.89%	30.91%	26.85%	29.86%	22.22%	26.22%	14.69%
Female (n=45)	38.37%	41.80%	38.43%	29.23%	28.37%	30.11%	28.18%	16.57%
Education								
Some Elementary School (n=9)	18.52%	14.94%	29.63%	10.86%	25.31%	15.56%	21.96%	4.69%
Some High School (n=20)	37.70%	37.31%	35.04%	30.33%	16.79%	32.64%	34.67%	21.09%
Some College (n=22)	38.86%	33.26%	31.97%	30.53%	31.52%	20.30%	22.80%	16.52%
College Graduate (n=18)	36.67%	47.47%	41.17%	27.96%	37.78%	32.34%	24.14%	12.59%
Immigration								
Pre-1994 (n=33)	35.02%	35.67%	34.06%	28.48%	28.53%	20.15%	30.66%	16.94%
Post-1994 (n=36)	35.56%	35.83%	35.77%	26.09%	27.65%	32.13%	22.56%	13.75%

Table 12: Organizational Services Offered by Survey Respondents

Service Offered	Percentage of Times Mentioned	
	Frequent Activity	Moderate Activity
Education	19.39%	17.27%
Organizational/Community Services	18.37%	16.36%
Individual and Family Life	15.31%	13.64%
Health Care	10.20%	9.09%
Basic Subsistence	7.14%	6.36%
Mental Health Care and Counseling	6.12%	5.45%
Employment Issues	6.12%	5.45%
Criminal Justice and Legal Services	6.12%	5.45%
Financial Services	4.08%	3.64%
Cultural Programming and Development	4.08%	3.64%
Environmental Quality	3.06%	2.73%
Leadership Development	0.00%	6.36%
Consumer Services	0.00%	4.55%

Collaboration

The organizational respondents to our survey reported moderate levels of collaboration with other organizations. Not surprisingly, social service organizations reported the highest levels of collaboration, reporting collaboration with 25% of the 160 organizations listed in the survey. Following social services, cultural organizations, community centers, hometown associations and arts centers reported collaborating with 20-25% of the organizations in the survey. Media, businesses and labor organizations reported collaborating with 15-20%, while churches and schools reported collaborating with about 9%. The high levels of collaboration reported by cultural associations, community centers, hometown associations and arts centers suggests that they may be important focal points for networking activities, as they provide opportunities for linkages between immigrant community members and access to services that they may need. Table 13 provides greater detail.

Understanding which types of organizations organizational respondents collaborated *with* is the second aspect of understanding the role that organizations play in the networking activities of the Mexican immigrant community. Our respondents collaborated most with community centers and media, reporting that they collaborated with more than 30% of the community centers and media in the survey. Respondents reported collaborating with between 25 and 30% of the social services, neighborhood associations, arts centers and cultural associations listed in the survey. Cultural institutions, informal associations, churches, hometown associations, social clubs and businesses were noted as collaborators between 20 and 25% of the time. Respondents noted collaboration with less than 20% of the labor organizations, schools and

Table 13: Collaboration Levels by Organizational Type

Respondent Organizational Type	Percentage of Collaboration Mentions
Social Service	24.79%
Cultural Association	23.38%
Community Center	20.47%
Hometown Associations	19.42%
Arts Centers	19.33%
Media	16.58%
Businesses	15.47%
Labor Organizations	14.48%
Schools	8.81%
Churches	8.53%

community leaders listed in the survey. Table 14 (See page 113) provides greater detail. These findings suggest that interconnections among organizations, particularly among community centers, media, social service organizations, neighborhood associations and arts and cultural organizations are relatively frequent.

Organizational respondents reported most often that they had information, expertise and volunteers to share. Considering the collaborating organizations listed in the previous paragraphs, this does not seem unusual. Many of these organizations are largely nonprofit and in many cases have few physical or material resources to share. What they can provide is information and time. Space, social network and materials are also shared, but less frequently than information and volunteers. This may reflect the relative costs of these resources to our organizational respondents, whose assets are limited and must be spent wisely and to the greatest effect. Table 15 (see page 113) briefly summarizes resource sharing information provided by organizational respondents.

The organizational survey contained questions that explored the nature of organizational collaboration among organizations in more detail. Each organizational respondent was asked a series of questions about the organizations with which they had previously reported collaborating. Specifically, questions about the type and direction of collaborative relationships were asked. Donating funds, referring clients, raising funds for; publicizing events for, planning events with; and providing space, transportation, expertise, materials and time fall under the umbrella of ‘providing resources to’ organizations. Receiving funds, receiving clients, attending events at, and receiving space, transportation, expertise, materials, and time fall under the umbrella of ‘receiving resources from’ organizations. Tables 16 and 17 (see pages 115 and 116) summarize the data associated with the types of resource sharing relationships these organizations reported. The following paragraphs highlight some key findings.

Table 14: Organizations that Respondents Collaborate With

Organizational Type	Percentage of Times Organizations Mentioned Collaborating With Organizations of these Types
Community Center	37.50%
Media	31.67%
Social Service	26.93%
Neighborhood Association	26.74%
Arts Center	25.00%
Cultural Association	24.46%
Cultural Institution	23.61%
Informal Association	22.92%
Church	21.88%
Hometown Association	20.83%
Social Club	20.83%
Business	20.83%
Labor Organization	18.45%
School	15.53%
Community Leader	13.54%

Table 15: Resources Shared by Organizations

Resources to Share	Mentions by Organizational Respondents
Information	21
Expertise	19
People	18
Space	12
Social Networking	12
Materials	8
Community Organizing Staff	4
Economic Power	3
Transportation	1
Community Organizing Models	1

In general, providing and receiving publicity, information, and expertise were key aspects of organizations' collaborative relationships. These generally intangible resources are all important aspects of networking behavior that link individuals to services that they

seek. Referring clients and accepting referred clients was also very important, and highlights the important brokering role that many of these organizations play. Sharing material resources occurs less often, but more frequently than exchange of actual funds does. Transportation does not seem to be as important of a resource to provide or receive, possibly because many individuals have their own cars, arrange their own transportation or use public transportation.

With respect to providing resources, most organizations noted providing publicity, expertise, and information to their collaborators. Most organizations also mentioned referring clients to and planning events with their collaborators. These behaviors were reported for between 20 and 50% of organizational respondents' collaborators. Volunteering time and providing space and materials were reported to occur with 10 to 20% of respondents' collaborators. Fundraising, donating funds and providing transportation occurred in less than 10% of respondents' collaborative relationships.

Turning to receiving resources, the patterns remain fairly similar. Most respondents noted receiving expertise and clients or attending events with 30% or more of their collaborators. Materials, space and volunteer time were received less often, only from about 15% of respondents' collaborators, while funding and transportation were received from about half as many collaborators (7%). This three-tiered resource structure may be worth further investigation, as it may have larger relevance to the nonprofit community.

There are no clear patterns associated with overall collaborative activities. In other words, all types of organizations do not receive and provide resources in the same manner. General patterns suggest that schools, hometown associations and labor organizations seem to receive resources most often. Labor organizations, schools, community centers and businesses also seem to provide most resources, though social service organizations, churches and media also provide high levels of resources.

Artistic and cultural organizations and their relationships with the larger organizational community are the focus of this study. The findings reported in Tables 16 and 17 (see pages 115 and 116) give us more detail about the resource exchange relationships that these organizations have. Arts centers report receiving expertise, referring clients, publicizing events, receiving clients, attending events, providing information and providing expertise most often when considering collaborative relationships. These collaborative activities are followed by providing space, funds, time and materials to their collaborators. Cultural associations report receiving expertise, providing information, receiving materials, referring clients, providing publicity, attending events and providing expertise most often when considering collaborative relationships, followed by providing time, materials and space. Of key importance here is that referring clients and sharing information are among the most important collaborative activities that these organizations participate in. This finding forms the basis for many of the policy recommendations at the end of this report.

Table 16: Collaborative Relationships, Providing Resources

Percentage of Times Organizational Respondents Noted the Following Relationships with their Collaborators.											
Organizational Type	Publicity	Refer Clients	Provide Information	Plan Events With	Provide Expertise	Volunteer Time	Provide Space	Provide Materials	Raise Funds	Donate Funds	Provide Transport
Global Measures	50.80%	46.27%	41.19%	30.75%	23.58%	19.38%	16.10%	11.97%	7.69%	5.40%	3.59%
Social Service Organizations	57.43%	35.19%	54.57%	17.73%	36.96%	33.69%	21.29%	6.10%	6.96%	2.60%	3.97%
Cultural Associations	30.53%	31.20%	40.07%	16.09%	27.69%	13.26%	10.47%	13.13%	2.52%	1.66%	0.67%
Community Centers	71.43%	56.16%	4.55%	70.00%	4.55%	18.83%	0.00%	4.55%	1.72%	0.00%	0.00%
Hometown Associations	27.11%	55.20%	48.70%	46.75%	7.63%	7.63%	37.82%	18.34%	18.18%	39.80%	2.27%
Arts Centers	42.59%	48.62%	8.44%	0.00%	7.14%	2.60%	5.19%	2.60%	0.00%	4.55%	1.30%
Media	50.00%	52.27%	3.22%	59.09%	3.22%	3.22%	0.00%	0.00%	4.55%	6.82%	0.00%
Businesses	71.43%	85.71%	46.42%	28.57%	35.71%	0.00%	46.43%	82.14%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Labor Organizations	85.60%	94.43%	85.65%	51.54%	16.67%	43.94%	3.03%	4.55%	27.25%	0.00%	15.79%
Schools	74.36%	69.23%	88.24%	61.54%	29.41%	47.06%	47.06%	29.41%	0.00%	0.00%	17.65%
Churches	45.69%	37.29%	19.05%	41.21%	23.81%	3.83%	12.42%	10.04%	14.98%	7.41%	2.90%

Table 17: Collaborative Relationships, Receiving Resources

Percentage of Times Organizational Respondents Noted the Following Relationships with their Collaborators:								
Organizational Type	Attend Events	Get Expertise	Receive Clients	Get Materials	Get Volunteers	Get Space	Receive Funds	Get Transportation
Global Measures	37.60%	36.36%	31.53%	14.47%	14.24%	15.15%	7.49%	7.05%
Social Service Organizations	43.08%	32.21%	50.39%	12.07%	15.62%	22.59%	8.41%	9.11%
Cultural Associations	32.97%	46.67%	19.00%	34.81%	14.42%	6.75%	4.25%	2.16%
Community Centers	15.97%	2.86%	11.43%	15.71%	4.29%	21.69%	1.43%	1.43%
Hometown Associations	36.04%	30.03%	18.20%	21.10%	12.18%	18.18%	27.44%	30.68%
Arts Centers	19.48%	54.55%	40.91%	0.82%	0.00%	0.65%	1.30%	0.00%
Media	25.81%	41.02%	3.22%	12.82%	28.21%	9.68%	3.22%	2.56%
Businesses	100.00%	7.14%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Labor Organizations	60.53%	77.37%	46.81%	0.00%	10.53%	42.98%	4.55%	15.79%
Schools	58.82%	60.60%	29.41%	9.09%	96.96%	29.41%	35.29%	15.15%
Churches	22.38%	12.66%	5.71%	0.00%	3.14%	1.45%	3.33%	0.00%

Not Collaborating

Understanding the kinds of collaborative relationships institutions and organizations have is important for understanding the kinds of networking and brokering relationships that exist and can be leveraged in support of the immigrant community in Chicago. The alternative perspective is also important. Survey respondents also provided information about why they did *not* collaborate with the organizations listed in the survey questions. Most organizations reported having no knowledge of the organizations they didn't collaborate with; this reason was selected 66% of the time. Other important reasons for not collaborating were having no direct reason to enter into collaborative relationships (19%), or having no personal relationship with employees or volunteers from other organizations (7.7%). Table 18 reports further detail on reasons for lack of collaboration among organizations. These findings suggest that opportunities for Chicago-area organizations to meet, interact and learn about each other may be important in strengthening organizational relationships and building bridges between immigrants and the services they may need access to.

Table 18: Reasons for Not Collaborating

Reason for Not Collaborating	Percentage of Times Mentioned
No Knowledge of Organization	66.00%
No Reason to Collaborate	19.01%
No Personal Relationship	7.70%
Other Reasons	4.50%
Geographic Constraints	2.37%
Disagree with Mission	0.27%
Personal Problem with Staff	0.10%
Bad Experience with	0.05%

The Ethnographic Perspective

The sections above have summarized the individual perspective on institutions and organizations and briefly touched on the role of organizations from the point of view of collaboration and networking. The majority of these sections have relied on survey responses for their support. However, most of these findings are supported by ethnographic data. The following sections summarize some of the key ethnographic findings about institutions and organizations from the study, adding further depth to the findings reported above. After individual sections—arranged by their salience in our survey respondents' support groups—on schools, parks, churches, social service

organizations, financial institutions, work and workers' rights organizations, businesses, media and hometown associations, the conclusion of this chapter summarizes the key services that organizations and institutions provide for the immigrant community, identifies what kinds of organizations immigrants' support groups provide bridges to, and highlights the organizations that act as bridges to other organizations and the services they provide through a set of key questions relevant to this section of the study.

Schools

Similar to other studies of immigrants and the arts (Moriarty 2004), a key motivator for parents' migration to the U.S. was to increase opportunities for their children. As discussed in the previous section, interviews with Mexican immigrant parents of school-age children, and with teachers and other school administrators, revealed that a significant number and variety of informal and formal arts involving recent Mexican immigrants occurred in schools, most frequently at the elementary and middle school levels.

Teachers, parents and other adults sought to achieve a number of goals through school-based arts and cultural activities. Among these goals were improving educational outcomes. As a respondent who was a teacher and curriculum coordinator said,

[Our school] is a part of a cluster of schools that concentrate on the arts called the Fine and Performing Arts Magnet Cluster...the idea was to bring these kinds of programs to underprivileged neighborhoods to make up for the discrepancy in school success. We can't do it academically since a lot of factors are intertwined; [but] we can do it through the arts.

Schools also sought to increase children's knowledge of the histories, and cultural and artistic practices of their own and other children's nations of origin, and to foster the cultural pride and self-esteem of immigrant children and children of immigrants (see the "Arts Education" section in the previous chapter for examples of this phenomenon). Young people expressed their own multifaceted identities in unique ways; as one researcher noted upon attending a school event:

One table displayed the results of a bookmaking exercise in which students rewrote the typical tale of *The Three Little Bears* in parodies and modernizations, including *The 3 Little Rappers and the Rocker*. The results struck me as...highly reflective of the students' social worlds.

In addition to school-based informal arts activities, informal arts groups formed by immigrant parents and their children also allowed for the exploration of Mexican identities through the performance of regional artistic and cultural forms. One instance of this was the youth folkloric dance group founded in Des Plaines (see the "Dance" and

“Arts Education” sections in the previous chapter). In suburban towns, in particular, where Mexican immigrants were a demographic minority, the informal arts played an important bridging role between Mexican immigrants and non-Mexican, non-Spanish speaking residents, while also strengthening bonds of affinity among Mexican immigrant participants and observers.

In some Chicago suburban towns where resources were scarce, schools served as the sole resource for some Mexican immigrant youth and parents. In some instances, informal groups formed through these schools helped to break down social isolation. As one mother remarked:

At the beginning, my son had problems speaking. He didn't speak with anybody and he didn't respond to the teacher. The school sent me to a program that could help him. He was very isolated because he only spent time with me. In the program, they helped me to make my son more sociable. And there I met other mothers who recently arrived...I've told them that it's sad at the beginning. When you don't know anything or anybody, and some of them don't have papers, then it makes it harder. I told them that I also arrived without knowing anything but when they have problems, I tell them, “don't worry, you go here for this and there for that”.

This mother served as a critical networking node for other mothers in the group who arrived more recently to the Chicago area. In lieu of a formal school-based referral program, this school, through providing support for children with developmental delays and their families, also created opportunities for mothers to meet and form networks that stemmed from and responded to their shared needs. Other schools offered more formal classes designed for parents. One respondent said, “I attended English classes at the school my children went to and there was a parents' program, and there I began to get to know people and learn about jobs and health centers.” Another mother said, “I've been involved with my children's school, and with the parenting classes that they give. I've learned how to be a better example for my children. And I've become friends with the mothers of my children's friends.”

Support services and informal support networks were similarly crucial for youth, though as one respondent, a health professional at a school-based nonprofit who worked with suburban Mexican and other Latino youth, described:

The chances of being rescued [from high risk behavior] are greater here [in Chicago] than in the suburbs due to all the agencies here and cultural institutions. My greatest concern right now is our Latino males. We're going to lose more and more of them into violence, into drugs. The kind of social isolation they face, combined with all the problems associated with poverty, is like a powder keg waiting to go off for this next generation.

When asked by the researcher how these youth sought help, she responded, “Often times they come to the health center, or they speak to a teacher, or they use their peers.” These are particularly networking-style behaviors. This interviewee pointed to one particular teacher who, like her, served as a key resource and networking node for Mexican immigrant students: [There is] an amazing woman teacher who works with our students [and] sees them as human beings. She is a white woman but she is very skilled at working with Mexican youth.” According to the respondent, this teacher created a much-needed cultural and linguistic bridge between the school and Spanish-speaking Mexican immigrant parents. Schools and teachers’ tremendous influence in the lives of recent immigrants, however, was described as both positive and harmful. As one teacher and curriculum coordinator in a Little Village school said:

I think if you’re looking specifically at Mexicans or the Chicano community, churches and schools are critical to understanding. People bring their issues to us as well. We solve more domestic problems here [in the school] than in a white community...The fact that parents would bring their domestic problems to us is indicative of the respect they have for the institution. This can work against the community as well. If we were to squash things like dancing or fruit selling outside, people will follow that. I’ve seen schools abuse that power...I would hope that our school would value that culture and what it’s about.

When schools did not “value...culture and what it’s about,” as one respondent put it, rather than buffering students from obstacles, they instead may have contributed to students’ failure to thrive personally and academically.

Similar to immigrants’ experience of social services resources, immigrants also experienced barriers to accessing school-based resources. Key individuals affiliated with the schools, such as the respondent and teacher above, often helped immigrant parents and their school-age children to gain access to school staff and vice versa. As the school-based health professional respondent cited above said, “[I] sometimes have staffings that allow me to explain some of the culture, and some of the psychodynamics.” Another respondent said:

I work with two high schools here in the area, and help parents to become involved in different ways in the schools, working so that Latinos are more accepted, so that they understand us better. Last week there was a group of fourteen parents of families who did a presentation to the school board here...Everything went very well...and there were [in attendance] the superintendent of the school district and two principals. There were going to be three principals but one didn’t come. We talked with them about our needs, our concerns. And one of those is, for example, that many Latino students are punished or suspended...because some Latino

students don't understand the school rules. If you give them a manual and they can't understand it [because it's in English], it forms a barrier between the school staff and the students. They come from our country, and then live in a country like this that's more structured and they don't understand that it's that way. There are certain things that a person can't do and that there are consequences. And at times the kids do things without thinking. Things that they think aren't bad, but things that ultimately wind up being problems, and then they're punished with three days suspension. And in those cases, students get angry [because of this treatment] and they're pulled out by the teacher or the dean or whomever, and they begin to suffer academically. And then it's the wish of the student not to continue in school because they've been feeling continually rejected. You can imagine.

Respondents offered diverse solutions to culture gaps they identified among parents, students and the schools, including forming informal groups to increase understanding of Mexican artistic and cultural traditions, encouraging parents to become involved as leaders and presenters (such as illustrated in the quote above), and using political advocacy to push schools to hire "Latino staff to reflect the [proportion] of Latinos" in the school. In some suburban towns in particular, the proportion of Latino students far exceeded that of Latino school staff. The respondent above concluded, "This is all done with the goal that our children stay in school, finish school, believe that they can do something in this society, that they can be professionals." Study data suggest that this respondent and others may have engaged in informal arts and cultural events to bond Mexican immigrants and bridge with non-Mexicans, thereby drawing attention to the important contributions of Mexican immigrants. Increasing recognition of Mexican immigrants' contributions, in turn, may have fueled Mexican residents' growing political capital at the local level (as evident in the school board presentation above), though further study is required to confirm this hypothesis. If this hypothesis bears further scrutiny, school-based and parent-organized informal arts and cultural practices may play critical roles in transformaing immigrants' potential as civic actors to their actual engagement as civic participants on a local level.

Chicago Area Park Districts: Parks, Outdoor Areas, Open Spaces

Outdoor areas and activities and open spaces seem to be important to the Mexican immigrant community as focal points for many different types of activities, from sporting events and recreational sports to small-plot gardening. Our respondents reported that 76% of their support group members had knowledge of parks, open spaces and outdoor activities. When considered along demographic lines, patterns similar to those associated with planning and organizing social events emerge. Spanish speakers report that 74% of their support group members have some knowledge of outdoor areas and activities, compared to bilingual respondents, who reported 76%, and English speakers, who reported 83% of their support group members had knowledge of outdoor areas and activities. Men reported that their support groups had more members with knowledge of

outdoor areas than women did (78% versus 74%). With respect to education, we find that those respondents with some elementary school reported that 76% of their support group members had knowledge of outdoor activities, while those with some high school experience reported 70%. Those with some college reported that 77% of their support groups had knowledge of outdoor activities, and college graduates reported that 82% of their support groups had similar knowledge. Those immigrants who have been here longer report having more members in their support networks that have knowledge of public spaces, parks, outdoor areas and outdoor activities. Further detail can be gathered from Table 19.

Respondents described parks, plazas and other outdoor areas as important sites for informal and formal family, organizational and community events. Outdoor festivals often were held in parks, as were holiday celebrations, such as the *Cinco de Mayo* celebration in Chicago's Douglas Park, and the Mexican Independence Day celebration held in Des Plaines' Lake (Opeka) Park. Similarly, festivals were held in popular plazas, such as Plaza Garibaldi. Both urban and suburban respondents described spending a substantial amount of time in local parks. Recent Mexican immigrants' use of parks might reflect both cultural practices in Mexico that emphasized collective and public forms of relaxation and entertainment, as well as the socioeconomic status of most recent Mexican immigrants for whom a family picnic in a public park was more affordable than many other recreational options.

Certain parks were well-known gathering sites for specific groups. One suburban respondent and teacher noted, "The youth hang out at Dee Park. That's about all they have." Other parks were known as popular gathering places for nation of origin groups, such as *el parque colombiano* (the Colombian park) or Warren Park at Devon and Milwaukee where the Colombian Festival was typically held. These parks became sites for organizing, such as when a worker's center held a picnic in a particular park to bring together current and former workers who filed a class action suit. Most of the workers shared a common nation of origin and organizers hoped their familiarity with the park would increase attendance at the picnic.

Informally organized sports took place in parks, which offered a free alternative to gyms and other exercise programs that charged fees. One respondent and professor of Mexican history reported he often saw young Spanish-speaking men on the basketball courts in Loyola Park between 5:30 a.m. and 6:00 a.m. who had "just gotten off their restaurant set-up jobs and gathered on the public courts for pick-up basketball games." He commented: "From the words they use when they miss a shot, they are definitely Mexican!" Respondents described countless soccer games, and some baseball games, that mostly young Mexican men took part in. Children, older men, and women and girls sometimes took part as well, though most often in relation to family play, as opposed to organized team play.

Respondents also described the use of space in some parks as reflective of larger ethnic and racial group tensions. As one researcher noted:

J. gave us the lay of the land, explaining where the dividing lines were between the Mexican neighborhood and the African American residential

areas to the north and west of the park. Within the park itself, space is occupied and facilities are used along racial parameters as well, with African Americans fishing and picnicking mostly north of Ogden Avenue, and Mexican soccer teams and celebrations dominating the open field area to the south.

Table 19: Percentage of Respondents' Support Groups with Knowledge of Parks, Open Spaces, Outdoor Areas, or Outdoor Activities

	Percentage of Friends with Knowledge of Outdoor Activities and Public Spaces
Global Measures (n=69)	75.72%
Language	
Spanish (n=51)	74.35%
English (n=10)	82.50%
Both (n=5)	76.00%
Gender	
Male (n=21)	78.57%
Female (n=45)	74.37%
Education	
Some Elementary School (n=9)	75.68%
Some High School (n=20)	69.57%
Some College (n=22)	76.92%
College Graduate (n=18)	82.28%
Immigration	
Pre-1994 (n=33)	74.71%
Post-1994 (n=36)	77.39%

There were few examples in the study of immigrants' responses to these tensions in public spaces, such as parks. One South Chicago respondent, however, described one woman's attempt to increase her and her Mexican immigrant and Mexican-American neighbors' access to public park space:

There's a neighborhood group that's getting started. An Hispanic lady took some leadership courses and is starting a grassroots organization here. She wants to integrate the park here because right now African American gangs are monitoring the park. At least that's what they say. And so the Hispanic kids can't use the park because of the fighting. This year our parish picnic will probably be there by default but it will help take back the park.

The previous chapter described examples of Mexican immigrants' public devotional practices (a public mass, a devotional protest by exploited workers, and a procession of the Virgin of Candelaria through a suburban neighborhood) that

intentionally and unwittingly commented on and, in some instances, changed social relationships in the spaces in which they took place. The respondent above offered yet one more example of Mexican immigrants' creative work to re-define social relationships in public spaces, though this time the catalyst for change was a parish picnic.

Churches

Many respondents described the interweaving of the sacred and the secular in Mexican public life and commented on the lack of spiritual symbols or discourse in public life in the U.S. One respondent commented, "In Mexico there are religious messages on every city bus. Right over the bus driver there will be a little altar saying this bus is dedicated to a certain saint. The culture is religious...It's easy to lose it here." Some informants pointed to the clear division between church and state in the U.S. as a contributor to reduced church attendance by Mexican immigrants in the U.S. when compared with their lives in Mexico. One respondent commented that the sacred in the U.S. is not as important as in Mexico and, even if individuals are religious, many recent Mexican immigrants work two jobs and are too exhausted by Sunday to attend a service.

Despite these issues, this study found that many Chicago area churches are growing because of increased attendance by recent Mexican immigrants. This is particularly true of churches that offered Spanish masses and responded to the needs of new parishioners through offering or referring them to social and other services. Indeed, respondents told of the consequences to Catholic churches in predominantly Mexican immigrant neighborhoods that did not offer Spanish masses or demonstrate their openness to Mexican residents—they ultimately were forced to close their doors. As discussed in the previous section and in the previous chapter, within these churches, and through church-sponsored coalitions and organizations, immigrants are strengthening social and civic networks through artistic and cultural practices.

One common characteristic of churches (and other institutions) popular with recent Mexican immigrants was an emphasis on family as a "key resource and cherished cultural [unit]. This organizational emphasis reflects the assertion of most respondents that family was the reason most Mexicans migrated to the U.S. (in order to remit earnings back), and that U.S.-based family networks facilitated Mexicans' migration and establishment of a new life in the Chicago area. A priest pointed to other benefits of institutional emphases on family: "Emphasis on family and families getting together helps them deal with some of the racism and the rejection people experience." Another respondent noted that "for immigrants who don't have family here, well then, the church becomes their identity. It becomes a place where you can be a person...We need to be part of a community, Mexican or American. It doesn't really matter which."

Two other traits of organizations popular with recent Mexican immigrants were respect and trust as cornerstones of social relationships. As one priest noted:

"The cultural rules are about respect." And that is expressed differently in Mexican culture. People don't want to say no because if they hurt your feelings that shows a lack of respect. "Integrity in the U.S. is about saying the truth even when it hurts, but integrity here [in Mexican culture] means

respect. The respect issue is the key thing.’ (from ethnographer’s fieldnotes with verbatim quotes from his interview with the priest)

This priest and other respondents described trust and loyalty as central to information sharing, describing that word of mouth (a network-enabled behavior) is crucial to churches, and to all institutions that work with recent Mexican immigrants. The priest cited above continued:

I think if I ran the study, I would just focus on asking how people form loyalties. ‘Who are the people you trust? If they told you to do something, would you do it?...It’s not so much what they know, but what can they motivate you to do? Why would you trust them?’ This has real meaning in terms of making a program work. For example, I know a guy who runs a camp near Lake Geneva, and he is always calling me to get people up there, and offering discounts. How do I explain to him the reason people...don’t go?...Why would people from here go there, if they don’t know anyone there? I can’t just tell them to go. ‘The latest theory is to do everything through the church, that people trust the church, but I think that’s exaggerated.’ The model of the Black pastor who just tells his congregation who to vote for, and they do it, that isn’t really the same here. We offered English classes, but at first no one came, even though we had brochures and we publicized. But now word-of-mouth is slowly building it. Now we have a waiting list, all due to word of mouth.

With this community, face-to-face invites work in the immediate, where announcing from the pulpit does not. I asked some people I saw on the street on the way to the rally to join me and they did, and told some of their friends. In the white community, people would have said, ‘You have to tell me two weeks in advance.’ (from ethnographer’s fieldnotes with verbatim quotes from his interview with the priest)

Churches and social service organizations, more than any other institutions, are uniquely valuable spaces in which recent Mexican immigrants can form social relationships based on mutual trust.

Many priests and church staff members described their efforts to foster relationships of respect and trust that, in turn, laid the ground for efficient word-of-mouth information-sharing and parishioners’ involvement in church-sponsored programs. These programs often provided important means for participants to break down social isolation. As one priest reflected, “I think in general immigrants are isolated. They don’t interact until they’ve been here awhile. At first it’s with the family only.” The power of the family unit also could contribute to social isolation, however. As the same priest noted, “a victim of domestic violence often has no...social networks sometimes” and a victim’s church involvement with her family might offer one of the few opportunities she has to bond with others. Churches also encouraged parishioners’ development of support

networks among themselves, for instance, through announcements during services at a suburban church. As the researcher who attended these masses noted:

These announcements provided information about a bilingual job in the area and the need to help a local resident who was in need of funds to get a liver transplant. At both masses...the woman who needed the transplant and some helpers were outside asking people for whatever money they could give. The church also distributed the local paper, *El Conquistador* and *El Valor*. That this church was a nucleus for informal help illustrates once again the importance of its position in the Mexican immigrant community.

Church-based programs provided Mexican immigrant parishioners opportunities to discuss cultural and other conflicts they experienced in Chicago. One priest described their parenting program as directly addressing the tension between “Mexican and American culture.” He continued:

We weigh in that there has to be a negotiated agreement between the two and critically ask what is good about each one. What is worth keeping? We take the view that there has to be cultural change but there is a lot of bad stuff in this country, too. We see this very effectively within the domestic violence program, for example. A woman who is struggling to confront domestic violence is affirmed for who she is. [The program appeals] to her sense of identity as a Mexican woman, but at the same time we are well aware that that’s one of the good things about the U.S.—that women are more respected.

Some respondents described churches as metaphorical safe havens—through their moral authority that, by extension, offered protection and opportunity to its parishioners. One priest described his church’s provision of documents demonstrating a parishioner’s involvement in the church, and thereby attesting to his/her good moral character:

We help them secure a public I.D. I have a [computerized] letter with the seal of the parish on it and we put their picture on the letter and I sign it so that they can take it to the consulate. This gives them a public identity. It says that they are a member in good standing at the parish and they take it to the consulate with their passport or birth certificate to get [an identification] card. I’m not a lawyer, so I’m not sure, but I think that they can use that to open a bank account and perhaps to purchase property.

Others described churches as trusted and critical “hubs” for information and resources that Mexican immigrant members would not be able or willing to seek elsewhere. For immigrants who very recently arrived and knew no one, churches were particularly crucial. One respondent who arrived penniless to Chicago and, seven years later, became a supervisor in a factory while studying English and calculus at night at a community college, recounted his search for the church of his youth:

It was Seventh Day Adventist. I remember the people, I remember the pastor of that church in Mexico, when I was a child of three or four years old, and my mom would take us because we didn't have anything to eat and the pastor would give us food to eat there and to take home. And this always left a strong positive impression on me. So I was looking for this name in the telephone directory, but it was in English. And so I realized “Seventh Day” that's what it's called. And I talked with the pastor who, fortunately, was Latino. And I said to him, “Pastor, I'm Seventh Day Adventist.” It's been a long time since I went to church, but I always felt a part of them. And so he said, “Son, we're Seventh Day Adventists, though we're not the church you're looking for. But listen, come to us and if you like us, this is your church.” I will always remember that. So I went, and wound up staying. I slept on a pew in the church because his house was very small and he had his family. But it was fine! They gave me food and they helped me find the Adventist church I was looking for. The main central Adventist church, I told you about, at Chicago and Damen. And that was where the pastor—who repeated the experience of my youth—found someone to give me three meals a day. He talked with a woman who gave me food and the church gave her funds for my food. And she was very nice. She made me breakfast and in the afternoon I'd go to her house. I'll never forget that! And they transformed a room that they used for children's Bible study classes on Saturday for me to sleep in....Later, one of the members of the church invited me to her home, and I stayed at her home, which was close to the church, for a long time.

Many respondents echoed this interviewee's experience, with one priest describing the breadth of needs among recent Mexican immigrants who may not feel safe to seek help from other institutions:

They see it as a safe haven...So they can go there for a mattress, for a job, for a lawyer, for medication, for advice on how to buy a house, set up a beauty parlor. I mean, anything....I developed the ability to refer people all over the place. There is tremendous need.

As researchers on this study quickly discovered, priests and other church staff were often very supportive of this research, though they were extraordinarily busy. The needs of large Mexican immigrant parishes, combined with continual invitations to family gatherings, exhausted church staff and volunteers and forced them to make hard decisions about what events they would and would not participate in. As one priest related, “I used to go to three parties every Saturday night...I can’t do that anymore.” He included his experiences in a book for other clergy and described his motivation for writing it: “I wanted to write an academic book that would be valuable to ministers on the ground. It is important to value [Mexican] culture. The U.S. could learn from these immigrants.” Respondents especially pointed to the suburbs as geographic regions where churches, along with other organizations, played a critical role as resource and information nodes: “Mexican community work in the suburbs is based in hometown associations, social service groups, and churches, but not independent organizations.”

Another respondent commented on the physical safety afforded by churches when, upon noticing children playing in the aisles during a Spanish mass, he addressed the adults and said:

When most of [you] were children, our parents said, “Go out and play. Don’t come back until dinner time.” But now we can’t do that because of the dangers in our streets: drugs, crime, muggings, traffic, etc. Instead we run around taking our kids to Tae Kwon Do lessons, picking them up after school, finding activities that they can do to keep them safe. But still there is a safe and happy place, and that is the church.

Respondents also described churches as bridging recent Mexican immigrants and others, such as this respondent’s story illustrates:

The priest of [my church] is Anglo, he’s of Polish ancestry. And he understands the reality of Latinos and does a mass in Spanish. And he invited me because he said that, among Anglos, there are people who don’t understand why Latinos celebrate as we celebrate the Virgin of Guadalupe. So we had a festival of faith, and there were different presentations. And the priest wanted a Latino to speak about devotion to the Virgin of Guadalupe. And he invited me. I felt a little insecure about it but I began reading...You know, I’m not a *conferencista*, I’m simply a member of the church. And my English isn’t perfect but yes, I think I was in a position to help them understand a little better why Mexicans celebrate the Virgin of Guadalupe in this way.

The diversity of roles Chicago-area churches play in the lives of recent Mexican immigrants caused some churches to found coalitions or nonprofit offshoots to build on parishioners’ greatest assets and respond to their needs. These organizations and

coalitions most frequently had a social service, educational or social justice (workers' rights) focus.

Social Service Organizations

Many respondents spoke of the centrality of social service organizations in their lives. As mentioned above, some social service organizations were founded by churches and either operated within church buildings or became independent nonprofits that received ongoing referrals from the church(es) that were their founder(s). Examples of such organizations from the study are Heart of Mary social service center (not yet an independent nonprofit) designed as a "one-stop shop" in Des Plaines that was founded by the priest, staff and parishioners at St. Mary's Church, and Pilsen-based The Resurrection Project that was founded by a coalition of neighborhood churches to provide affordable housing, youth leadership training and, recently, community development through artistic and cultural projects. Respondents described participating in a range of programs through social service organizations, including ESL classes, childcare, technology training, workforce development, and emergency material assistance, to name a few. As one respondent described, "There are a lot of us that are pained to go to one of those agencies that help us, but they give us something to eat, they give us clothes, and a bed to sleep on."

Other respondents described these organizations as important incubators for projects and groups launched by recent Mexican immigrants themselves. A staff member of Erie Neighborhood House illustrated this when describing their popular Technology Promoter classes: "Women who were studying to become Technology Promoters started the domestic violence group and have continued it on their own, apart from any official support from Erie, with the exception of moral support and meeting space."

Most social service organizations concentrated their programs and service provision in Chicago neighborhoods; few established organizations had yet to expand to the suburbs. One respondent from Morton Grove, a Chicago suburb, noted that "the problem is that organizations (in Pilsen and Little Village) don't reach out to those in the suburbs." The director of a prominent political advocacy organization echoed this comment:

There is not much shift to the suburbs by nonprofits. Organizers still see city and suburbs differently. They are two different animals. Mexican community work in the suburbs is based in hometown associations, social service groups, and churches, but not independent organizations." Though some nonprofits exist in the suburbs, such as Family Focus in Aurora, study data suggest that individuals within organizations served as important nodes of information and resources for the quickly growing population of recent Mexican immigrants living in the suburbs. As one respondent observed, "what you will find in many suburbs is one Latino who may work at a housing group or social service agency that has primarily served the Black community now acting as a liaison for the new Latino population.

These key individuals were Mexican immigrants, Mexican Americans and non-Mexicans (often Spanish-speaking Anglo-Americans), were the sole or among a few bilingual staff people, and often were among the few Latinos in visible leadership positions in the organization or town. As one respondent, a writer and published author who taught writing in a local nonprofit, reflected:

I am Mexican. I speak Spanish well. I need to understand United States society...because it is my new country...But they do not understand us. Nobody is gaining from this. Everyone is losing...I saw this in the first week. I decided to make myself like Oscar Lewis. I already know many people. I can open doors between them. Mexican culture [is going to be reinvented] here. So that is my role.

Another individual who worked with a youth-oriented nonprofit located within a health center at a suburban public school similarly described herself as “a cultural resource.” An ethnographer recorded her comments:

There is not much else out there for them. ‘[Adults] have the church. [The youth] have the school and me. [I provide youth and their families with referrals] to other local clinics, food pantries, things like that. The problem is not only a lack of resources, but language. Accessing services is a huge problem, even if services are there, which leads to blaming people for not using what is there.’

The consequence of this lack of access to services, she concluded, was that families “wait ‘til there is a major crisis before they go for help.” Study respondents who were key resource people described their ongoing struggle to simultaneously respond to emergencies, increase immigrants’ access to services, and conduct public prevention and education efforts designed to empower recent immigrants.

Though these individuals received the “okay” of the organizations in which they worked to provide Mexican immigrants with referrals and other types of resources, they often accomplished this work on top of their other formal duties, and worked extremely long hours to fulfill the informal requests made of them. In addition, the establishment of and fundraising for groups and programs for recent Mexican immigrants within these organizations often fell to these individuals, some who received the support and even collaboration of co-workers. These groups, however, were vulnerable to being discontinued when the institution’s priorities shifted. This occurred to an informal arts support group for stay-at-home Mexican immigrant mothers that once met in a partitioned off section of a health clinic’s waiting room. They had to end when the

organization decided to increase their patient load and required the use of the entire waiting room.

Few institutions in which these individuals worked focused on service provision specifically to recent Mexican immigrants, and when organizations were restructured, such as occurred in one suburban health center a year before the study, individual staff who had been key resource providers were hard-pressed to continue their work. Inevitably, these individuals continued in this role in a volunteer capacity, dedicating countless hours and energy to providing social services and referrals to new immigrants through other organizations. In the case of the restructured suburban health clinic, the individual staff member, together with his partner, co-parishioners and priest, worked to set up a program that would continue to provide much-needed information and resources to recent Mexican immigrants in the area.

When key resource individuals also engaged in civic forums, they often became even more overwhelmed with requests from town leaders. As one highly respected suburban community leader said:

What I do, for example, is attend the city council meetings to be informed. And what I think will happen is that [more] people [Mexican immigrants] will begin to play a more active role in the [community]. At times, what happens to me is that the city, the mayor, the schools, the churches call me. But I'm one person!

In addition to *Latinos Progresando*, an advocacy organization that intentionally used theater as a vehicle to encourage Mexican immigrants' and others' civic participation, The Resurrection Project (TRP) engaged in designing artistic and cultural spaces and programs to support community development. As a TRP program director described:

In the mid 1990s, TRP was given funding to study quality of life issues here in Pilsen. One of our findings was that quality of life would be improved if there was a town center or a *zócalo*, like exists in every Mexican town. Quality of life isn't just about brick and mortar, but it's also about what a community looks like and having that be positive. Having a cultural center as well as a physical public space can help to improve schools and can lower crime. We also think the *zócalo* will strengthen Pilsen's economy and the bad elements wouldn't want to hang out as much.

Though plans for the *zócalo* are still in development, TRP used their expertise in affordable housing and youth leadership training to create an innovative program that is deeply rooted in the cultural values of local predominantly Mexican and Mexican-American neighborhoods to support young people in completing college. The coordinator of the program described that they had just received a \$3.4 million grant from

the state to renovate their building on West 17th Street, a former convent, and turn it into a dorm for Latino college students. Though “they still need to raise \$1.4 million more, this grant is a good start.” He described their proposal justifying the dorm:

It’ll allow Latino students who live in the surrounding neighborhoods of Pilsen, *La Villita* and Lawndale to stay in the dorm and have a space that is conducive to studying, while providing reassurance to families that their children are safe, and aren’t too far from home...The dorm will be especially important for young women who otherwise might never be able to live in a dorm because their parents are so concerned about their safety and well-being.

Like TRP, other social service organizations popular with recent Mexican immigrants emphasized that all of their work is cultural. Said a respondent and Erie Neighborhood House staff person of their parenting, Technology Promoter, GED, and ESL classes:

The classes are student-focused in order to be successful. This means that the classes inherently are culturally sensitive because they focus on the students’ own lives...and most of Erie’s students are immigrants...[In this way], all of Erie House's curriculum is cultural.

By looking to immigrant students’ and participants’ lives to inform the form and content of classes and programs, social service organizations, like the churches described above, engaged in processes of change that potentially had ripple effects for all staff, participants, the institution as a whole, and ultimately the neighborhood and even city in which the institution was located. Further study is required to illuminate the particular effects at each of these levels of organizations’ open and ongoing engagement with recent Mexican immigrant participants.

Financial Institutions: The Informal Tanda and Institutions for Remitting Money to Mexico

The custom of the *tanda*, though not part of a formal institution, offered evidence of the importance of social networks in the U.S. to Mexican immigrants’ economic well-being. One respondent described the *tanda* as a group of ten or more people who pledged to give up a certain set amount from their pay every week, so that one person on the list received the entire amount each week. Each person in the *tanda* contributed money until everyone had been paid back. As this respondent noted, “There’s a lot of trust involved...*confianza* is very important” since the first people who got the money could opt out and stop paying. This *tanda*-based network also provided a forum for “a lot of sharing of advice on house buying, and on construction, and skill sharing.” It is possible

that these *tanda* or informal lending networks are linked to another very popular form of financial exchange, that of remittances, though further study is required to determine this.

Throughout the study, respondents described the importance of institutions they used to remit money back to family in Mexico. These institutions were so central to recent Mexican immigrants' purpose for being in the U.S. that respondents often appeared to take them for granted. Indeed, it was not until the network survey portion of the study when respondents were asked directly to name the businesses they used most frequently to remit money back to Mexico that some respondents commented on these financial institutions as important components of their ongoing contact with family in Mexico.

Respondents also discussed other implications of these informal lending networks and remittances, such as making possible a form of double citizenship. Said one respondent:

The *remesa* [remittance], I think, was the largest amount of money that Mexico received [last year]. It wasn't imports, nothing like that, it was what people sent from here, the U.S. Now, tell me this, does that not make a double citizen? Does that not make a citizen of the world? We're not only paying our taxes here, we're helping over there. We're supporting two countries at once.

Mexican immigrants' new financial power translated to some extent into newfound influence in their home country. One respondent commented, "(remittances are) giving the Mexican (immigrant) community a new status" vis a vis the Mexican government. The implications of remittances for artistic, cultural and social networking practices in the Chicago area and in Mexico (which have been discussed to some extent in the previous section) are potentially immense and warrant further study.

Workers' Centers

Church-founded and sponsored workers centers emerged in the study as important organizations through which recent Mexican immigrants gained important knowledge and skills, organized both with other immigrants and non-immigrants in the Chicago area and, for some, connected with their own histories of organizing in Mexico. One researcher, whose doctoral work centered on international labor movements, attended conferences with participants in local workers centers and volunteered at one North side center to learn more about the role these organizations played in the artistic and cultural lives of recent Mexican immigrants.

Unlike traditional forms of organized labor in the U.S., such as the AFL-CIO and other unions, this researcher wrote of being struck by the use of religious iconography for workers center labor organizing, and felt "it spoke not only to the religious undertones of this particular event but also to the importance of religion as a tool for outreach to immigrant workers." In reflecting on comments made by workers whose first experience of being involved in an organized labor movement occurred in Chicago, she proposed:

[In] thinking about the workers centers as “cultural assets,” the center provides workers with more than just a safe space in which to work through their problems, the center serves to empower them through knowledge. Workers have expressed that the knowledge they get at the center empowers them to confront their bosses, makes them respected in their workplaces, and makes them feel good about themselves. They come to the center feeling exploited and lost, intimidated by laws they don’t know and a language they don’t understand and they leave feeling empowered and capable of defending themselves.

Importantly, workers centers are forging new types of organizing strategies because of the largely immigrant population they work with. As the researcher noted after attending meetings involving workers in temporary or independent contract jobs:

Both of these meetings made me think more about the role of temporary workers—over and over we’re hearing that in the last three years work conditions have gotten worse for immigrants and that they are having a harder time finding permanent work. It seems that most new immigrants are working as temporary workers or day workers or independent contractors which allows employers to give them fewer rights and benefits.

The transitory nature of these positions created challenges to organizing when employees moved from business to business, which workers centers responded to by hosting events to bring former and current employees together, such as picnics in parks advertised through radio stations and hosted by a well-known DJ. (For more discussion of this, see the “Media” section below).

Other workers spoke to this researcher about the ways the Chicago-based workers center connected them to their earlier experiences in Mexico. The researcher continued:

For other workers, the center provides a link to the type of political struggles they were involved with back home. Some of them used to be former union leaders back home, some were even involved...in the struggles in Chiapas, and thus what they find in the center isn’t so much tools and knowledge as much as community and the possibility of being part of a social movement.

Some of these centers worked to affirm the valuable knowledge and fundamental worth of recent Mexican immigrant workers through their attention to language. As the researcher noted of the workers center in which she volunteered:

Around the center the term “undocumented” is rarely used, instead people simply talk about having or not having papers. Perhaps rather than discussing things in terms of *being* this makes it simply about *having* or not having.

As discussed in the previous section, workers centers at times used Mexican faith-based practices as vehicles for recent Mexican immigrants’ social and political power. The centers’ other “internal” work, however, to educate workers about their civil rights and to empower them as valued human beings with unique skills and knowledge, irrespective of legal status, may have been crucial groundwork for the public and often deeply creative acts of resistance to workplace-based exploitation described previously.

Businesses: Restaurants, Cafes, and Markets

Study data revealed that restaurants, cafes and markets were crucial sites for informal and formal Mexican artistic and cultural practices. As one interviewee noted, “[These] are the first places that become clearly Latino.” Like social service organizations, markets and restaurants that catered to Mexican immigrants were highly centralized in the city of Chicago. Said one respondent, “Everything is in the city, versus the suburbs. So, many Mexicans go into the city for various reasons. They go to 26th Street [Little Village], 18th Street [Pilsen], and they mostly go there to shop.” Restaurants and cafes that were popular gathering places served as vital economic centers by supporting recent Mexican immigrant servers, cooks, musicians, dancers, vendors who sold flowers and other objects to customers, photographers, DJs, and others, and potentially outside vendors (such as Mexican immigrant food producers and importers, though further study is required to confirm this).

Some restaurants diversified their businesses, ostensibly to appeal to a broader range of customers. One example of this was the restaurant Guadalajara in the Chicago suburb of Berwyn that transformed its upper floor into a dance club and drew different crowds through rotating the type of music DJs played each night. Though little *mariachi* was played in the upstairs club, the uniforms of Guadalajara’s waitresses paid tribute to this quintessentially Mexican cultural and artistic form. The waitresses were dressed in full regalia consisting of a modified and stylized mariachi suit, replete with decorative scarves and buttons down the sides of both pant legs.

Restaurants and cafes also were important cultural centers for recent Mexican immigrants’ connections with one another through small and large group events, and for the continuity of different types of Mexican food, music, dance, visual arts (murals), and handicrafts (sometimes included in interior design and decorations). Some Chicago area restaurants, cafes and bakeries also had storefronts reflecting a distinctively Mexican aesthetic. One researcher, recalling her conversation with a respondent, wrote:

I noticed a big bakery with flashing lights and commented on how it looked more like a disco than a bakery. He laughed but then said that in

Mexico all commerce was like that. He said he missed that. Here everything is low key and the same.

Café Jumping Bean, Café Mestizo and Café Inspiración, among others, fostered local and visiting Mexican artists through hiring artists as staff, publicizing and hosting events, and offering wall space for exhibits. These cafes and others like them were central clearinghouses of information of interest to recent Mexican immigrants. One respondent and a music aficionado, when asked how he kept up on the many concerts in town said, “I mostly found out by looking at flyers and posts at *los cafés* (the cafes) in Pilsen.”

Restaurants and cafes also served as bridges between Mexican immigrants and other non-Mexicans, as in the case of *Las Tres Hermanas* (The Three Sisters) restaurant in Highwood, a north Chicago suburb. A respondent described Highwood as a “Mexican community that’s been here for about 100 years,” as a destination for new Mexican immigrants, and as home to a large army base. Though further study is required, preliminary data indicate that the restaurant was a buffer for recent Mexican immigrants by serving as a cultural center (and potentially as a social network node). It was also a bridge between the Mexican community in Highwood and the predominantly non-Mexican military personnel who lived on and around the base. The success of *Las Tres Hermanas* in these dual roles was evident in the clientele in the restaurant who were a mix of Mexican customers and people like the “army man who had approached the front counter to ask the owner if they sold gift certificates.” (from ethnographer’s fieldnotes) The researcher added, “On our way out, we noticed posted next to the front door a certificate of appreciation from the local army base, thanking *Las Tres Hermanas* Restaurant for their generous donation to the base’s Family Day.”

Grocery stores also played a key role in connecting recent immigrants to Mexico and to one another. Though some respondents reported that they were able to get the same ingredients and foods in Chicago as in their hometown of Mexico—as one respondent said, because “the immigrants grow them or they are imported.” Many more reported that they had difficulty finding ingredients they relied upon. (As in the case of music, it may be that foods and ingredients from northern Mexico were more common in the Chicago area than those of other Mexican regions). Stores that sold particular Mexican foods and ingredients were well known, such as the always crowded market located three blocks from the Immaculate Conception school. A respondent who shopped there said, “They make the best *carnitas* around. It’s a little shop that also sells special herbs from Mexico that you can’t get here easily.” News of these markets traveled quickly through word of mouth and, like the creative seamstress at McKinley Park School, they were soon eagerly sought out.

Businesses: Live Performance Venues

Mexican immigrants are such powerful consumers of music that musicians, producers, and venues competed actively for Mexican immigrant audiences. The institutional revitalization of some (now) popular music venues in Chicago serves as a testament to the success of these venues in drawing their patronage. One example of this was the Aragon Ballroom, a historic edifice built in the 1920s in the Uptown

neighborhood of Chicago that, along with the surrounding neighborhood, fell into neglect. According to study participants who were experts on the local Mexican music scene, the Aragon's resurgence within the last decade happened, in large part, when it "transformed its image and began catering to a Latino audience, and specifically hosting bands and groups from Mexico." Another example was a popular and "sprawling bar and dance complex" in a near southwest Chicago suburb that, in former decades, catered to country music lovers and 1980s pop music fans. As the manager described, in 1998, it was "given a facelift and began catering to the Mexican community" because "this was where the money is." On a typical Wednesday evening when the DJ spun "a mix of *cumbia*, *merengue*, *norteña* music and *rók en español*," the manager reported that there were "six to seven hundred entrants of which fully one-half show an ID that is from Mexico or the consulate." At 1 am, when a popular nearby club closed, the crowd grew even larger. Whether Mexican immigrants' patronage of these individual institutions, and others like them, have contributed to larger economical renewals of the Chicago neighborhoods in which they are located requires further study.

Importantly, despite the large publicity budgets of some of these venues, respondents continually pointed to word of mouth as the single most effective way recent Mexican immigrants learned about goings-on. As one respondent said, "People attend things with their relatives and their *compadres* (close friends or associates). That's a very important social category. And the success is due to word of mouth. 'My cousin did this,' that sort of thing." Club owners and event producers who were cognizant of these powerful social networks reported successfully drawing Mexican immigrant audiences. One club owner explicitly described to a researcher his strategies for advertising through recent immigrant networks:

He made it clear that...the community builds the customer base themselves by word of mouth. He said ads did little for his club and they were nearly empty their first year. So they decided to keep admission cheap in order to build their numbers. The covers stay at the five dollar level or free, and drink prices are low, such as Friday specials that include one and two dollar drinks. They rent out parking lots from a rental car company across the street and another nearby strip mall, which are all free to their customers. All this "is why people tell other people."

Some artists and other respondents lamented the lack of large performance spaces in Pilsen, regarded by most respondents as the heart of Mexican artistic and cultural life in the Chicago area. Said one respondent:

We would have those shows at Meztle, but we can't due to our neighbors. There is a need for a venue here in Pilsen. It would be a gold mine for whoever opened it. Completely full, every day. Right now there is the Black Hall, at Whipple and 26th, and La Justicia. And in the Congress

Theater, there is the side storefront where they have shows. Here it is very residential, and there are few places.

Despite the profits enjoyed by certain venues that catered to recent Mexican immigrants, Chicago-based artists who participated in this study expressed frustration about producers' oversight of local talent. As a member of a popular arts collective that founded and runs Café Meztli, a Pilsen-based performance space, expressed, "there is so little attention paid to artists from the community itself. People arrive from Mexico, they have a nice performance...and then they leave. What about the rest of us?" Another respondent asked, "are we going to strengthen what we have or only look elsewhere?" Local artists were required to expend considerable energy and creativity to sustain themselves and the spaces they founded. Coping strategies ranged from "artists lending money among themselves when it's needed" to remaining vigilant to hold onto what they had, whether that was sound equipment of interest to local thieves, or affordable community-based performance spaces of interest to developers.

What emerged in the study was that different stakeholders in Chicago had conflicting concepts of what it meant to "strengthen what we have" with many local Latino artists butting heads with city administrators. The Café Meztli founder cited above described the political battle he and other community residents engaged in to make visible the arts that already existed in Pilsen, thus warding off the threat of displacement from a city-sponsored redevelopment initiative:

We had a conversation with [Mayor] Daley, who was talking about making this into an arts community with the TIF [Tax Increment Financing]. We said, "But, Mayor, this *is* an artistic community." Their proposal was to investigate a plan from Indianapolis to create arts housing. But the final result would be to displace the community."

It is ironic that in the midst of Chicago's economic boom where developers often trumpet the uniqueness of immigrant-founded neighborhoods as part of sales pitches, community-based arts organizations dedicated to fostering current Mexican and Mexican-American artists—and fostering future artists by providing classes on "not just the music, but the *why* of the music"—were at risk of displacement.

Further, a related service economy has grown up around live performance sites, whether large theaters or summer festivals, to provide goods (food, popsicles, t-shirts) and services (cell phones and calling cards) to those in attendance. This also was true of churches and a few nonprofit organizations and schools in which popular Mexican artistic and cultural activities were held. Peripheral economies that sprang up around large gatherings of recent Mexican immigrants were so strong that some institutions charged for access to their patrons, such as churches who required that vendors buy a permit and pay a monthly fee to operate their carts on church property or risk being shooed away after Mass. These same institutions were besieged by businesses eager for access to their parishioners, and executive committees often heavily monitored businesses, such as

mortgage lenders, who wished to market their services. Further, vendors interviewed during the study reported supporting family members both in the U.S. and Mexico off their vending sales, indicating that recent and other Mexican immigrants' participation in popular artistic and cultural practices had a positive and crucial economic ripple effect both locally and transnationally.

Media: Radio and Television

Respondents described radio stations such as *La Tremenda* (1200 AM), *La Que Buena* (105.1 FM), *Viva* (103.1 FM), *La Pasión* (106.7 FM), *La Ley* (107.9 FM) and *Radio Arte* (90.5 FM) as crucial institutions for recent Mexican immigrants. Though respondents also referred to popular television programming, particularly soap operas (*telenovelas*) and news programs (Telemundo and Univisión, channels 44 and 66 respectively), few respondents spoke directly about the role of television or of specific programs in their lives. In one instance, a respondent told of the fear and rejection she felt after viewing a news program featuring a local man who joined the Minutemen militia at the U.S.-Mexico border. In another example, a youth empowerment program organizer related that some students faced challenges in studying at home because there was little space to escape other people and the sounds of a *telenovela* in the background.

As described in the previous sections, respondents frequently talked about radio stations as providing them with a sense of connection and belonging by giving them access to an imagined community of Mexican immigrant listeners. The power of radio for many Mexican immigrants may have made it that much more difficult when their children, as one respondent said “don’t choose to listen to Spanish radio stations.” This refusal to listen may have served as evidence for some parents of their children’s disconnection from Mexico, the Spanish language, and with specifically Mexican cultural practices. Further study is required to determine the roles Spanish language radio and television play, if any, in the transmission of Mexican cultural and artistic knowledge and practices from parents to children, and within recent Mexican immigrant families in general.

These radio stations also were important networking nodes for information sharing regarding community and cultural events, and even for community organizing, such as when DJs from Viva organized a march in support of immigrants’ rights in July 2005. The DJs’ mobilization of marchers was effective though controversial. As representatives from a state federation expressed, “All the federations got together and voted on it. We all decided not to go, except maybe for Zacatecas [because] we did not agree with the way the march was set up. We felt that the two DJs were basically using people for raising their ratings.” Early federation requests of the DJs “to have shows discussing immigration laws and reforms, and the like” were “always refused.” Though the march clearly revealed a source of tension between some federation and popular culture leaders in the Mexican immigrant community in Chicago, all respondents agreed that the DJs’ popularity catalyzed a large turnout at the immigrant rights march. Similarly, when a workers center sought to organize bank couriers who had been involved in a case against an employer but who had since left the company, they organized a worker’s picnic in a popular park and advertised it on the radio. As a researcher recounted: “They thought it would be a good idea to announce the activity on

a radio show called *El Chocolate de la Mañana* on 107.9 as they thought this was what most couriers listened to during their work day.”

Another radio station, *Radio Arte*, also was described as an important conduit for information sharing, but this unique nonprofit initiative of the Mexican Fine Arts Center also had a youth-oriented mission. According to their website:

Radio Arte trains, motivates and encourages youth to develop self-expression through the broadcast medium. It provides a forum for young people to be creative and responsible to the largest Mexican community in the Midwest as the only bilingual (Spanish/ English), youth-operated, urban, community station in the country, *Radio Arte* is committed to training young people (ages 15-21) from the Chicago metropolitan area in the art of broadcasting. (http://www.wrte.org/about_us_quienes_somos/)

Individual staff at some radio stations worked to create opportunities for the organizations that served the stations’ immigrant listeners, such as a staff member at *La Tremenda* who “provided support for the federations in terms of allowing space in his radio show.” During the study, a new radio project was launched on 950 AM to give hometown federations an hour every Sunday to talk about their events and programs.

Despite radio’s tremendous popularity among recent Mexican immigrants, some respondents were highly critical of the content of Chicago area Spanish language radio programs. One respondent said:

Radio is a disaster...They are [saying] the worst things. There is no educational content. These programs, *La Ley*, *Chokolade en la mañana*, they offend people, they are explicit. That is the way they market the radio stations. It seems like they don’t know the culture and the musical taste of people [who are] more international. Instead they market to a...stereotype. Mass media has a huge effect... radios at work, novelas at home.

Another respondent, a college educated and professionally trained actress, commented that she felt radio DJs were contributing to new hybrid forms of language. In the interview, she seemed to vacillate between an appreciation for these emerging linguistic forms and sheer dismay:

[One of those] DJs, *locutores*, we say in Mexico, was making these horrible grammatical errors, but it was okay because what happens is he doesn’t know he’s speaking [badly] because he probably lived here all his life. He’s handed down whatever language he’s exposed to, he gets a job

in a radio station that's geared for Mexicans or Latinos and who want to only hear Spanish, and, of course, he doesn't know that there's a way of saying certain things. You know, we don't say "*haga*," we say "*haya*," this is just an example. We don't say "*buey*," that it's very (wrong) to say "*buey*," on a Mexican radio station back in Mexico. And he's getting away with murder, you know! ...If he was in Mexico, he wouldn't have a job. He's making too many grammatical errors, he's said two to three cuss words that are minor, but he doesn't know he's saying that. In Mexico, that person would not get a job because, in Mexico...to be a DJ or a *locutor* you go to school, you would have to speak *great* Spanish, *elaborate* Spanish because in the U.S. or, actually, in any language, we have a common language that you go by and then we have the elaborate one, right? Same thing in Mexico, you know, you have the elaborate, which is how you would be speaking on the radio.

Researcher: When he says "*buey*," what is that?

Respondent: It's a very common word now in Mexico, and you say it among your friends. A "*buey*" is a big bull [ox] that's used [by farmers to cultivate land] because it's such a heavy animal. But it's a thing among teenagers now that, if I'm speaking to you in Spanish, I'd say, "*que honda, buey*," (what's up, *buey*), "*a dónde vamos a ir, buey*" (where are we going to go, *buey*)...See *buey*, I could never say in front of my grandma because she would be like, "that's nice language!" Not even in front of my parents because they would be like, "hey, did we teach you that?!"...But [the DJ] was saying it lots of times and I thought, this guy would *never* have a job in Mexico City. He would never—he's making too many grammatical errors! And the people don't know about it because they've been away from their country so long, some of the new generations think that's the correct form of speaking, so this is when the culture and the language evolve! Because now, [these forms of speech are] accepted as good, as common. Do you see?...And that's when you say, "Wow!" [As author] Carlos Monsivais [wrote]—our culture evolves! It has to. Our language evolves too.

Further study of the linguistic aspects of cultural and artistic change could reveal even more about the specific ways in which language evolves and the implications of this evolution for recent Mexican immigrants in the Chicago area, and in the U.S. in general. It also would be compelling to study the ways that linguistic changes among Spanish speakers who are recent Mexican immigrants in the U.S. influence speech and the written word in Mexico, if at all.

Hometown Associations and State Federations

Respondents described Mexican hometown associations and state federations as advocates of political and cultural projects that highlighted and benefited immigrants from their respective Mexican states in Chicago, and as one of the few types of organizations that did “community work” in the suburbs. Certain federations, such as Durango United, the Hidalgo Federation, and *Casa Guanajuato*, supported youth leadership development that was transnational in emphasis. One of instance of this was their selection of a *reina* or queen who traveled both to the home state or town as well as throughout the Chicago area, among other youth programs. The Michoacán Federation was well-known for its community leadership trainings. Respondents commented, “I think to me that’s the upcoming super-organizing force in the Mexican community” and “the *Michoacanos* set the tone” for the other federations. Federations and hometown associations often provided needed social and other services to their compatriots in the Chicago area. A Casa Guanajuato staff person described the tax assistance they offered:

Depending on the time of the year, people come to us for different services. For example, many undocumented people come to us to help them file their taxes. We help them because we think it’s important that the undocumented need to have a presence. When they file their taxes they show they are productive individuals. This would help a lot in case of an eventual legalization.

She went on to describe the assistance they offered to legitimate educational credentials:

We think it is very sad to find all these professionals coming from Mexico—engineers, designers, accountants—[who work] as cleaning staff and the like in Chicago. There is nothing wrong with cleaning; it’s a decent job. But what we find sad is that all the potential in these people is going to waste. So, we help people with the revalidation of their university credentials here in the U.S. Because imagine how good it would be if the community could benefit from all this potential... So we are happy to help with university credentials, especially when it’s people that have an interest in working with the community.

A staff person at the Hidalgo Federation described a service they performed that was made necessary by the dangers of border crossing:

We look for missing people. When someone from Hidalgo crosses the border and their families never hear from them again, they contact us and we look for them. We contact border patrol, hospitals, jails, etc until we

find the person. But sometimes people don't want to give us information because we are not a registered nonprofit organization. That's why we are in the process of becoming one.

Researcher: Do you usually find people?

Respondent: Yes, so far it has been only one person we have been unable to find... He was murdered under very confusing circumstances. But we usually find people. It's a very stressful job because people call us for help and put all their hopes on us.

The staffer said the federation also arranged for the bodies of Hidalgo immigrants who died in Chicago to be sent back home.

Chicago-based Mexican federations also were noted as organizers of soccer clubs and popular cultural events such as outdoor festivals, music and arts performances, such as dancing and sponsors of orchestras or *rondalla* (a kind of guitar group). A respondent and staff person at Casa Guanajuato described their use of art as a tool for collective unity (of the cast and audience), entertainment, and education:

We promote art a lot. For example we organize theater plays. At the moment we are showing *La Ley de Herodes* (Herod's Law). Both staff and members of the community are acting in it. We also have programs for the education of adults because we know from experience how hard it is to learn new things when you are older.

In addition, certain federations published newspapers for distribution in the Chicago area and throughout the U.S. As one researcher noted, a newspaper called *El Guerrerense* is distributed in Atlanta, Chicago, and California and during the study led with the story of the *Pistolero's* (DJ-organized) anti-Minuteman march along with two stories about happenings back in Guerrero and among *Guerrerense* federations in the U.S. Like the Guerrero federation, a respondent with the Hidalgo federation described their intention to publish a "small newspaper":

It will have news from Chicago and from Hidalgo, to keep people [in communication], and also information about events and the federation's programs. Unfortunately, because we don't have the resources, it's going to be a small publication that will come as an attachment of another publication called *El Chilango Deportivo* (Mexico City Sports).

The same federation initiated a program called *Acercando Familias* (Bringing Families Closer), which involved setting up videoconferences between families in the U.S. and Hidalgo. As the director of the program described:

Families that had not seen some of their relatives for twenty years were able to see each other and talk. It was very exciting. We did this program with the collaboration of the *Universidad Autónoma de Hidalgo*. It was free. We provided equipment, space and transportation for people here in Illinois. The university provided transportation, space and equipment for people in Hidalgo. People from rural areas were brought to the university so they could talk to their relatives in Chicago. But, again, unfortunately, we ran out of funds and were unable to continue. We might do it again in the future, though.

This hometown federation's use of videoconferencing to link recent Mexican immigrants with their families at home has potentially large implications for a study of this kind. Like respondents' use of the Internet for the exchange of messages and photographs, it is possible that this videoconferencing also served as a conduit for the exchange of cultural and artistic forms and content between Mexico and the U.S., perhaps contributing to the creation of hybrid forms in both places. Further study is needed to identify the implications of these trans-border technological links for specific artistic and cultural activities and for the people who are their practitioners in both the U.S. and Mexico.

Federations also were coalition builders who succeeded in defeating a proposal by the Mexican government to tax new cars brought into Mexico by immigrants returning from the U.S. According to one respondent this victory awakened the Chicago area federations to their new power and influence relative to other U.S.-based Mexican federations and the Mexican government. Federations and hometown associations also allied themselves with other political entities in the Chicago area and U.S. in order to achieve their goals of improving conditions and legal possibilities for Mexican immigrants. These organizational allies included the New Americans Initiative coordinated by the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR), National Alliance of Latino and Caribbean Communities (NALACC) and Confemex, among others.

Hometown associations and federations also committed themselves to the social and economic development of Mexican hometowns and states. Said a staff person at Casa Guanajuato, "We want to help create sources of employment for the people there—precisely to prevent migration to the U.S. and the loss of lives." When asked how the association promoted development, the staffer described:

A study is made to find out what are the needs of the community at our hometowns. Churches, roads, schools and sewer systems—lately we are focusing on bringing jobs to these places. So, a study is made to find out

how much money is needed for these projects. Then, clubs here in Chicago (Casa Guanajuato is an umbrella organization for Guanajuato clubs in Chicago) raise money, say \$25,000. Then, the municipal government in the hometown in Guanajuato has to put down another \$25,000; the state government of Guanajuato, another \$25,000 and the Mexican national government, another \$25,000. So that's why it's called 'three times one': for each dollar that the immigrants provide, the municipal, state and national governments in Mexico have to put [in] a dollar each.

In addition to social and economic development, some federations, such as Durango United, sent "medical missions, sending an eye doctor to do exams, providing glasses, [doing] checkups, inform[ing] people about diseases, fund[ing] operations. We've been sending medical support to municipalities." The associations' and federations' abilities to collect and leverage Mexican immigrants' funds was enviable to many, including Mexican government officials at state and local levels, which one respondent said tried "to use the power and money of hometown associations to leverage things they need done in Mexico." For this reason, some associations chose to remain independent of the Mexican consulate in Chicago that offered funding and other forms of support to hometown association and state federation affiliates.

Federations' efforts to improve life for their constituencies in the Chicago area and in home states and towns led to their request that The Field Museum serve as a social network catalyst by hosting an event to bring together federations, hometown associations, and partner organizations:

I would like also to propose something to the Museum, some kind of event where all the *federaciones* would get together, like a dinner, or a reception. We would organize to bring the youth and the neighborhood people to downtown, to see this as part of their cultural assets. And we could also get a higher profile for the *federaciones*, because we really need that.

Through sponsored events, such as the one proposed at The Field Museum, federations hope to increase their knowledge of one another and of other Mexican immigrant serving organizations in order to identify future possibilities for collaboration.

The preceding sections of this chapter have revealed the ways in which organizations and institutions play key roles in the lives of the Mexican immigrant community. They have also revealed that many immigrants may access important services through networking, using either their support group members or important organizations as intermediaries.

CHAPTER IV: CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

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Importantly, the ethnographic findings of this study strengthened many of the findings from survey and networking portions. Ethnographers found that respondents used artistic and cultural practices to form and sustain social and leverage networks that were *both ethnically and socioeconomically diverse* (Wali, Severson and Longoni 2002) and *included weak ties* (Granovetter 1973; Dominguez and Watkins 2003)—as exemplified by respondents’ involvement in schools with non-Mexican majority staff and administration—as well as *homogeneous and marked by strong ties* of kinship (Enchautegui 2002)—as illustrated by respondents’ involvement with family members in church groups. Whether recent Mexican immigrants were able to develop leverage networks (either heterogeneous or homogeneous) within an institution appeared to be determined, at least in part, by organizational leaders’ and participants’ encouragement and facilitation of recent Mexican immigrants’ own initiative. Organizations and institutions that were open to their leadership created the greatest possibility for recent immigrants’ development of leverage networks. In other words, data from this study suggest that when regarding the relationship of artistic and cultural practices to the formation of networks involving recent Mexican immigrants, the *roles* immigrants were allowed to assume within these networks, *rather than the composition of the group* itself, may ultimately have had the largest impact on immigrants’ leverage within networks formed through organization-based activities.

In addition, gender is an important component when considering the work of Fitzgerald (2004) and Ochoa (2000), who found that the most common “enrichment” activities are those that involve political, civic or labor action. Though recent Mexican immigrants certainly were involved in these forums, data indicate that men, more than women, were the most frequent participants in these realms. Women were more often involved in networks formed and sustained through their artistic and cultural activities in churches and schools. Though the activities women engaged in and the networks they formed within school and church settings may have been perceived as political by some—for instance, the organization of a church picnic to “take back” a park—respondents described these practices most often as religious, cultural, educational or artistic. Respondents also described artistic and cultural practices as facilitating their formation of both non-kin (e.g. outside the household) and kin (within the household) networks of psychosocial support, which is in keeping with the findings of previous studies (Enchautegui 2002; Gellis 2003; Leslie 1992). Data from this study indicate that the gender of the actors performing the “emotional labor” (Hochschild 1983, 2003; Kruml and Geddes 2000) involved in psychosocial support differed depending upon the network domain, with worker center-based networks, for instance, often involving men, and home, church and school-based networks often involving women.

The sheer volume of information in this report seems to argue that a brief summary may be useful. Some major findings can be summarized in the table and the ten key points below:

Table 20: Summary of Themes in Ethnographic Notes

Number of Times Themes Appeared in Textual Analysis			
Networking (Indiv/Org)		245	
Artistic & Cultural Practices			
Music	175	Clothing	73
Events	107	Textile Arts	65
Arts Education	106	Crafts	52
Visual Arts	90	Sports	49
Theater	75	Writing	45
Food	74	Gardens	19
Institutions & Organizations (selected)			
Churches	244	Businesses	191
Schools	228	State Federations	11

Key Findings

1. Respondents reported providing resources most often to and receiving resources most often from
 - a. Businesses
 - b. Financial Institutions
 - c. Media
 - d. Community Centers
2. Respondents who provided those resources tend to be
 - a. English or Bilingual Speakers
 - b. Male
 - c. Well Educated
 - d. Pre-1994 Immigrants
3. Respondents who received those resources tend to be
 - a. Male
 - b. Linguistically Diverse
 - c. Well Educated
 - d. Post-1994 Immigrants
4. Respondents whose support groups have most knowledge of artistic, cultural, and social organizations tend to be
 - a. Male
 - b. English Speakers
 - c. Well Educated
 - d. Pre-1994 Immigrants
5. Respondents whose support groups have most knowledge of schools, churches, or primary service providers tend to be
 - a. Female
 - b. Linguistically Diverse
 - c. Well Educated

- d. Post-1994 Immigrants
- 6. Organizations most often provide services associated with the following topics
 - a. Education
 - b. Organizational or Community Services
 - c. Individual and Family Life
 - d. Healthcare
 - e. Basic Subsistence
- 7. Those organizations that report collaborating most often are:
 - a. Social Service Organizations
 - b. Cultural Associations
 - c. Community Centers
 - d. Hometown Associations
 - e. Artistic and Cultural Groups and Institutions
- 8. Those organizations that are most often reported as collaborators are:
 - a. Community Centers
 - b. Media
 - c. Social Service Organizations
 - d. Neighborhood Associations
 - e. Artistic and Cultural Groups and Institutions
- 9. Most collaborations were associated with the exchange of
 - a. Publicity
 - b. Clients
 - c. Information
 - d. Expertise
- 10. Lack of collaboration is associated with
 - a. No knowledge of the organization
 - b. No easily determined reason for collaboration

Policy Recommendations

This study shows how cultural and artistic practices contribute to identity formation, strengthen collaborative bonds, stimulate economic activity, and extend social networks for Mexican immigrants. Based on these insights into the artistic and networking assets of Mexican immigrants in the Chicagoland area, we offer the following policy recommendations:

- 1) **Support increased access to arts and support local artists in the Mexican community.** Arts practice provides critical opportunities for developing civic skills, building social support networks, and economic participation. Through engaging in informal arts and through continued and constant innovation of cultural practices, Mexican immigrants are creating significant social resources and reaching out to non-immigrants. The broad range of arts and cultural practices documented in this study are a vital part of the social fabric of the Mexican community. Supporting arts and cultural practices through funding initiatives,

more availability of public space, and recognition and validation of their importance will be a major contribution to assuring that Mexican immigrants can continue to contribute to the economic and social development of the Chicago Metropolitan region. Local artists are a growing sector of the community and their efforts to foster creativity, promote transnational relations, contribute to educational efforts and neighborhood vitality should be recognized and supported by public and private institutions.

- 2) **Support institutions, such as churches, social service organizations, public parks, libraries, and small businesses that serve as critical sites for Mexican artistic and cultural practices.** Also support the individuals within them who are bridges between recent Mexican immigrants who are predominantly limited or non-English speaking and non-Mexicans in Chicago communities who are limited or non-Spanish speaking. The cultural bridging that these institutions facilitate and make possible are invaluable to the greater understanding and increased possibility for civic action for the collective good involving both Mexican and non-Mexican community residents.
- 3) **Expand opportunities for immigrants to obtain employment training, English as a Second Language, and information on rights and responsibilities.** This study documented the initiatives and strategies that immigrant workers are taking to improve their livelihood under difficult conditions.
- 4) **Support school-based efforts to use arts and cultural education and increase arts education opportunities for teachers.** Many schools serve as important sites for parents' and students' broader civic engagement, whether in relation to security and community policing, public health, or other issues of concern to neighborhoods and cities. Data from the *Creative Networks: Mexican Immigrant Assets in Chicago* study indicate that teachers who incorporate the arts and culturally specific content and forms in their classes—including in non-arts focused courses—can simultaneously teach basic concepts, affirm students' family and ethnic/racial experiences and identities, and encourage curiosity among students about their own and other students' cultural uniqueness. Teachers should be encouraged to expose their students and themselves to the diversity of Mexican culture (for example, by taking trips to predominantly Mexican neighborhoods in the Chicago area, to Mexican artistic and cultural events in Chicago.) Study data also suggest that teachers who incorporate Mexican subjects and forms in bilingual events for parents also provide a point of entrée for parents to engage in the schools and become partners with teachers in assuring children's successful educational development. This approach allows schools, teachers and parents to shift away from a deficit-based to an asset-based relationship between families and schools in which parents are regarded as valuable and knowledgeable practitioners of personal and collective artistic and cultural practices and traditions. Arts education opportunities for parents at schools should also be

increased so that they can become equal partners with teachers in the school-based element of their child's educational development.

- 5) **Create an information-sharing mechanism by convening local researchers, government personnel, hometown federations and other immigrant organizations, and social service organizations to facilitate information sharing, improve services to immigrants and strengthen support networks.** Creating an information-sharing mechanism through which organizations, researchers and city government personnel can remain informed of one another's missions, objectives and projects will make delivery of social services more efficient. This information-sharing could catalyze more effective and informed collaboration to build on the assets and meet the needs of the Chicago area recent Mexican immigrant population, including its informal and formal artists and cultural practitioners.
- 6) **Support legislative efforts at the federal and state levels to allow undocumented students in America's junior high schools and high schools to apply for legal status if they have good moral character and have lived in the U.S. for at least five years.** With legal status, these students can go to college and eventually become U.S. citizens. In addition, undocumented students who are college bound would be able to pay in-state tuition (rather than foreign student tuitions, which are typically much higher).

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: SURVEY INSTRUMENTS

QUESTIONNAIRE: INDIVIDUALS' CONNECTIONS TO PERSONAL NETWORKS

1. What is a **name** that we can use to represent you during this interview? You do not have to provide your real name if you choose not to, just a name that you will recognize as representing yourself while you answer the following questions.
2. Please list names for 15 **family members, friends, coworkers, church members or other relations** that you consider close to you. Again, you do not have to provide real names if you choose not to, just names that you will recognized as representing your group members as you answer the following questions.
3. The screen above shows your name at the center, surrounded in a circle by the names of people you listed as your support group of family, friends, coworkers, etc. At the bottom of the screen are icons that represent levels of **knowledge** in areas that are important to the immigrant community. We would like to know how much knowledge you think the members of your group have in each of these areas.

We will start with the name at the top and move clockwise around the circle so that we do not miss anyone, including yourself. If you believe a group member is knowledgeable on one or more of these topics, tell me the level of knowledge from the appropriate area in the bottom of the adjacent window. Keep in mind that you can add as many icons to one person's name as you feel appropriate.

KNOWLEDGE AREAS: cultural and arts activities, citizenship and immigration services, neighborhood information, social activities, church and religious information, sports, neighborhood organizing, jobs and employment, health and social services, schools and education, ESL/language classes, friends and family in Mexico, hometown in Mexico

SCALE: none, some, moderate, expert

4. In your daily life, you may need information about **KNOWLEDGE AREA** that you do not possess. The screen above shows your name in the center, surrounded in a circle by the names of the people in your group.

Start with the name at the top and move clockwise around the circle so that you do not miss anyone. Please indicate one or more people from whom you are likely to **retrieve information about KNOWLEDGE AREA** by telling me their names.

KNOWLEDGE AREAS: cultural and arts activities, citizenship and immigration services, neighborhood information, social activities, church and religious information,

sports, neighborhood organizing, jobs and employment, health and social services, schools and education, ESL/language classes, friends and family in Mexico, hometown in Mexico

This question will be repeated for each KNOWLEDGE AREA listed.

5. In your daily life, you may have or receive information about **KNOWLEDGE AREA** that others do not have. The screen above shows your name in the center, surrounded in a circle by the names of the people in your group.

Start with the name at the top and move clockwise around the circle so that you do not miss anyone. Please indicate one or more group members to whom you are likely to **provide information about KNOWLEDGE AREA** by telling me their names.

KNOWLEDGE AREAS: cultural and arts activities, citizenship and immigration services, neighborhood information, social activities, church and religious information, sports, neighborhood organizing, jobs and employment, health and social services, schools and education, ESL/language classes, friends and family in Mexico, hometown in Mexico

This question will be repeated for each activity listed.

6. You may or may not **INSERT ACTIVITY HERE (work with)** people in your group on a regular basis. We would like to know how often you think you **worked with** people in your group in the past month. The screen above shows a symbol that represents you in the middle, surrounded by the names of the individuals you chose earlier.

We will start with the person at the top and move clockwise around the circle so that we do not miss anyone. Please indicate (to your best estimate) how frequently you think you have **worked with** that individual during the past month. If you do not have an estimate, we can leave it blank.

ACTIVITIES: learn art practice from, teach art practice to, plan and organize social events, plan cultural events, attend cultural events, attend social events, attend church, attend work or union meetings, attend neighborhood meetings, attend sports events, participate in arts activities or performances, participate in cultural events, attend ESL or other educational classes.

SCALE: never, seldom, sometimes, often, very often

This question will be repeated for each activity listed.

7. In your daily life, you or your group may interact with a number of organizations important to the immigrant community. The screen above shows your name at the center, surrounded in a circle by the names of people in your group. At the bottom of the screen

are icons that represent different kinds of organizations. We would like to know which members of your group have ties to each kind of organization.

We will start with the name at the top and move clockwise around the circle so that we do not miss anyone, including yourself. If you believe a group member has contact with one or more of these kinds of organization, tell me. Keep in mind that you can add as many icons to one person's name as you feel appropriate.

ORGANIZATIONAL TYPES:

Community leaders
Informal artists' groups
Social clubs
Sports clubs
Churches
Schools
Libraries
Parks
Cultural and community centers
Hometown associations
Businesses
News media
Social and cultural events

8. The screen above shows your name in the center, surrounded in a circle by the names of the people in your group. Using the adjacent screen, please indicate how often you **communicated with group members prior to immigrating to the US**. We will start with the name at the top and move clockwise around the circle so that you do not miss anyone.

SCALE: never, seldom, sometimes, often, very often

9. The screen above contains the names of everyone in your group arranged in a circle. We would like to know how often you think the members of your group communicate with one another about **KNOWLEDGE AREA**.

KNOWLEDGE AREAS: cultural and arts activities, citizenship and immigration services, neighborhood information, social activities, church and religious information, sports, neighborhood organizing, employment, health and social services, schools and education, ESL/language classes, friends and family in Mexico, hometown in Mexico

Use the graph above to draw lines representing your view of the communication network:

1. Start with the name at the top and move clockwise around the circle so that you do not miss anyone (and do not forget yourself in the middle).
2. Click on the box corresponding closest to the frequency of communication.

3. Select the name of the person who initiates communication.
4. Click on the name of the person the initiator talks to.
5. Repeat steps 1-3 for each pair of people that you believe communicate.
6. If you do not believe two people communicate with each other, do not draw a line between them.

SCALE: none, once a year, once every six months, once every three months, once a month, once a week, daily

This question will be repeated for each activity listed.

10. The following items concern how you interact with your group members:

- a. I am generally independent.
- b. Members of my group have a lot of overlapping knowledge.
- c. Each member has unique knowledge that they bring to my group.
- d. I depend on the knowledge of other members of my group.
- e. I depend on the knowledge of other people outside my group.
- f. I work very closely with other group members.
- g. I know a lot about the knowledge of my group members
- h. My group members know a lot about my knowledge.
- i. My group members know a lot about one another.
- j. My group coordinates knowledge well.
- k. Each member of my group has a specialized role.
- l. Members of my group have interchangeable roles.

SCALE: n/a, strongly agree, agree, neither, disagree, strongly disagree

11. How active are you in formal artistic and cultural activities? (groups, etc.)

SCALE: none, once a year, once every six months, once every three months, once a month, once a week, daily

12. How active are you in informal artistic activities? (sewing, cooking, etc.)

SCALE: none, once a year, once every six months, once every three months, once a month, once a week, daily

13. In what neighborhood do you live?

14. What is your occupational status?

SCALE: full time, part time, occasional/day labor, unemployed

15. In what neighborhood do you work?

16. What is your occupation?
17. How do you normally get to work? (car, bus, etc.?)
18. How many times in the past year have you visited Mexico?
19. How many times in the past year have friends or family from Mexico visited you?
20. How many times in the past five years have you visited Mexico?
21. How many times in the past five years have friends or family from Mexico visited you?
22. How often do you talk to friends or family in Mexico?

SCALE: none, once a year, once every six months, once every three months, once a month, once a week, daily

23. To the best of your knowledge, how long have you lived in the US?
24. To the best of your knowledge, how long have you lived in your current neighborhood?
25. In what year were you born?
26. Where in Mexico were you born?

A list of Mexican states will appear here

27. What is your gender?
28. What is the highest level of education you received?

SCALE: Some high school, High school diploma, Some college, Associate's degree, Bachelor's degree, Master's degree, Doctorate degree

29. What is your marital status?

SCALE: Single, never married; Divorced, Separated, Married

30. What language do you speak most often?

The following questions are about your support group members:

11. How active is **name** in formal artistic and cultural activities? (groups, etc.)

SCALE: none, once a year, once every six months, once every three months, once a month, once a week, daily

12. How active is **name** in informal artistic activities? (sewing, cooking, etc.)

SCALE: none, once a year, once every six months, once every three months, once a month, once a week, daily

13. In what neighborhood does **name** live?

14. What is your occupational status?

SCALE: full time, part time, occasional/day labor, unemployed

15. In what neighborhood does **name** work?

16. What is **name**'s occupation?

17. How does **name** normally get to work? (car, bus, etc.?)

18. How many times in the past year has **name** visited Mexico?

19. How many times in the past year have **name**'s friends or family from Mexico visited?

20. How many times in the past five years has **name** visited Mexico?

21. How many times in the past five years have **name**'s friends or family from Mexico visited?

22. How often does **name** talk to friends or family in Mexico?

SCALE: none, once a year, once every six months, once every three months, once a month, once a week, daily

23. To the best of your knowledge, how long has **name** lived in the US?

24. To the best of your knowledge, how long has **name** lived in his/her current neighborhood?

25. To the best of your knowledge, in what year was **name** born?

26. To the best of your knowledge, where in Mexico was **name** born?

A list of Mexican states will appear here

27. What is **name**'s gender?

28. What is the highest level of education **name** received?

SCALE: Some high school, High school diploma, Some college, Associate's degree, Bachelor's degree, Master's degree, Doctorate degree

29. What is **name's** marital status?

SCALE: Single, never married; Divorced, Separated, Married

30. What language does **name** speak most often?

QUESTIONNAIRE: INDIVIDUALS' CONNECTIONS TO ORGANIZATIONS

We will start with a master list of organizations, created from focus groups, informational interviews, etc. That list will be subdivided in ways suggested by the community assets schematics in Kretzmann and McKnight. The first set of questions will narrow down an individual's interactions with the organizational environment. **There will always be the option for an individual to add an organization to the list if it isn't present.** The second set of questions will investigate frequency of interactions on a series of activities based on providing support to organizations and taking advantage of organizations' services.

1. What is a **name** that we can use to represent you during this interview? You do not have to provide your real name if you choose not to, just a name that you will recognize as representing yourself while you answer the following questions.
2. Here is a list of **community leaders** (organizers, politicians, priests, etc.) in the Chicagoland area. Which of these individuals do you know or interact with? Are there others that we have forgotten to mention? Who are they?
3. Here is a list of **informal artistic and cultural groups** active in the Chicagoland area. Which of these groups do you know of or interact with? Are there others that we have forgotten to mention? What are they?
4. Here is a list of **social clubs** active in the Chicagoland area. Which of these social clubs do you know of or interact with? Are there others that we have forgotten to mention? What are they?
5. Here is a list of **sports clubs** active in the Chicagoland area. Which of these sports clubs do you know of or interact with? Are there others that we have forgotten to mention? What are they?
6. Here is a list of **churches** in the Chicagoland area. Which of these Churches do you attend services, festivals, or social events at? Are there others that we have forgotten to mention? What are they?
7. Here is a list of **schools** in the Chicagoland area. Which of these schools do your children attend, which of these schools do you attend social events, festivals, or other activities at? Are there others that we have forgotten to mention? What are they?
8. Which of these **libraries** do you visit on a fairly regular basis? Are there others that we have forgotten to mention? What are they?
9. Here is a list of **parks** in the Chicagoland area. Which of these do you visit on a fairly regular basis? Are there others that we have forgotten to mention? What are they?

10. Here is a list of **cultural and community centers** in the Chicagoland area. Which of these do you visit on a fairly regular basis? Are there others that we have forgotten to mention? What are they?
11. Here is a list of **hometown associations**. Do you participate in the activities of any of these associations? Are there others that we have forgotten to mention? What are they?
12. Here is a list of **businesses** (clubs, restaurants, bars, etc.). Which of these places do you visit? Are there others that we have forgotten to mention? What are they?
13. Here is a list of **newspapers, journals, magazines, television stations and radio stations** in the Chicagoland area. Which of these do you read, watch or listen to? Are there others that we have forgotten to mention? What are they?
14. Here is a list of **events** (festivals, holidays, temporadas, etc.) that occur in the Chicagoland area. Which of these do you attend? Are there others that we have forgotten to mention? What are they?

15. The screen above shows your name at the center, surrounded in a circle by the names of the organizations you said you interact with in the previous question. At the bottom of the screen are icons that represent levels of knowledge in areas that are important to the immigrant community. We would like to know how much **knowledge** you think the organizations you listed have in each of these areas.

We will start with the name at the top and move clockwise around the circle so that we do not miss anyone. If you believe an organization is knowledgeable on one or more of these topics, tell me the level of knowledge from the scale at the bottom of the screen. Keep in mind that we can add as many icons to one organization's name as you feel appropriate.

KNOWLEDGE AREAS: cultural and arts activities, citizenship and immigration services, social activities, religious information, neighborhood organizing, jobs and employment, health and social services, schools and education, ESL/language classes

SCALE: none, some, moderate, expert

16. You may or may not **INSERT ACTIVITY HERE (for example donate funds to)** organizations and groups on a regular basis. We would like to know how often you think you **donated funds to** organizations in the past month. The screen above shows a symbol that represents you in the middle, surrounded by the names of the organizations you chose earlier.

We will start with the organization at the top and move clockwise around the circle so that we do not miss anyone. Please indicate (to your best estimate) how frequently you

think you have **donated funds to** organizations during the past month. If you do not have an estimate, we can leave it blank.

ACTIVITIES: show art/perform, teach/facilitate art activities, participate in arts activities, donate funds, plan and organize social events, plan cultural events, provide meeting space, provide transportation, provide expertise, provide information, provide materials and equipment, volunteer time.

SCALE: never, seldom, sometimes, often, very often

This question will be repeated for each activity listed.

17. You may not **INSERT ACTIVITY HERE (for example attend functions planned by)** the groups or organizations you listed on a regular basis. We would like to know how often you think you **attended a function** during the past month. The screen above shows a symbol that represents you in the middle surrounded by the names of the organizations you listed.

We will start with the name at the top and move clockwise around the circle so that we do not miss anyone. Please indicate (to your best estimate) how frequently you think you have **attended a function** at these organizations during the past month. If you do not have an estimate, we can leave it blank.

ACTIVITIES: receive funds, attend social events, attend cultural events, gets information on rights, gets educational/social/health services, has children who attend, uses space at for family/social/sports/cultural/artistic events.

SCALE: never, seldom, sometimes, often, very often

This question will be repeated for each activity listed.

18. The screen above contains the names of the organizations you listed arranged in a circle. We would like to know how often you think these organizations **communicate or interact** with each other. We will use the graph above to draw lines representing your view of their communication network. If you do not believe two organizations communicate with each other, we will not draw a line between them.

1. Click on the box corresponding closest to the frequency of communication.
 2. Select the name of the organization who initiates communication.
 3. Click on the name of the organization the initiator talks to.
- Repeat steps 1-3 for each pair of organizations that you believe communicate with each other.

We will start with the name at the top and move clockwise around the circle so that we do not miss anyone.

QUESTIONNAIRE: ORGANIZATIONAL RESOURCE AND INTERACTION NETWORKS

1. Basic Information

- a. Name of organization
- b. Contact name
- c. Contact title
- d. Phone number
- e. Home page
- f. Address
- g. Is your organization incorporated?
- h. Is your organization immigrant-led?
- i. What neighborhood do you work in most?
- j. When was your organization started?
- k. How many employees do you have?
- l. How many volunteers do you have?
- m. How many years have you been involved with cultural or artistic activities?
- n. How many projects in total do you have in operation?
- o. How many cultural or artistic projects do you have in operation?
- p. How much of your funding comes from local, state, or federal governments?
- q. How much of your funding comes from private sources such as foundations?
- r. How much of your funding comes from donations?
- s. How much of your budget supports artistic and cultural activities?
- t. How much of your budget supports the Mexican immigrant community?

2. Here is a list of organizations involved with the Mexican immigrant community in one way or another. On a scale of 0 to 6, rate the degree of collaboration that your organization has with these other organizations. The degree of collaboration should be based on the intensity and frequency of communication.

a. Collaboration Scale

- i. No collaboration
- ii. A little
- iii. A little more
- iv. Some
- v. More than some
- vi. A lot
- vii. A whole lot

3. Please tell me what resources your organization needs, based on the list below. Are there other resources we have forgotten? If so, what are they?

a. Resources Needed

- i. Economic Power
- ii. Expertise

- iii. Information
 - iv. Materials and Equipment
 - v. People
 - vi. Space and Facilities
 - vii. Transportation
4. Please tell me what resources your organization has to share, based on the list below. Are there other resources that we have forgotten? If so, what are they?
- a. Resources Offered**
 - i. Economic Power
 - ii. Expertise
 - iii. Information
 - iv. Materials and Equipment
 - v. People
 - vi. Space and Facilities
 - vii. Transportation
5. From the list below, indicate the categories that best describe the **types of services** your organization offers. Rate these on a scale of 1-7, according to how much you specialize in each area. Are there other types of services we have forgotten to mention? If so, what are they?
- a. Basic Subsistence
 - i. Food
 - ii. Housing
 - iii. Material Resources
 - iv. Temporary Financial Aid
 - v. Transportation
 - vi. Other
 - b. Consumer Services
 - i. Consumer Assistance
 - ii. Consumer Regulation
 - c. Criminal Justice and Legal Services
 - i. Criminal Correctional System
 - ii. Judicial Services
 - iii. Law Enforcement Agencies
 - iv. Law Enforcement Services
 - v. Legal Assistance Modalities
 - vi. Legal Education Information
 - vii. Legal Services
 - viii. Other
 - d. Education
 - i. Educational Delivery Systems
 - ii. Educational Programs
 - iii. Educational Support Services
 - iv. Other
 - e. Environmental Quality

- i. Animal Services
 - ii. Environmental Improvement
 - iii. Public Health
 - iv. Public Safety
 - v. Other
- f. Health Care
 - i. Emergency Medical Care
 - ii. Health Screening/Diagnosis
 - iii. Health Supportive Services
 - iv. Human Reproduction
 - v. Inpatient Health Facilities
 - vi. Outpatient Health Facilities
 - vii. Rehabilitation
 - viii. Specialized Treatment
 - ix. Specialty Medicine
 - x. Substance Abuse Service
 - xi. Other
- g. Income Security
 - i. Employment
 - ii. Income Maintenance Programs
 - iii. Social Insurance Programs
 - iv. Other
- h. Individual and Family Life
 - i. Family Substitute Services
 - ii. Family Support Services
 - iii. Leisure Activities
 - iv. Social Development
 - v. Spiritual Enrichment
 - vi. Other
- i. Mental Health Care and Counseling
 - i. Adjunctive Therapies
 - ii. Counseling Approaches
 - iii. Counseling Modalities
 - iv. Mental Health Facilities
 - v. Outpatient Mental Health Care
 - vi. Psychiatric Support Services
 - vii. Other
- j. Organizational/Community Services
 - i. Community Groups
 - ii. Community Services
 - iii. Information Services
 - iv. Occupational Professional Services
 - v. Organizational Development
 - vi. Other

6. Designate the **target populations** or people to whom your organization's services are intended. Rate these on a scale of 1-7, according to how much you target or provide services to each group. Are there other groups we have forgotten to mention? If so, what are they?
- a. Age groups
 - i. Adults
 - ii. Seniors
 - iii. Youth
 - iv. Others
 - b. Aided persons
 - i. ADFC Recipients
 - ii. Section 8 Housing Recipients
 - iii. Other
 - 1. Caregivers
 - c. Citizenship
 - i. Foreign Nationals
 - ii. Refugees/Entrants/Asylum
 - iii. Resident Aliens
 - iv. Other
 - d. Disabilities
 - i. Developmental Disabilities
 - ii. Health Conditions
 - iii. Hearing Impairments
 - iv. Homebound People
 - v. Learning Disabilities
 - vi. Mental/Emotional Disturbance
 - vii. Physical Disabilities
 - viii. Substance Abusers
 - ix. Visual Impairments
 - x. Other
 - e. Educational Status
 - i. Functionally Illiterate
 - ii. School Dropouts
 - iii. Students
 - iv. Other
 - f. Ethnic Groups/National Origin
 - i. African Americans
 - ii. Hispanics/Latinos
 - iii. Native Americans
 - iv. Other
 - g. Families Needing Support
 - i. At Risk Populations
 - ii. Bereaved Individuals
 - iii. Children of Aging Parents
 - iv. Co-Dependents
 - v. Divorced Persons

- vi. Families of Adult Incest
- vii. Families of Alcoholics
- viii. Families of Disabled
- ix. Families of Frail/Senile Elderly
- x. Families of Fays/Lesbians
- xi. Families of Mentally Ill
- xii. Families of Military Personnel
- xiii. Families of Sexual Assault Victims
- xiv. Families of Suicides
- xv. Other
- h. Family Relationships
 - i. Families with children
 - ii. Single Parent Families
 - iii. Parents
 - iv. Siblings
 - v. Other
- i. Income Groups
 - i. Low Income
 - ii. Other
- j. Military Personnel
 - i. Veterans
 - ii. Other
- k. Offenders
 - i. Child Abusers
 - ii. Court-Referred Individuals
 - iii. Gang Members
 - iv. Juvenile Delinquents
 - v. Other
- l. Sex
 - i. Men
 - ii. Women
- m. Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity
 - i. Bisexuals
 - ii. Gay Men
 - iii. Lesbians
 - iv. Transsexuals
 - v. Transvestites
 - vi. Men who have sex with Men
 - vii. Other
- n. Transients
 - i. Homeless
 - ii. Other
- o. Victims/Survivors
 - i. Abused Adults
 - ii. Abused Children
 - iii. Accident Victims

iv. Other
p. Volunteers

7. What are your current projects, especially those that provide good examples of your participation in artistic and cultural activities, that highlight your collaboration with other organizations OR that focus on the types of projects you really want to find partners for. Additionally, you may wish to list previous and future projects that involve your organization.

8. You may or may not **INSERT ACTIVITY HERE (for example donate funds to)** organizations and groups on a regular basis. We would like to know how often you think your organization **donated funds to** organizations in the past year. The screen above shows a symbol that represents your organization in the middle, surrounded by the names of other organizations.

We will start with the organization at the top and move clockwise around the circle so that we do not miss anyone. Please indicate (to your best estimate) how frequently you think you have **donated funds to** organizations during the past year. If you do not have an estimate, we can leave it blank.

ACTIVITIES: donate funds, plan and organize social events, plan cultural events, provide meeting space, provide transportation, provide expertise, provide information, provide materials and equipment, volunteer time.

SCALE: never, seldom, sometimes, often, very often

This question will be repeated for each activity listed.

9. You may not **INSERT ACTIVITY HERE (for example attend functions planned by)** the groups or organizations on a regular basis. We would like to know how often you think your organization **attended a function** during the past year. The screen above shows a symbol that represents your organization in the middle surrounded by the names of other organizations.

We will start with the name at the top and move clockwise around the circle so that we do not miss anyone. Please indicate (to your best estimate) how frequently you think you have **attended a function** at these organizations during the past year. If you do not have an estimate, we can leave it blank.

ACTIVITIES: receive funds, attend social events, attend cultural events, gets meeting space at, gets transportation from, get expertise from, get materials and equipment from, get volunteers from.

SCALE: never, seldom, sometimes, often, very often
This question will be repeated for each activity listed.

APPENDIX II: INDIVIDUAL RESPONDENT SELECTION APPROACHES

1. Arts/Culture

Ethnographers will choose a series of one-digit numbers from the random number table before arriving at the arts/culture location. After the cultural event, the ethnographer will use the list of random numbers to contact possible respondents in the following way: each individual exiting the location after the ethnographer will be counted. When the count number corresponds to the random number on the list, the ethnographer will approach that individual about the survey. The counting begins again after that individual is contacted, and sampling continues until the ethnographer has met his or her sampling goal. For example, if the first two numbers in the random one-digit list are eight and five, the first individual contacted would be the eighth individual to exit the location after the ethnographer. The second individual would be the fifth person to exit after the first person was contacted.

2. Mass

Ethnographers will choose a series of one-digit numbers from the random number table before arriving at the mass location. After arrival, the ethnographer will use the list of random numbers to contact possible respondents in the following way: each individual exiting the location after the ethnographer will be counted. When the count number corresponds to the random number on the list, the ethnographer will approach that individual about the survey. The counting begins again after that individual is contacted, and sampling continues until the ethnographer has met his or her sampling goal. For example, if the first two numbers in the random one-digit list are eight and five, the first individual contacted would be the eighth individual to exit the location after the ethnographer. The second individual would be the fifth person to exit after the first person was contacted.

3. Sports

At a sporting event with organized seating, sampling will proceed as for Arts/Culture events. At sporting events without organized seating, sampling will be modified in the following way: Each ethnographer will obtain a map of the park they intend to visit and divide that map into six sections. Then, an ethnographer will choose a number from the random number table until he or she reaches a number between one and six. That number will represent the area in which the ethnographer will target individuals. To determine which individual to contact, the ethnographer will go to the chosen area and count the number of groups. Ethnographers will enter the random number table, and choose the first two digits encountered to represent the group they will choose a respondent from. If the number chosen does not identify a group, the next two numbers will be chosen until an appropriate group number is achieved. After the group is chosen, the following two numbers in the random table will represent the location of the respondent in the group. If the numbers following the group number do not correspond to a location in the group, the next two numbers will be chosen, and so on until an appropriate location is chosen.

4. Workers' Rights

These are considered to be classes in which there is one group working together. Ethnographers will enter the random number table, and choose the first two digits encountered to represent the individual they will contact. If the number chosen does not identify an individual, the next two numbers will be chosen until an appropriate number is achieved.

5. Social Services

Ethnographers will choose a series of one-digit numbers from the random number table before arriving at the social services location. After arrival, the ethnographer will use the list of random numbers to contact possible respondents in the following way: each individual entering the location after the ethnographer will be counted. When the count number corresponds to the random number on the list, the ethnographer will approach that individual about the survey. The counting begins again after that individual is contacted, and sampling continues until the ethnographer has met his or her sampling goal. For example, if the first two numbers in the random one-digit list are eight and five, the first individual contacted would be the eighth individual to enter the location after the ethnographer. The second individual would be the fifth person to enter after the first person was contacted.

6. ESL

These are considered to be classes in which there is a set of groups working together. Ethnographers will enter the random number table, and choose the first two digits encountered to represent the group they will choose a respondent from. If the number chosen does not identify a group, the next two numbers will be chosen until an appropriate group number is achieved. After the group is chosen, the following two numbers in the random table will represent the seat of the respondent. If the numbers following the group number do not correspond to a seat in the group, the next two numbers will be chosen, and so on until an appropriate seat number is chosen.

APPENDIX III: ETHNOGRAPHIC CODING SCHEME

LIST OF CODES

ANYL (ROOT CODE; NOT USED WITHOUT A SUFFIX)

ANALYSIS=REFLECTIONS ABOUT POSSIBLE MEANINGS OR PATTERNS.

ANYL-PULL

FACTORS IN THE U.S.A. THAT DRAW PEOPLE FROM MEXICO AS NAMED BY RESPONDENT OR RESEARCHER.

ANYL-PUSH

FACTORS THAT LEAD TO EMIGRATION FROM MEXICO AS NAMED BY RESPONDENT OR RESEARCHER.

ANYL-RESP

RESPONDENT MUSING ABOUT MEANING OF HIS/HER EXPERIENCE.

ANYL-RSCH

RESEARCHER REFLECTING ON POSSIBLE PATTERNS, TRENDS, IDEAS IN DATA IN WAYS THAT GO BEYOND THE USUAL AMOUNT OF ANALYSIS IN CODING FIELDNOTES. (CAN BE USED TO CODE ANALYTIC MEMO THAT CODER INSERTS WHILE CODING).

BUFFER

ANY THING, PRACTICE, ACTIVITY, NETWORK OR PERSON THAT LESSENS THE PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY RECENT MEXICAN IMMIGRANTS DURING TRANSITION TO USA.

DO

DOMAIN= BROAD SECTORS OR REALMS OF PRACTICES, OBSTACLES OR NODES.

DO-BUSN

RELATING TO EXCHANGE OF GOODS, SERVICES, FINANCIAL RESOURCES.

DO-CVPL

CIVIC-POLITICAL-LEGAL=RELATING TO GOVERNMENT, ELECTED OFFICIALS, AND LEGAL STATUS AND DOCUMENTATION.

DO-EDUC

RELATING TO LEARNING, BOTH THROUGH FORMAL INSTITUTIONS AND INFORMAL OR SMALL SCALE PROCESSES.

DO-FEDS

FEDERACIONES=RELATING TO ORGANIZATIONS IN USA THAT REPRESENT PEOPLE FROM STATES OR REGIONS IN MEXICO.

DO-FMLY

RELATING TO IMMEDIATE AND EXTENDED FAMILY, REGARDLESS OF LOCALITY.

DO-HLTH

RELATING TO PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL BEING AND MAINTENANCE.

DO-HOOD

NEIGHBORHOOD=RESPONDENT-IDENTIFIED COMMUNITY WITHIN A LARGER MUNICIPALITY.

DO-LABR

RELATING TO DUTIES PERFORMED IN EXCHANGE FOR COMPENSATION.

DO-RECR

RECREATION=NON-ARTS ACTIVITIES PERFORMED OR OBSERVED FOR FUN OR AMUSING DIVERSION.

DO-RELG

RELATING TO SPIRITUALITY AND THE SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS THAT ORGANIZE SPIRITUALITY

GSCALE

GSCALE=GEOGRAPHIC REACH OR SPAN OF THE ARTS/CULTURAL PRACTICE, NODE OR OBSTACLE

GSCALE-LOCAL

SPECIFIC ARTS/CULTURE PRACTICE, NODE OR OBSTACLE OCCURS IN AN ADJACENT COMMUNITY AREA OR NEIGHBORHOOD, OR WITHIN FIVE MILES.

GSCALE-NATNL

GEOGRAPHIC SCALE NATIONAL. THE SPECIFIC ARTS/CULTURE PRACTICE, NODE OR OBSTACLE OCCURS ON A NATIONAL (USA) SCALE.

GSCALE-REGION

GEOGRAPHIC SCALE REGIONAL; THE SPECIFIC ARTS/CULTURE PRACTICE, NODE OR OBSTACLE OCCURS WITHIN ILLINOIS AND ADJACENT STATES.

GSCALE-TRANS

GEOGRAPHIC SCALE TRANSNATIONAL. THE SPECIFIC ARTS/CULTURE PRACTICE, NODE OR OBSTACLE OCCURS ACROSS INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL BORDERS.

LOC

LOCATION=GEOGRAPHIC SITE OF ARTS/CULTURE PRACTICE, NODE OR OBSTACLE. ALSO USED ALONE TO CODE FOR OTHER GEO SITES WITHOUT OWN CODE (E.G. INDIANA)

LOC-CHIAREA

CHICAGO AREA=CHICAGO MUNICIPAL AREA GEOGRAPHIC SITE OF ARTS/CULTURE PRACTICE, NODE OR OBSTACLE; RELATING TO

LOC-NORTH

GEOGRAPHIC SITE OF ARTS/CULTURE PRACTICE, NODE OR OBSTACLE; RELATING TO CHICAGO, N SIDE (WITHIN CITY LIMITS N OF GRAND AVE)

LOC-SOUTH

SOUTH SIDE (WITHIN CITY LIMITS SOUTH OF I-55 EXPRESSWAY) AS GEOGRAPHIC SITE OF ARTS/CULTURE PRACTICE, NODE OR OBSTACLE

LOC-SUB

CHICAGO SUBURB AS GEOGRAPHIC SITE OF ARTS/CULTURE PRACTICE, NODE OR OBSTACLE

LOC-WEST

WEST SIDE OF CHICAGO AS GEOGRAPHIC SITE OF ARTS/CULTURE PRACTICE, NODE OR OBSTACLE

MX

MX=MEXICO. CAN BE USED ALONE=COUNTRY OF MEXICO WHEN SUCH REFERENCE IS NOT COVERED BY OTHER CODES (EG PR-REMT, GSCALE-TRANS, ETC.)

MX-AGUA

STATE OF AGUASCALIENTES

MX-BACA

STATE OF BAJA CALIFORNIA

MX-BACS

STATE OF BAJACALIFORNIA SUR

MX-CAMP

STATE OF CAMPECHE

MX-CHIA
STATE OF CHIAPAS

MX-CHIH
STATE OF CHIHUAHUA

MX-COAH
STATE OF COAHUILA

MX-COLI
STATE OF COLIMA

MX-DIST
DISTRITO FEDERAL (MEXICO CITY)

MX-DURA
STATE OF DURANGO

MX-EMEX
STATE OF MEXICO

MX-GUAN
STATE OF GUANAJUATO

MX-GUER
STATE OF GUERRERO

MX-HIDA
STATE OF HIDALGO

MX-JALI
STATE OF JALISCO

MX-MICH
STATE OF MICHOACAN

MX-MORE
STATE OF MORELOS

MX-NAYA
STATE OF NAYARIT

MX-NUEV
STATE OF NUEVO LEON

MX-OAXA
STATE OF OAXACA

MX-PUEB
STATE OF PUEBLA

MX-QUER
STATE OF QUERETARO

MX-QUIN
STATE OF QUINTANA ROO

MX-SANL
STATE OF SAN LUIS POTOSI

MX-SINA
STATE OF SINALOA

MX-SONO
STATE OF SONORA

MX-TABA
STATE OF TABASCO

MX-TAMA
STATE OF TAMAULIPAS

MX-TLEX
STATE OF TLEXCALA

MX-VERA
STATE OF VERACRUZ

MX-YUCA
STATE OF YUCATAN

MX-ZACA
STATE OF ZACATECAS

NODE
PERSON, PLACE, ORGANIZATION OR PRACTICE WITH MANY CONNECTIONS
FOR RESOURCE SHARING (MATERIALS, INFORMATION, SOCIAL
CONNECTIONS) IDENTIFIED BY RESPONDENT AND/OR RESEARCHER.

NON LAT

NON-LATIN AMERICAN RESPONDENT, BUFFER, OBSTACLE OR NODE AS RELATING TO MEXICAN IMMIGRANTS.

OBSTACLE

ANY THING OR PERSON THAT DELAYS OR HINDERS TRANSITION OF RECENT MEXICAN IMMIGRANTS TO LIVING IN USA.

ORG

ORGANIZATION. GROUP OF PEOPLE WITH COMMON CAUSE OR INTEREST WHETHER IT IS A NODE OR NOT.

ORG-FRML

INCORPORATED, ESTABLISHED OR "LEGITIMATE" ORGANIZATION.

ORG-INFR

UNINCORPORATED OR UNOFFICIALY SANCTIONED ORGANIZATION.

OTHER LAT

INDIVIDUALS NOT MEXICAN BUT OF LATIN AMERICAN OR SPANISH-SPEAKING CARIBBEAN ANCESTRY WHO ARE EITHER RESPONDENT, BUFFER, OBSTACLE OR NODE AS RELATING TO MEXICAN IMMIGRANTS. NOT REFERRING TO PEOPLE FROM SPAIN.

PR

PRACTICE=ARTISTIC/CULTURAL, NETWORKING ACTIVITY RELATED BY RESPONDENT OR OBSERVED. ALONE, PR=ANY PRACTICE WITHOUT ITS OWN CODE.

PR-ART ED

ANY FORM OF DELIBERATE TEACHING OR LEARNING OF ANY ARTS PRACTICES (NOT CULTURAL PRACTICES).

PR-CARE

HEALTH SERVICES CONSUMED AND/OR PRODUCED, INCLUDING BOTH INDIVIDUAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL CARE.

PR-CLOTHING

THE PRACTICE OF MAKING CLOTHES.

PR-CRFT

MANUAL TALENTS SEPARATE FROM CLOTHES MAKING (WHICH HAS ITS OWN CODE). CAN INCLUDE KNITTING, CROCHETING, SEWING, STENCILING, WHITTLING, WOOD CARVING, CERAMICS PAINTING, LEATHER WORKING. CAN USE FABRIC, TEXTILE, TEXTURED, INHERENTLY MALLEABLE, OR MIXED MATERIALS.

PR-CULT PERF

STREET VENDOR AND OTHER DISPLAY FALLING OUTSIDE OF MUSIC, THEATRE, DANCE, SPOKEN WORD

PR-DEC-EXTR

AESTHETIC CHANGES TO EXTERIOR OF BUILDINGS

PR-DEC-INTR

AESTHETIC CHANGES TO INTERIOR OF BUILDINGS OR ENCLOSED SPACE

PR-DNCE

ALL FORMS OF USE OF THE BODY AS A MEANS OF DELIBERATE ARTISTIC OR CULTURAL EXPRESSION THROUGH MOVEMENT

PR-EAT

THE CONSUMPTION OF MEXICAN FOOD, BOTH TRADITIONAL FOODS AND NEW FORMS AS THEY MAY APPEAR IN CHICAGO.

PR-EVENTS

SINGULAR OR PERIODIC GATHERINGS OF PEOPLE FOR ANY PURPOSES OF OBSERVANCE, COMMEMORATION, OR ENJOYMENT. (CHURCH FUNDRAISER, QUINCINERA)

PR-FEST

ANY PUBLIC GATHERING, SPECTACLE, OR MASS PROCESSIONAL MOVEMENT MARKED BY A SPECIFIC CULTURAL OR COMMUNITY REFERENT

PR-FOOD

ANY EFFORTS DEVOTED TO GATHERING MATERIALS, PRODUCING, COOKING, SERVING OR OTHERWISE PRESENTING EDIBLES

PR-GARD

PLANTING AND MAINTAINING PLANTS FOR DECORATIVE OR FOOD VALUE

PR-GROUPS

PARTICIPATION AS TEACHER OR LEARNER IN ORGANIZED MEETINGS DESIGNED TO DISSEMINATE IMPORTANT INFORMATION OR SKILLS (ESL, LABOR RIGHTS, IMMIGRATION POLICIES, ARTS GROUPS)

PR-LANG

PURPOSEFUL PARTICIPATION IN SPANISH OR OTHER NATIVE MEXICAN LANGUAGES AS A MEANS OF MAINTAINING CULTURAL IDENTITY AND COMMUNITY FORMATION. INCL TEACHING TO THE US BORN.

PR-MDIA

WATCHING, LISTENING, DOING INTERVIEWS, BROADCASTING IN TELEVISION OR RADIO PROGRAMMING

PR-MEET

PARTICIPATION OF TWO OR MORE INDIVIDUALS IN FORMAL ENCOUNTERS FOR THE PURPOSES OF SHARING INFORMATION AND/OR FORMULATING PLANS OF ACTION

PR-MUSIC

SOUND EXPRESSION FORMS USING ANY COMBINATION OF RHYTHM, MELODY OR HARMONY, EXPERIENCED LIVE OR THROUGH ANY MEDIA

PR-REMT

SENDING MONEY TO MEXICO FROM THE UNITED STATES. CODE REFERS TO ALL ASPECTS OF THIS PRACTICE.

PR-RESC

PROVIDING OR SEEKING OUT RESOURCES (MATERIAL, INFORMATIONAL OR SOCIAL). THROUGH RESOURCE SHARING, NETWORKS ARE CREATED.

PR-SCLP

SHAPING OF PLASTIC MATERIALS INTO SOLID FORMS AS A MEANS OF EXPRESSION

PR-SPORT

INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES

PR-THTR

LIVE DRAMATIC ENACTMENT

PR-VEND

SELLING, CONSUMING OR PARTICIPATING IN GOODS SOLD IN STREET VENUES

PR-VISUAL

PAINTING, MURALS, DRAWING AND OTHER MAKING OF TWO DIMENSIONAL SURFACES OR OBJECTS OF ART THAT CAN BE SEEN WITH THE EYES

PR-WRIT

ALL FORMS OF WRITTEN EXPRESSION USING WORDS

PR IMP

PRACTICE'S IMPACT=EFFECT, PRODUCT OR RESULT OF THE CULTURAL/ARTISTIC ACTIVITY. ALSO USED TO CODE FOR SOME EFFECT WITHOUT A CODE HERE

PR IMP-ASIM

THE PROCESS OF INTEGRATION INTO A GENERALLY LARGER COMMUNITY IN RESPONSE TO SOCIAL PRESSURES TO ADAPT. THIS CODE APPLIES BOTH TO PEOPLE MOVING FROM MEXICO TO USA AND FROM USA BACK TO MEXICO. THIS CODE CAN ALSO BE USED FOR THOSE WHO RESIST ASSIMILATION

PR IMP-COMTY BLD

PEOPLE DETERMINING AND COALESCING AROUND COMMON INTERESTS

PR IMP-ECON

RELATED TO EARNING OR NOT EARNING BASIC LIFE NECESSITIES IN THE UNITED STATES OR MEXICO

PR IMP-LIFE

LIFE ENHANCING=SOMETHING THAT MAKES LIFE BETTER

PR IMP-NOST

NOSTALGIA=REMEMBRANCE OR FEELING ABOUT ONE'S LIFE IN MEXICO. CAN BE POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE

PR IMP-SHFT

THE PERCEIVED TRANSFORMATION OF A SYSTEM OF SHARED BELIEFS ABOUT HUMAN ACTIVITY, INCLUDING CUSTOMS, PRACTICES AND VALUES, INTO NEW PARADIGMS

PR MODE

PRACTITIONER'S MODE=ROLE A PERSON PLAYS IN THE ARTISTIC PRACTICE. (ROOT CODE NOT USED WITHOUT SUFFIX)

PR MODE-PART

TAKE PART IN ARTISTIC PRACTICE BUT NOT AS SPECTATOR OR PERFORMER

PR MODE-PERF

ENGAGING IN ARTISTIC PRACTICE FOR THE BENEFIT OF AN AUDIENCE

PR MODE-SPEC

OBSERVING AN EVENT

PR TYPE

PRACTICE TYPE (ROOT CODE; NOT USED WITHOUT SUFFIX)

PR TYPE-FRML

FORMAL=COMMUNICATED, ESTABLISHED OR "LEGITIMATE", PRACTICE

PR TYPE-HYBR

HYBRID=PRACTICE OF MIXED ORIGIN OR COMPOSITION

PR TYPE-HYPER

A MEXICAN PRACTICE THAT APPEARS IN AN EXAGGERATED FORM IN THE USA; CONVERSLY, A MEXICAN PRACTICE THAT APPEARS IN EXAGGERATED FORM IN MEXICO DUE TO INFLUENCE OF USA

PR TYPE-INFR

INFORMAL=NON-COMMUNICATED OR UNOFFICIALY SANCTIONED PRACTICE

RESP

RESPONDENT=ROOT CODE FOR INTERVIEWEE'S DEMOGRAPHIC INFO (ROOT CODE, NOT USED WITHOUT SUFFIX)

RESP-AGE

EXACT OR APPROXIMATE AGE OF RESPONDENT

RESP-IDEN

THE PROCESS THROUGH WHICH AN INDIVIDUAL ASKS AND ANSWERS "WHO AM I"; THE ONGOING NEGOTIATION BETWEEN THE SELF AND OUTER WORLD THROUGH WHICH A PERSON DETERMINES THE PERSONAL, CULTURAL AND OTHER TRAITS BY WHICH S/HE IS RECOGNIZABLE AS A MEMBER OF A GROUP

RESP-MIG

MIGRATION FOR REASONS OF OTHER PERCEIVED OPPORTUNITES (NOT INCLUDING EC, ED, FA, CH)

RESP-MIG-CHI

MIGRATION FOR THE REASON OF CONSIDERATION OF CHILDREN'S FUTURE=

RESP-MIG-EC

MIGRATION FOR ECONOMIC REASONS

RESP-MIG-EDU

MIGRATION FOR REASONS OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

RESP-MIG-FAM
MIGRATION DUE TO FAMILY OR FAMILY REUNIFICATION

RESP-OCCU
OCCUPATION OF RESPONDENT

RESP-SEX-F
FEMALE

RESP-SEX-M
MALE

RESP-SEX-OTHER
SELF-IDENTIFIED GENDER OTHER THAN MALE OR FEMALE

RESP RI
RESPONDENT RESIDES IN=INTERVIEWEE LIVES IN AREAS OTHER THAN CHICAGO OR SUBURBS

RESP RI-NORTH
RESPONDENT RESIDES IN CHICAGO NORTH SIDE (WITHIN CITY LIMITS NORTH OF EXPRESSWAY I-55)

RESP RI-SOUTH
RESPONDENT RESIDES IN CHICAGO SOUTH SIDE (WITHIN CITY LIMITS SOUTH OF I-55 EXPRESSWAY)

RESP RI-SUB
RESPONDENT RESIDES IN CHICAGO SUBURBS (OUTSIDE OF CITY LIMITS, WITHIN METROPOLITAN AREA)

RESP RI-WEST
RESPONDENT RESIDES IN CHICAGO WEST SIDE CHIICAGO (WITHIN CITY LIMITS SOUTH OF GRAND AVENUE, NORTH OF I-55)

APPENDIX IV: ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITY TABLES

Organization Name	Percentage of Responding Organizations that Noted Moderate Collaboration With These Organizations
El Valor	58.33%
Centro Comunitario Juan Diego	45.83%
Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum	41.67%
Hoy	41.67%
Mujeres Latinas en Accion	37.50%
Progreso Latino	37.50%
Centro sin Fronteras	37.50%
Casa Aztlan	33.33%
Latinos Progresando	33.33%
The Field Museum	33.33%
CAPS	33.33%
Resurrection Project	33.33%
Alivio Medical Center	29.17%
Centro Romero	29.17%
Erie Neighborhood House	29.17%
Latino Youth, Inc.	29.17%
Radio Arte	29.17%
YMCA	29.17%
MALDEF	29.17%
LULAC	29.17%
Accion Chicago	29.17%
EcoVida	29.17%
Universidad Popular	29.17%
Interfaith Leadership Project	25.00%
Family Focus	25.00%
Contratiempo	25.00%
Spanish Coalition for Housing	25.00%
Little Village Community Development Corporation	20.83%
Pilsen Alliance	20.83%
Café Jumping Bean	20.83%
Hector Duarte	20.83%
HACE	20.83%
Amor de Dios	20.83%
Latino Cultural Center	20.83%
Our Lady of Tepeyac	20.83%
Sones de Mexico	16.67%
Latin American and Latino Studies Program, UIC	16.67%
World Relief, Albany Park	16.67%
Logan Square Neighborhood Assn	16.67%
Neighborhood Housing Services of Chicago	16.67%
Café Mestizo	16.67%
LUCHA	16.67%

Latino Organizations of the SW	16.67%
Our Lady of Guadeloupe	16.67%
Por un Barrio Mejor	16.67%
College of DuPage Adult Education	16.67%
Pilsen Neighbors	16.67%
US Hispanic Leadership Inst.	16.67%
St. Pious Church	12.50%
CAAELI	12.50%

Organization Name	Percentage of Times Organizational Respondents Noted High Collaboration Levels with These Organizations
Little Village Community Development Corp.	29.17%
Mujeres Latinas en Accion	25.00%
St. Pious Church	25.00%
Chicago Interfaith Workers Center	25.00%
Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum	20.83%
Casa Aztlan	20.83%
Alivio Medical Center	20.83%
Pilsen Alliance	20.83%
CAAELI	20.83%
Progreso Latino	16.67%
Centro sin Fronteras	16.67%
Centro Romero	16.67%
Sones de Mexico	16.67%
Latinos United	16.67%
Latino Union	16.67%
Albany Park Workers Center	16.67%
Access Community Health	16.67%
ICR	16.67%
Casa Guanajuato	16.67%
Centro Cristo Rey	16.67%
El Valor	12.50%
Hoy	12.50%
Latinos Progresando	12.50%
The Field Museum	12.50%
CAPS	12.50%
Erie Neighborhood House	12.50%
Latino Youth, Inc.	12.50%
Radio Arte	12.50%
Interfaith Leadership Project	12.50%
Café Jumping Bean	12.50%
Latin American and Latino Studies Program, UIC	12.50%
World Relief, Albany Park	12.50%
Illinois Coalition of Immigrant & Refugee Rights	12.50%
St. Anthony's	12.50%
Metropolitan Family Services	12.50%

Los Jaliscenses	12.50%
Albany Park Community Center	12.50%
Los Zacatecanos	12.50%
Casa Michoacan	12.50%
Zacatecas Cultural Center	12.50%
Albany Park Neighborhood Council	12.50%
Zacatecas HTA	12.50%
Saint Procopius Parish Church	12.50%
Villa Guadeloupe	12.50%
Los Hidalgenses	12.50%
Family Rescue	12.50%
Bureau of Immigrants and Refugees at IL DHS	12.50%
WIC	12.50%
Durango Unido en Chicago	12.50%