The Forgotten Latino Community: Racial Formation and the Struggle for Political Representation in Washington, D.C., 1970–1993

by

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Dedication

To Yeye, your promised sweatshirt is finally on its way!

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List of Abbreviations

ANC	Advisory Neighborhood Commission
CADOLANCA	*Comité de Ayuda y Desarollo de Latinoamericanos en la Capital de la Nación*/Committee for the Aid and Development of Latin Americans in the Nation's Capital
CARECEN	Central American Refugee Center
CCRB	Civilian Complaint Review Board
CHCA	Council of Hispanic Communities and Agencies
CLCD	Commission on Latino Community Development
EOFULA	Educational Organization for the United Latin Americans
FOP	Fraternal Order of Police
IBPO	International Brotherhood of Police Officers
INS	Immigration and Naturalization Service
IRCA	Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986
LAYC	Latin American Youth Center
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MPD	Metropolitan Police Department
MULA	*Mujeres Unidas Latinoamericanas*
OLA	Office on Latino Affairs
OSCAC	Office of Spanish Community Advisory Committee
PEILA	Program of English Instruction for Latin Americans
SCLS	Southern Christian Leadership Conference
SNCC	Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee
USCCR	United States Commission on Civil Rights

Note on Terminology

The terminology used to describe Spanish-speaking communities and people of Latin American and Caribbean descent living in the United States is in flux and part of important intellectual discussions. Scholars are increasingly adopting gender-neutral terms, including "Latinx" and "Latine," to refer to people who identify with Latin American or Caribbean heritage. I recognize the pitfalls of gender-based terminology and agree with the current push to adopt language that advances inclusivity. After many debates and conversations with colleagues, however, I have landed on the use of the term "Latino" in this dissertation for the sake of consistency and clarity. I have chosen, however, to use the term Latinx in this dissertation when referring to these groups in present day and when describing historiographical debates and scholarly literature.

The Latin American, Caribbean, and Spanish-speaking population of Washington, D.C. was unique because of its heterogenous composition. Unlike U.S. cities with majority populations of Puerto Ricans, Mexicans/Chicanos, or Cubans, the District did not have a clearcut majority until the 1990s when Salvadorans became the largest demographic. Because of this, I use the term Latino to describe an amalgamated community. While historical actors and contemporary sources used various terms interchangeably during the thirty-year period covered by this dissertation, including "Spanish," "Spanish-speaking," "Latin," "Hispanic," and "Latino," the majority favored and readily used Latino. The names of community organizations and their preferred terminology fluctuated and reflected changing conventions and political standing, but

over the years Latino remained a consistent form if self-identification for people of Latin American or Caribbean descent in the District of Columbia. Puerto Rican and other leaders in the area also deliberately used the term Latino to create a sense of community and to construct a shared ethnic and political identity. Because for much of the period covered in this dissertation no single group predominated within a diverse D.C. Latino population, it is less common to see members of this social group identified by nationality in archival sources that speak to the whole community. However, whenever possible, I refer to historical actors' specific place of origin or heritage, especially when discussing Puerto Ricans and Salvadorans—two of the groups at the center of this dissertation. Salvadorans tended to self-identify with reference to their nationality or to describe themselves as "Central Americans" even as establishment leaders viewed and grouped them as part of the larger Latino community.

Abstract

"The Forgotten Latino Community: Racial Formation and the Struggle for Political Representation in Washington, D.C., 1970–1993" is a political history of the nation's capital that analyzes the racial complexities of urban politics by interrogating the relationship between Latino activism and the Black municipal leadership. Urban politics informed and shaped Latino identity formation in the District, creating moments of opportunity for Latinos to articulate and mobilize community over the thirty-year period. The dissertation asks: What did Latino political mobilization and community formation look like in a Black-majority city with a Black political class emerging to dominate city politics? The choices made by heads of Latino organizations, spearheaded by high-profile Puerto Ricans, and internal leadership dynamics prompted the strategic assertion of a unified Latino community. Puerto Rican leaders, who had established networks with Black politicians, mobilized this type of Latino identity to inform political strategies.

In contrast to D.C.'s Black majority, which gained a measure of political representation and power with the expansion of home rule in 1973, the city's Latino population had less visibility in both the city and federal governments due to the heterogenous nature of the group and census undercounting. Early on, Puerto Rican residents emerged as the multinational community's primary interlocutors with the Black-majority government due to their citizenship status, ability to speak English, and familiarity with the municipal bureaucracy. These leaders focused on asserting the growing Latino population's visibility by challenging census

undercounts, engaging in political campaigns, and pushing for an equitable share of city funding. Politics created moments of opportunity for Puerto Rican leaders to articulate a unified Latino community, joined by a shared language and culture. They strategically pushed this narrative to better petition the local and federal government. In reality, the District's Latinos were an amalgamated population consisting of mixed nationalities, citizenship statuses, classes, and races.

However, the makeup of the Latino population changed with the ramping-up of civil wars in Central America and U.S. foreign policy, causing new immigration and refugee patterns in the 1980s. Salvadoran migration to the District produced new challenges for an already strapped Latino community and Black politicians. By 1990, Salvadorans became the largest Latino group in the city. The material condition of Salvadorans in the District exemplified the persistent needs and cyclical nature of demands of the Latino community. While Puerto Rican leaders had initially focused on issues such as language inclusion, funding for social services, and government jobs, by the mid-1980s Salvadoran activism centered issues of immigration enforcement and police harassment. On May 5, 1991, the police shooting of a handcuffed Salvadoran man inflamed already tense race relations between the Latino community and the majority-Black city government. The Mount Pleasant Uprising of 1991 was the climax of multiple converging problems and dynamics in the Latino communities: the persistence of unmet needs, perceptions of invisibility, police brutality, and multiracial tensions.

Chapter 1 Introduction

"We call it the forgotten Latino community," asserted Sonia Gutiérrez, director of the Council of Hispanic Communities and Agencies in Washington, D.C. Gutiérrez, a Puerto Rican educator, mad this claim at a 1978 town hall sponsored by the Carter administration. In celebration of National Hispanic Heritage Week, high-profile Latino administration officials had traveled to different states in an effort to learn about the country's Latino population.[1] At their last stop in Washington, D.C., officials recognized similar patterns of issues faced by the local and the national population: language barriers, immigration obstacles, poor housing, high unemployment, and inadequate education. However, Gutiérrez argued that unlike other locales that had either Mexican, Cuban, or Puerto Rican majorities, the D.C. Latino community was exceptional because the diversity of its Latin American populations had delayed unity and thus the possibility of political representation. Although Sonia Gutiérrez described a "Latino community" in 1978, the notion of a "Latino" identity was in flux during the early 1970s.

The intertwined processes of identity formation for a multinational Latino community and its political mobilization at key flashpoints from 1970 to the early 1990s reveals tensions and paradoxes that surfaced when D.C. Latinos agitated for their civil and political rights in the Black-majority city. The Latino population in the District that was concentrated in the Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant neighborhoods originally consisted mostly of embassy and federal workers in the 1940s. The community expanded with new immigration patterns and as families

[1] "Latinos Call Themselves A 'Forgotten Community'," *The Washington Post*, September 16, 1978.

settled permanently, drawing in other extended communities.[2] As their numbers grew, Latin American people negotiated among themselves a definition of Latino identity—specifically, who was to be included or excluded from that designation. The District's Latino population was a heterogenous group of Caribbeans, South Americans, and Central Americans with different class and citizenship statuses; it included the poor, the working class, the middle-class, recent immigrants and refugees, and more established first- and second-generation residents and citizens. This level of diversity posed challenges for aspiring leaders who attempted to organize a united front that would be legible to city and federal authorities. By the 1970s, the population had grown considerably yet retained its minority status within "Chocolate City."[3] Washington D.C. was a solidly minority-majority city with the African American population reaching 71 percent. According to the 1970 census data, "persons of Spanish Language" of any race made up 2.1 percent of the total population.[4]

A burgeoning group of Latino organizers, inspired by the District's Black Power and civil rights tradition, wanted to use the community's growing presence to advocate for their own civil rights.[5] The 1970s was a turning point for this activism, driven by what Latino leaders argued was a severe undercounting of their population in the 1970 Census due in part to vulnerable

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[2] Olivia Cadaval, *Creating a Latino Identity in the Nation's Capital: The Latino Festival* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1998); Terry A. Repak, *Waiting on Washington: Central American Workers in the Nation's Capital* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995); Chris Myers Asch and George Derek Musgrove, *Chocolate City: A History of Race and Democracy in the Nation's Capital* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2017).

[3] Washington, D.C.'s nickname of "Chocolate City" foregrounded the city's vibrant African American community. The name was conferred on the city by a song from funk band Parliament. For some examples of the use and description of "Chocolate City" see Asch and Musgrove, *Chocolate City*; Natalie Hopkinson, *Go-Go Live: The Musical Life and Death of a Chocolate City* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012); Brandi T. Summers, *Black in Place: The Spatial Aesthetics of Race in a Post-Chocolate City* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2019).

[4] U.S. Bureau of the Census, *1970 Census of Population and Housing, Census Tracts* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1972) https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1970/phc-1/39204513p22ch11.pdf.

[5] For some examples that center civil rights and Black Power in the history of Washington, D.C. see: Arch and Musgrove, *Chocolate City*; Lauren Pearlman, *Democracy's Capital: Black Political Power in Washington, D.C., 1960s–1970s* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2019).

groups within the community's undocumented status, fear of federal authority, and language barriers. While to the 1970 Census found 15,671 persons of Spanish descent lived in the District, local leaders claimed that more than 50,000 Latinos resided across the city.[6] Community leaders felt the undercounting of their population in census data relegated Latinos as "others" and affected their material conditions in the city. The city and federal government used census information to set thresholds for investment in communities by determining proportional funding for programs, including employment and housing assistance. Living in proximity as neighbors opened the door for multiracial alliances and coalition building around shared concerns over affordable housing, jobs, and education. For African Americans and Latinos, misunderstandings and competition over resources (at times instigated by politicians and community leaders) foreclosed sustained intergroup solidarity. The budget scarcity, resulting in part from Carter and Reagan ear cuts for social programs, further marginalized Latino communities in the city. Feelings of exclusion spurred Latino organizing efforts to unify the community and create advocacy groups, programs, and proposals to assert their presence in the city and to fight for their share of resources and political power.

The main voices of the Latino community emerged from leadership positions in social service, religious, and non-profit organizations, which constituted the main lifeblood of the Latino community. Within that cadre of leaders, a contingent of Puerto Ricans became the public face of the people, including Sonia Gutiérrez, Carlos Rosario, José Gutiérrez, Aida Berio, William "Willie" P. Vazquez, and Arlene Gillespie.[7] Puerto Rican leaders were able to speak for

[6] Olivia Cadaval and Brian Finnegan, "'Our Voices in the Nation's Capital': Creating the Latino Community Heritage Center of Washington, D.C.," *The Public Historian* 23, No. 4 (Fall 2001): 73-90; Robert D. Manning, "Washington, D.C.: The Changing Social Landscape of the International Capital City," in *Origins and Destinies: Immigration, Race, and Ethnicity in America*, ed. Silvia Pedraza and Rubén G. Rumbaut (New York: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1996), 373-389; Mary Lenz, "Concerns in Washington's 'Latin Quarter': How Much Longer Can the Melting Pot Survive?" *The Washington Post*, September 7, 1978.

[7] Sonia and José Gutiérrez were married during this time.

the Latino population from a position of privilege. Not only did they have the security of citizenship (a legacy of colonialism), but they also had gained experience from their involvement in civil rights organizing, their established relationships with Black city leaders, and their stats as middle-class professionals.[8] Other prominent non-Puerto Rican Latino leaders during this time shared these privileged characteristics. Puerto Rican leaders, such as Rosario, prioritized mainstream forms of political organizing and eschewed more radical and progressive tactics.[9]

However, as the Salvadoran population grew in the District and became a majority of the Latino enclave by the late-1980s, fissures developed between the newcomers and the established leaders. The growing Salvadoran and Central American community challenged the status quo of representation and engagement with the Black majority. This new migrant and refugee wave, prompted by civil wars and U.S. interventionist policies in Central America, consisted of individuals mostly from rural areas who were less educated and economically disadvantaged compared with their older counterparts. In the 1970s, Puerto Rican leaders pressed the Black-majority city for the Latino community's share of political power, funding for the development of services, and stressed the obstacle of language barriers. In contrast, during the 1980s, the Salvadoran majority framed desires for representation around concerns of safety, harsher immigration policies, jobs, and police brutality. Throughout the 1980s, Puerto Rican leaders continued to speak for the Latino community, including Salvadorans, while also disempowering

[8] Sonia Song-Ha Lee, *Building a Latino Civil Rights Movement: Puerto Ricans, African Americans, and the Pursuit of Racial Justice in New York City* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2014); Lorrin Thomas, *Puerto Rican Citizen: History and Political Identity in Twentieth Century New York City* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010); Nicholas De Genova and Ana Yolanda Ramos-Zayas, *Latino Crossings: Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and the Politics of Race and Citizenship* (New York: Rutledge, 2003); Lilia Fernández, *Brown in the Windy City: Mexicans and Puerto Ricans in Postwar Chicago* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2012).

[9] Betty Medsger, "Latins form Largest Immigrant Group," *The Washington Post*, December 4, 1972.

the Salvadoran majority's ability to advocate for themselves to the city government. As such, by 1990, Salvadorans felt like they had become "the forgotten Latino community."

Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant became sites of contestations over private and public spaces by Black, white, and Latino residents. Competing interests in these neighborhoods revealed simmering racial tensions underneath multiracial and multicultural spaces through the 1980s. Despite the high concentration of Latino residents in the Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant area, the city was reluctant to increase targeted assistance for affordable housing and employment for the undercounted community. Puerto Rican leaders argued that language barriers and cultural differences aggravated poor living conditions. Immigrants were often forced to live in crowded apartments, where landlords took advantage of language differences and used threats of deportation to force acquiescence.[10] Gentrification by white homeowners presented a new problem for the community, revealing ideological differences between established political leaders who wanted more bilingual police and Latino youth who protested increased police surveillance and harassment. Latino-centered programs and agencies pushed to make these myriad issues visible to city administrations, advocating for populations in the community regardless of citizenship status. Black politicians contended that these problems were class-based and required structural rather than Latino-specific solutions.

On May 5, 1991, layered experiences of marginalization expressed by Latinos who felt invisible to the Black-led city government and Salvadorans who felt sidelined despite their growing numbers converged in the Mount Pleasant uprising. Salvadorans, Latino youth, and frustrated community members protested and rebelled against the city and law enforcement after a Black police officer shot a Salvadoran man in the neighborhood park. The Mount Pleasant

[10] Blair Gately, "Adams Morgan, Mt. Pleasant Residents Protest High Rent, Evictions, Joblessness," *The Washington Post*, February 16, 1978.

uprising, spanning three nights, was a microcosm of the contestation of public spaces—who had the right to be in these spaces and how they were used— and of the bitterness felt by Latinos over their status and treatment in the District. Pedro Avilés, a Salvadoran community organizer and leader, claimed the situation was "predictable and predicated" as Salvadorans had consistently voiced concerns over police harassment and their general underrepresentation of Latinos in the city.[11]

1.1 Latino Urban History in a Multiracial City

"The Forgotten Latino Community: Racial Formation and the Struggle for Political Representation in Washington, D.C., 1970–1993" is a history of a people developing and making themselves visible through politics and fighting for a right to a multiracial city. Between 1970 and 1993, changing demographics, priorities, and politics set the contours of how a real and imagined Latino community engaged with the Black political majority. In the beginning, Puerto Rican leaders leveraged their privilege to become power brokers of the Latino community, articulating problems over lack of funding, language barriers, and political representation to the Black political majority. These leaders envisioned a unified Latino community that brought together all Spanish-speaking populations within the District and worked to make their concept a reality. Through sustained political engagement, Puerto Rican leaders helped transform a disparate community without formal representation into a viable political entity. By the 1980s, newer Central American migrants shifted intra-community relations and demographics and were sidelined by Puerto Ricans who believed that this new group needed first to be acculturated to the city, multiracial relationships, and political processes. Salvadorans and younger Latinos

[11] Testimony of Pedro Avilés, Chairman, DC Latino Rights Task Force, United States House of Representatives, Committee on Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs, *Effectiveness of Federal Assistance Programs in Meeting Fiscal Distress, Part II*, 102nd Congress, 1st Session (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1991).

diverged from the Puerto Rican establishment and attempted to elevate issues of police brutality and the ripple effects of discriminatory federal immigration policies on everyday life at the local level. However, Black city leaders, who had relied on Puerto Rican leaders to communicate with the city's Latino population, sidestepped these concerns until disenfranchised Latinos took to the streets in 1991.[12] The Mount Pleasant uprising marked a turning point for the Latino community in Washington, D.C. as Puerto Rican leaders were forced to concede to the Salvadoran majority. As a result, the city's Black governmental leadership was forced to recognize the existence of a broader range of Latino interests, and disenfranchised Latinos recentered community demands to emphasize equity and justice.

The trajectory from a community struggling for political representation to one rebelling against structural forces is evident at three different scales: city, community, and neighborhood. Tracking an evolving Latino population in the District at these scales exposes how racial identity categories were simultaneously imposed by state authorities and internally generated by Latinos. These intertwined processes of identity formation are revelatory for how Latinos experienced rightlessness in layered ways. Puerto Rican learnership asserted a shared Latino identity, or latinidad, based on language, culture, and home country as a pragmatic response to politicization.[13] Central American migrants contested latinidad by demanding their inclusion. Moreover, these three scales of analysis inform one another, allowing for the tracing of federal power and Black political power in relation to the construction of Latino identity.

[12] Lorrin Thomas and Aldo A. Lauria Santiago, *Rethinking the Struggle for Puerto Rican Rights* (New York: Routledge, 2019); Pedro A. Regalado, "The Washington Heights Uprising of 1992: Dominican Belonging and Urban Policing in New York City," *Journal of Urban History* 45, no. 5 (September 2019): 891-1098.
[13] Eduardo Contreras, *Latinos and the Liberal City: Politics and Protest in San Francisco* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019), 8.

As an urban case study, Washington, D.C. is both exceptional and exemplary.[14] Federal power structured the conditions of life for all residents in Washington, D.C. in a pre- and post-home rule era. Before 1973, the District's residents did not have the right to full local self-government. This meant they could not vote on municipal politics, create their own budget, or enact local laws. In 1973 the Home Rule Act gave city residents the right to vote for their own mayor and city council even as the president retained emergency powers over local law enforcement and Congress maintained the power to veto all legislation and budgets. For all D.C. residents, but mostly African Americans, greater political representation had long been the crux of racial tensions and crisis.[15] The role of federalism in D.C. and its status as the nation's capital sets the city apart from other urban spaces dealing with similar questions of urban politics and governance. In this regard, the federal state governed Washington, D.C. in similar ways to other United States territories, such as Puerto Rico, with limited direct representation and imperial-like relationship.[16] Historian Lauren Pearlman has shown how the federal government's oversight

[14] Urban historians have used case studies as a method to access how structural barriers constrained agency and choice at a local level. Thomas Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996); George Chauncey, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1890–1940* (New York: Basic Books, 1994); Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Robert Self, *American Babylon: Race and the Struggle for Postwar Oakland* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003); David M. P. Freund, *Colored Property: State Policy and White Racial Politics in Suburban America* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007); Matthew D. Lassiter, *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006); Lily Geismer, *Don't Blame Us: Suburban Liberals and the Transformation of the Democratic Party* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014); N. D. B. Connolly, *A World More Concrete: Real Estate and the Remaking of Jim Crow South Florida* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2014); Andrew Highsmith, *Demolition Means Progress: Flint, Michigan, and the Fate of the American Metropolis* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2015).

[15] In 1961, the ratification of the 23rd Amendment granted residents of D.C. the right to vote in presidential elections. Congress and the Executive Branch could thus directly implement laws and manage local politics in the city through the power of federal oversight. From around 1880, a three-member board of commissioners appointed by the president administered D.C. In 1967, that system was replaced by one consisting of a mayor-commissioner and a nine-member city council also appointed by the president. Although the District has one elected representative in Congress, that person does not have voting power. Arch and Musgrove, *Chocolate City*; Pearlman, *Democracy's Capital;* Howard Gillette, Jr., *Between Justice and Beauty: Race, Planning, and the Failure of Urban Policy in Washington, D.C.* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006).

[16] For some histories that center the role of U.S. empire and governance of its territories see: Julie Greene, *The*

powers, even with home rule's expansion of participatory politics, constrained the possibilities of development and dissent in the city.[17] Puerto Rican leaders who steered community organizing understood this unique relationship and helped form a Latino consciousness that challenged but also appealed to federal imposition.

While Washington, D.C. maintains unique qualities as the nation's capital, the city also shares similar paradigms with other urban spaces and Black-majority cities where federal policies on housing, education, and policing sorted and regulated people by race. State legislatures act as mediators between the federal and local governments. But in D.C., the process is direct. Howard Gillette, Jr. maintains that "what happened in Washington, D.C., was what the nation wanted."[18] Politicians often used Washington, D.C. as a testing ground for national debates and ideas about urban policy. Latino residents experienced the District's duality and contended with the Black political majority to find a path towards recognition. In particular, community leaders used the city's unique dynamic to their advantage. They relied on Hispanic congressmen to force city officials to hold hearings on the status of Latinos, testified in congressional hearings to support program fundings, and drew national attention to their struggles following the Mount Pleasant uprising.

Canal Builders: Making America's Empire at the Panama Canal (New York: Penguin Press, 2009); Paul Kramer, *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States, and the Philippines* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006); Laura Briggs, *Reproducing Empire: Race, Sex, Science, and U.S. Imperialism in Puerto Rico* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Amy Kaplan, *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005); April Merleaux, *Sugar and Civilization: American Empire and the Cultural Politics of Sweetness* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2015); Jana Lipman, *Guantánamo: A Working-Class History between Empire and Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008); Kornel Chang, *Pacific Connections: The Making of the US-Canadian Borderlands* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012); Alfred McCoy, *Policing America's Empire: The United States, the Philippines, and the Rise of the Surveillance State* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009); Paul Kramer, "Power and Connection: Imperial Histories of the United States in the World," *American Historical Review* 116, no. 5 (December 2011), 1348-1391.

[17] Pearlman, *Democracy's Capital.*

[18] Gillette, Jr., *Between Justice and Beauty*, x.

In the case of Latinos, their relationship to federal supremacy in the city affected processes of identity formation and daily life driven by census undercounts, the domineering use of funding, and the implementation of immigration policy. Rosario and other Puerto Rican leaders understood that the way they were categorized and counted by the Census Bureau conflicted with their community's development. They took advantage of the capacious category of "people of Spanish descent" used by the Census in 1970 to mobilize the pan-ethnic group into one Latino entity, thus pushing back against the underestimation of the size of their population in the city.

Scholarship on how the state created racial categories contextualizes Latinos' identity formation in the District. Census categories, especially the designation of race, set the boundaries of societal inclusion and exclusion and reflected political expediency that worked to maintain white supremacy.[19] Additionally, Mae Ngai has demonstrated how terms such as Latin American and Asian were simultaneously ethnic and racial categories. In these cases, the law produced racial identity and intertwined citizenship, Americanization, and whiteness.[20] In the District, this

[19] For some works that trace the history of the Census see: Paul Schor, *Counting Americans: How the US Census Classified the Nation*, trans. Lys Ann Weis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017); Margo J. Anderson, *The American Census: A Social History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015); Kenneth Prewitt, *What is Your Race?: The Census and Our Flawed Efforts to Classify Americans* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013); Kenneth Prewitt, "The Census Counts, the Census Classifies," in *Not Just Black and White: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Immigration, Race, and Ethnicity in the United States*, eds. Nancy Foner, George M. Fredrickson (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2004); Dan Bouk, *Democracy's Data: The Hidden Stories in the U.S. Census and How to Read Them*, First Edition (New York: MCD, 2022); Cristina G. Mora, *Making Hispanics: How Activist, Bureaucrats, and Media Constructed a New American* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2014); Melissa Nobles, *Shades of Citizenship: Race and the Census in Modern Politics* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000); Mara Loveman, "The U.S. Census and the Contested Rules of Racial Classification in Early Twentieth-Century Puerto Rico," *Caribbean Studies* 35, no. 2 (July-December 2007): 79-114; Mara Loveman and Jeronimo O. Muniz, "How Puerto Rico Became White: Boundary Dynamics and Inter-Census Racial Reclassification," *American Sociological Review* 72, no. 6 (December 2007): 915-939.

[20] Mae M. Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004); Thomas A. Guglielmo, *White on Arrival: Italians, Race, Color, and Power in Chicago, 1890-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Chang, *Pacific Connections*; Erika Lee, *At America's Gates: Chinese Immigration during the Exclusion Era, 1882-1943* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003); Kelly Lytle Hernández, *Migra!: A History of the U.S. Border Patrol* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010); Ellen D. Wu, *The Color of Success: Asian Americans and the Origins of the Model Minority*

was evident as the census consistently recorded people of Puerto Rican and Mexican origin and counted only select groups of other foreign-born ethnic communities.[21] Similarly, Lilia Fernández explains that "the obtuse way in which the nation-state … identified and officially counted Latinos/as … obscured their presence even further."[22] Latinos in the District felt like a silent minority, suppressed by state actors who failed to acknowledge the growing population. Rev. Jose Tuarbe echoed claims that Latinos were "the most neglected minority group" in Washington, D.C. in 1970.[23]

Rosario and other Puerto Rican leaders recognized the political necessity of overcoming the community's disparate interests in order to gain representation within the city. Sonia Gutiérrez helped create the Council of Hispanic Agencies in 1977 to unify social service organizations in the pursuit of federal funding. Language differences united Latinos while simultaneously creating barriers for their inclusion in D.C. society. These leaders argued that language barriers permeated all interactions in the city. They made interpersonal interactions difficult. They opened the population up to discrimination and mistreatment by government agencies. At the street level, misunderstandings and misperceptions between Spanish speakers

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(Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013); Laura Briggs, *Reproducing Empire: Race, Sex, Science, and U.S. Imperialism in Puerto Rico* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Natalia Molina, *Fit to be Citizens?: Public Health and Race in Los Angeles, 1879-1939* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006); Natalia Molina, *How Race is Made In America: Immigration, Citizenship, and the Historical Power of Radical Scripts* (Berkeley: University of California Pres, 2014); Khalil Gibran Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern Urban America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011); Scott Kurashige, *The Shifting Grounds of Race: Black and Japanese Americans in the Making of Multiethnic Los Angeles* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008); Cindy Hahamovich, *No Man's Land: Jamaican Guest Workers in America and the Global History of Deportable Labor* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011); Peggy Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally: Miscegenation Law and the Making of Race in America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Margot Canaday, *The Straight State: Sexuality and Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011).

[21] U.S. Bureau of the Census, *U.S. Censuses of Population and Housing: 1960. Census Tracts* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1962) https://www2.census.gov/prod2/decennial/documents/41953654v11ch05.pdf; U.S. Bureau of the Census, *1970 Census of Population and Housing, Census Tracts* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1972) https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1970/phc-1/39204513p22ch11.pdf.

[22] Fernández, *Brown in the Windy City*, 6.

[23] Constance Holden, "Latin Residents Tell City Council of Troubles," *The Evening Star*, January 28, 1970.

and the police occurred. In the classroom, teachers struggled to communicate and assimilate new migrant students. Language barriers also arose where Latinos worked at their places of employment. State policies, from housing, education, and immigration, reinforced the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion.[24] At the same time, Puerto Rican leaders' move to subsume all Latino concerns within one umbrella did not eliminate interpersonal struggles within the community. Nor did it eradicate the realities of racial, class, and citizenship differences.

Changes in migration patterns to the city that resulted from U.S. foreign and immigration policy and events abroad not fully contained within the box of U.S. foreign entanglements also affected local Latino identity formation. During the period between 1970 and the late 1980s, the makeup of the D.C. Latino community shifted significantly. Initially, Latinos in the District were more established within the working, middle and professional classes. Many individuals were citizens or immigrants with clear pathways to citizenship. By the 1980s, in contrast, the city's Latino population was composed increasingly of migrants and refugees who were undocumented, without paths to citizenship, from rural communities and from lower class and less educated backgrounds. Suann Hecht, a community activist in Mount Pleasant, remembers:

> Most of the people who were coming up from Latin America were well educated, had been very politically active in their own countries and of course had to leave because of that. But I would say most of them were probably college educated, middle class, upper middle class intellectuals. Where with the Central American, it was more the regular people who were just coming up because of the desperate war. They were a whole other class of people.[25]

These different groups of Latinos had unique relationships with the federal government that were informed by experiences between their home nations and the U.S. empire. For instance, the local

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[24] Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis*; Canaday, *The Straight State;* Shah, *Contagious Divides*; Fernández, *Brown in the Windy City;* Self, *American Babylon*; Freund, *Colored Property*; Lassiter, *The Silent Majority*; Self, *American Babylon*; Freund, *Colored Property*; Geismer, *Don't Blame Us*; Connolly, *A World More Concrete*; Highsmith, *Demolition Means Progress*.

[25] Suann Hecht Interview, Mount Pleasant Oral History Project, January 26, 2018, http://hdl.handle.net/1961/dcplislandora:42907.

chapter of the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES) linked the political situations in El Salvador and in the District of Columbia by foregrounding Congress's role in creating instability.[26] Scholars, in what Paul Kramer has synthesized as the "geopolitics of migration," have argued that geopolitical processes create the social categories of migrants and refugees and inform racial formation in U.S. domestic spaces.[27] In this case, federal policies on immigration and foreign military interventions instigated Central American migrations in the l980s and simultaneously affected the mobility of migrants within the city.

Federal immigration policies in the 1980s affected local organizing efforts and the level of assistance Salvadorans required in the District. Two policies profoundly altered the categorization of all Salvadorans who crossed the United States-Mexico border. The 1980 Refugee Act modified the national definition of refugee to align with United Nations standard, a person with a "well-founded fear of persecution."[28] The law also shifted the burden of proof to individuals to demonstrate they met the definition of a refugee during INS hearings.[29] Later, the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) established new amnesty policies and

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[26] D.C. Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador, "The Struggle for Self Determination: From D.C. to El Salvador," n.d. [1990], Folder 30, Box 48, Series 11, District of Columbia Statehood Commission Records, The People's Archive, District of Columbia Public Library, Washington, D.C.

[27] Paul A. Kramer, "The Geopolitics of Mobility: Immigration Policy and American Global Power in the Long Twentieth Century," *The American Historical Review* 123, no.2 (April 2018): 393–438; Greene, *The Canal Builders*; Hahamovitch, *No Man's Land*; Lara Putnam, *Radical Moves: Caribbean Migrants and the Politics of Race in the Jazz Age* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2013); Jesse Hoffnung-Garskof, *Racial Migrations: New York City and the Revolutionary Politics of the Spanish Caribbean* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019); Frank Andre Guridy, *Forging Diaspora: Afro-Cubans and African Americans in a World of Empire and Jim Crow* (Chapel Hill: The North Carolina University Press, 2010); David Pedersen, *American Value: Migrants, Money, and Meaning in El Salvador and the United States* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013); Patrick Scallen, "The Bombs that Drop in El Salvador Explode in Mount Pleasant: From Cold War Conflagration to Immigrant Struggles in Washington, DC, 1970-1995," (PhD Diss., Georgetown University, 2019).

[28] *Refugee Act of 1980*, Pub. L. No. 96-212, 94 Stat. 102 (1980).

[29] For more on Central American refugee policies see: Ngai, *Impossible* Subjects; Kristina Shull, "Reagan's Cold War on Immigrants: Resistance and the Rise of a Detention Regime, 1981-1985," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 40 no.2 (Winter 2021): 5-51; Craig A. Kaplowitz, "The Great Repudiator and Immigration Reform: Ronald Reagan and the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986," *Journal of Policy History* 30, no.4 (October 2018): 635-656; Scallen, "The Bombs"; Carlos B. Cordova, *The Salvadoran Americans* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2005); Gerson Rosales, "Yo canto a mi pueblo: Salvadoran Migration, Activism, and Diaspora in the San Francisco Bay Area, 1900-1992," (PhD diss., University of Michigan, forthcoming).

ramped up enforcement at the same time. While the law opened some paths towards citizenship, Salvadorans who arrived after 1982 were predominantly left out. IRCA also placed new restrictions and penalties on employers who hired undocumented workers.[30]

Discretionary interpretation of the law, especially regarding who counted as a refugee and had access to asylum in the country, reset the boundaries between legal and "illegal" forms of immigration.[31] The federal government, influenced by foreign interventions and support for the regime in El Salvador, largely maintained Salvadorans were economic migrants or "illegal aliens" rather than refugees or asylum seekers. The federal government considered Salvadorans as victims of generalized conditions of violence and not targeted persecution based on membership in a protected category such as race, religion, or political affiliation.[32] These structures and legal challenges followed Salvadorans residing in the District and distinguished the group from other Latinos in the community. According to the Office on Latino Affairs, IRCA's eligibility requirements for amnesty excluded 90 percent of D.C.'s undocumented Salvadorans.[33] Salvadorans recounted how fears of deportation structured daily life and informed their interactions with state actors, police, employers, and landlords. Immigration policies racialized Salvadorans and contributed to the antagonistic relationship between Salvadorans and the police. Community concerns about the potential collaboration between Immigration and

[30] Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*; Astrid Zolberg, *A Nation by Design: Immigration Policy in the Fashioning of America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006); Gary Gerstle, *American Crucible: Race and Nation in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Roger Daniels, *Guarding the Golden Door: American Immigration Policy and Immigrants Since* 1882 (New York: Hill and Want, 2004); Gil Loescher and John Scanlan, *Calculated Kindness: Refugees and America's Half-Open Door, 1945 to the Present* (New York: The Free Press, 1986); Kaplowitz, "The Great Repudiator and Immigration Reform"; Scallen, "The Bombs"; Carlos B. Cordova, *The Salvadoran Americans* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2005); Rosales, "Yo canto a mi pueblo."
[31] Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*; Lee, *At America's Gates*; Wu, *The Color of* Success; Lytle Hernández, *Migra!*.
[32] Scallen, "The Bombs."
[33] Arlene F. Gillespie, "Issues Related to the Impact of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 on the District of Columbia," June 1987, Office of Latino Affairs 1979, Vertical Files, The Washingtoniana Collection, The People's Archive, DC Public Library, Washington, D.C. [hereinafter Vertical Files, DCPL].

Naturalization Service agents and the Metropolitan Police Department influenced negative perceptions of local law enforcement.

Latinos' pursuit of a sense of cohesive community, multiracial alliances, and political representation mapped onto the neighborhoods of Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant. Intra-community tensions and negotiations about race and belonging occurred in these neighborhoods. As Felipe Hinojosa has assessed about recent Latinx urban history trends, "Latino history is a big topic that is best covered at the barrio level."[34] Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant, located in Ward 1, were lauded by residents, city officials, and the media as a "melting pot," almost equally divided between Black, Latino, and white populations.[35] During the 1970s, the demographics in these neighborhoods changed from mostly white and Black residents to white, Black, and Latino with the steady settlement of Latinos.[36] As the Latino population in Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant grew, their presence affected the neighborhood's physical and social spaces. The Council of Hispanic Agencies along with Puerto Rican leaders attempted to establish a "Latin Quarter" in Adams-Morgan in 1977, connecting identity to the physical space and cementing their positions within the city. Mount Pleasant was also affectionately known by Latino immigrants as *La Manplesa*. However African American and white residents challenged Latino assertions of a right to *el barrio*.

[34] Felipe Hinojosa, "Saving the Barrio: Immigration and Social Movements in Latino Urban History," *Journal of Urban History* 48, no. 4 (July 2022): 942-948, https://doi-org.proxy.lib.umich.edu/10.1177/00961442211028784.
[35] Government of the District of Columbia, Office of Policy and Planning, *Indices: A Statistical Index to District of Columbia Services*, August 1991.
[36] Betty Medsger, "Latins form Largest Immigrant Group," *The Washington Post*, December 4, 1972; Lee Daniels, "Diversity Marks First Ward," *The Washington Post*, August 14, 1974.

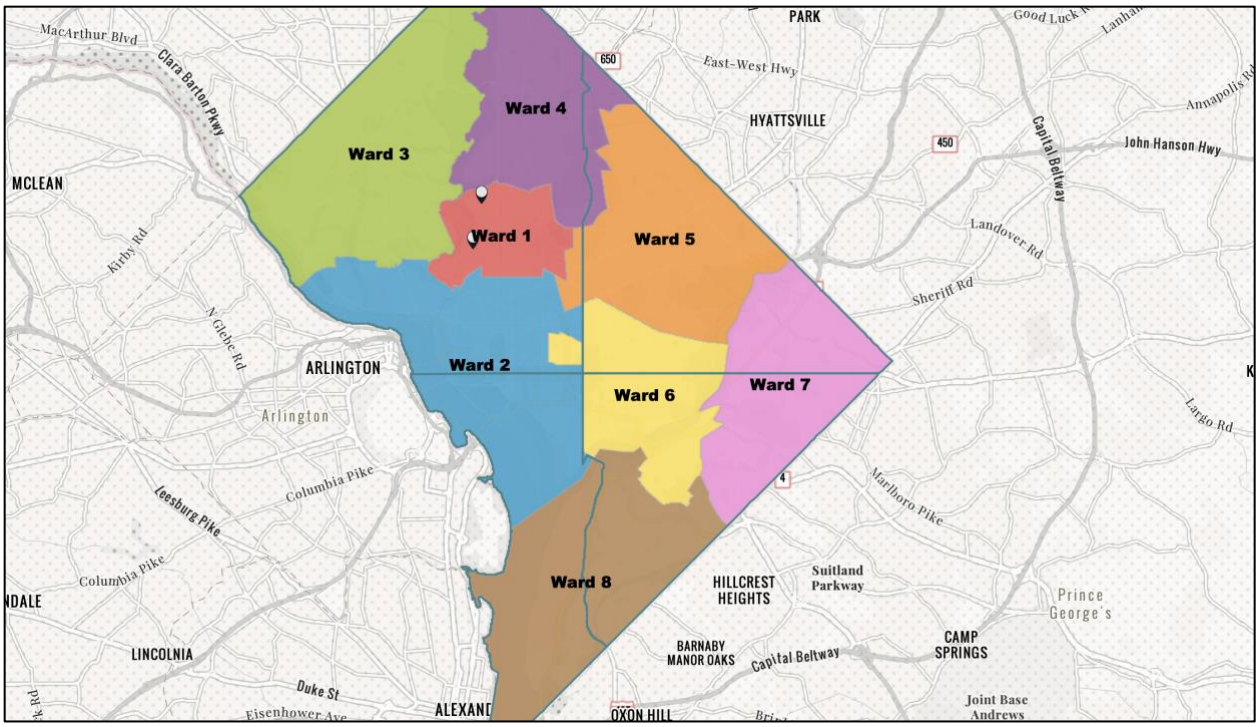


Figure 1.1 Map of Washington, D.C. with Wards (1990). The Latino enclaves of Mount Pleasant and Adams-Morgan, denoted by the black pins, are located in Ward 1. Source: Map created by author using ArcGIS Online.

1.1.1 Comparative Racial Formation

The development of a real and imagined Latino community occurred in relationship to, and was influenced by, the Black majority in the city.[37] Puerto Rican leaders and other high-profile Latin American leaders envisioned what a unified Latino community might mean and articulated their vision of such a public in response to local politics. Latino community development in the District echoed dynamics in both the African American and Asian communities who also managed intra-community relations. In Washington, D.C., Puerto Rican

[37] I am inspired by Tomás F. Summers Sandoval, Jr.'s work on Latino San Francisco and discussion of "imagined community." Sandoval, Jr., argues that community terminology can evoke this imaginary, but it also stands in for a "tangible" community expressed at different key moments. As was the case in the District, Latinos in San Francisco worked on uniting the diverse group, building "horizontal comradeship." See Tomás F. Summers Sandoval, Jr., *Latinos at the Golden Gate: Creating Community and Identity in San Francisco* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2013), 7.

middle-class leaders operated in similar ways to Black and Asian middle-class individuals and organizations with respect to their working- and lower-class counterparts. For example, scholars of the Great Migration have shown how African American groups who already resided in northern cities such as Chicago attempted to condition new, southern Black migrants' behavior and mobility. In D.C., this played out as Puerto Rican and Latino agency executives assisted Salvadoran migrants who were from more rural places and had less educational background to integrate into American society.

Moreover, scholars have argued that concepts of racial uplift and respectability politics in the Black community during the Jim Crow era were not place-specific and instead centered class dynamics and the role of Black institutions. Puerto Rican leaders in the District created self-help institutions in the early 1970s to improve Latino lives and regulate behavior. The formation of a collective African American identity was in constant flux and emerged under pressures for Jim Crow society. Middle-class, liberal leaders and institutions such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) attempted to represent all African American interests. However, left-leaning and radical Black Power movements activated by urban uprisings eventually contested these more established groups.[38]

[38] Davarian Baldwin, *Chicago's New Negroes: Modernity, the Great Migration, and Black Urban Life* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007); Leslie Brown, *Upbuilding Black Durham: Gender, Class, and Black Community Development in the Jim Crow South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008); Kevin Gaines, *Uplifting the Race: Black Leadership, Politics, and Culture in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880-1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993); Michele Mitchell, *Righteous Propagation: African Americans and the Politics of Racial Destiny After Reconstruction* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Victoria Wolcott, *Remaking Respectability: African American Women in Interwar Detroit* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001); Cara Caddoo, *Envisioning Freedom: Cinema and the Building of Modern Black Life* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014); LaKisha Michelle Simmons, *Crescent City Girls: The Lives of Young Black Women in Segregate New Orleans* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2015); Thomas J. Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty: The Forgotten Struggle for Civil Rights in the North* (New York: Random House, 2008); Matthew Countryman, *Up South: Civil Rights and Black Power in Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006).

The normative function of racial ideology that spreads from individuals at local levels into politics and the law is also evident in Asian communities. Scholars of Asian American studies have traced how aspirational Asian community leaders drew on respectability politics to make decisions about the deserving and undeserving in the community, contributing to the creation of the model minority myth. For example, Nayan Shah explains how normative household structures became a vehicle for Chinese immigrants' ascendance to model minority status. Following in Shah's analytical footsteps, Ellen Wu uses the concept of family life, particularly salient during the 1960s after the publishing of the Moynihan Report, to show how Chinese and Japanese Americans were seen as more likely to reproduce normative ideals. Put another way, they were culturally closer to white society than African Americans. In this process, Wu illustrates how Asian Americans invoked their other relational identities of class, gender, and sexuality to reinforce their potential for assimilation into white, middle-class society.[39] In the District, Puerto Rican leaders and institutions such as the Office on Latino Affairs attempted to curb alcohol use and homelessness in the migrant community to appease white homeowners anxious about crime.

The Latino community of Washington, D.C. was both real and constructed, always in formation and contested. The social construction of race and other related identity categories developed in similar ways for Latinos, African Americans, and Asian Americans. Puerto Rican leaders and members of the professional class felt that they were acting for the whole

[39] Shah, *Contagious Divides*; Wu, *The Color of Success*; Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*; Lee, *At America's Gates*; Chang, *Pacific Connections*; Molina, *Fit to be Citizens?;* Mark Brilliant, *The Color of America has Changed: How Racial Diversity Shaped Civil Right Reform in California, 1941-1978* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Judy Yung, Gordon Chang, and Him Mark Lai, *Chinese American Voice: From the Gold Rush to the Present* (Berkely: University of California Press, 2006); Kurashige, *The Shifting Grounds of Race*; Daniel Martinez HoSang, *Racial Propositions: Ballot Initiatives and the Making of Postwar California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010); Daniel Martinez HoSang, Oneka LaBennett, and Laura Pulido, *Racial Formation in the Twenty-First Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012); Stephanie Hinnershitz, *A Different Shade of Justice: Asian American Civil Rights in the South* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2020).

community, even the most disadvantaged, by creating normative standards and addressing the political problem of representation.

The state's classification of Latinos by race and ethnicity was subjective, demonstrating the fluidity of identity and racialization processes for Latin American peoples in a U.S. context. Before 1980, the census classified the majority of Hispanics as white. Although an "other" category existed in the 1970 census, editors counted individuals who selected the category or indicated a Latin American national identifier as white.[40] For instance, the 1970 census reported that Puerto Ricans in the U.S. were 92.9 percent white and 5.3 percent were Black.[41] This classification ignored the complexities of racial identity in Latino populations and subsumed this distinct and diverse group within the category of whiteness. While in 1980 the census for the first time tracked a separate "other" racial category, it maintained a separate ethnicity-based question identifying whether or not people were of "Spanish/Hispanic origin or descent."[42] This census arrangement maintained that race and ethnicity for Hispanics were two distinct and separate classifications.[43] In the District, the 1980 census showed that 6,403 or 36 percent of people of "Spanish origin" selected the "other" race category, 42.5 percent (7,524) self-identified as white, and 21 percent (3,752) self-identified as Black.[44] The legal classification of Latinos such as Puerto Ricans as white preserved the ambiguity of whiteness, allowing Latinos to be considered white on record while not fully gaining the benefits of its privilege in everyday life. Puerto

[40] Fernández, *Brown in the Windy City*, 5-7.
[41] U.S. Bureau of the Census, "Table 1," in *Puerto Ricans in the United States* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1973) https://usa.ipums.org/usa/resources/voliii/pubdocs/1970/Population/Vol2/42043783v2p1d1gch1.pdf
[42] Fernández, *Brown in the Windy City*, 6.
[43] For a more detailed sociological account of the social construction of race in Latino populations see: Clara E. Rodríguez, *Changing Race: Latinos, the Census and the History of Ethnicity* (New York: New York University Press, 2000).
[44] U.S. Bureau of the Census, "General Population Characteristics: District of Columbia," in *1980 Census of Population*, August 1982, https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1980/volume-1/district-of-columbia/1980a_dcabcd-02.pdf.

Ricans leaders understood this distinction, consistently emphasizing how local and federal resources did not reach Spanish speakers in the city. They worked to articulate a Latino community that was unified and distinct to counteract census undercounts based in part to the separation of race and ethnicity.

From the 1980 census onward, the federal government classified Salvadorans, as was the case for all Latin American migrants, as Hispanic or Latino. At the local level, Black officials, Puerto Rican leaders, and social service organizations also incorporated Salvadoran migrants into the construction of a Latino community due to their share language and religious and cultural traditions. Salvadorans, however, tended to identify more with their nationality or as Central Americans.[45] They understood that they were nonwhite, but they also did not consider themselves Black. Regardless, they faced similar social constrains to other Latino groups who were caught in between white and Black racialization.[46]

As was the case nationally, Latinos in the District recognized the paradoxes of their racial status, legally considered white but racialized as nonwhite locally. Latinos were unable to fully reap the benefits of whiteness and had to negotiate the liminal space of their place in society as a racial group in-between Black and white.[47] While Puerto Rican and other community leaders

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[45] Scholars are beginning to recount histories of racial formation and the racialization of Salvadorans within a U.S. context. For some examples see: Scallen, "The Bombs," 200-201; Carlos B. Cordova, *The Salvadoran Americans* (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 2005); Rosales, "Yo canto a mi pueblo"; Sandoval, Jr., *Latinos at the Golden Gate*; A 2013 Pew Research Center survey reported that 49 percent of Salvadorans regularly used the term "Salvadoran" while 36 percent used "Hispanic/Latino." Gustavo López, "Hispanics of Salvadoran Origin in the United States, 2013: Statistical Profile," Pew Research Center, September 15, 2015, https://www.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2015/09/2015-09-15_el-salvador-fact-sheet1.pdf.

[46] Scallen, "The Bombs," 200-201.

[47] For some key works on the history of Latino racialization see: Neil Foley, *The White Scourge: Mexicans, Blacks, and Poor Whites in Texas Cotton Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); Fernandez, *Brown in the Windy City*; George Sánchez, *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture, and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900–1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); Thomas Guglielmo, "Fighting for Caucasian Rights: Mexicans, Mexican Americans, and the Transnational Struggle for Civil Rights in World War II Texas," *Journal of American History* 92, no. 4 (March 2006): 1212-1237; Ian Hanley López, *White By Law: The Legal Construction of Race* (New York: New York University Press, 2006); Guadalupe San Miguel, Jr., *Brown not White:*

focused on the census undercount as a major driver of their creation of community, they also understood that the group's racial ambiguities made them less visible to the city government. In some cases, such as for Dominicans, self-identifying as Black as well as being perceived as Black by other African American peers allowed for their inclusion into Black-majority areas.[48] Because Washington, D.C. was a majority-Black city, there were additional benefits to be included as members of the racial majority unlike in other cities with a white majority, such as New York or Chicago.[49] On the other hand, Dominicans were easily identified by their preferred use of Spanish, which immediately set them apart from Black residents. Moreover, the city's tabulation of profiles of crime victims also revealed the double-bind of race for Latinos in the District. MPD crime reports only included boxes that identified victims as either Black and white, statistically ignoring Latinos as victims of crime and the reality of their experiences.[50]

This case study focuses on community formation through political processes that necessitated the expression of a unified community. Recent scholars of Latinx history have shown the centrality of identity-based politics during the postwar era. Sonia Song-Ha Lee argues,

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School Integration and the Chicano Movement in Houston (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2001); De Genova and Ramos-Zayas, *Latino Crossings*; Thomas, *Puerto Rican Citizen*; Molina, *How Race is Made in America*; Laura E. Gómez, *Inventing Latinos: A New Story of American Racism* (New York: The New Press, 2020); Gómez, *Manifest Destinies*.

[48] For some works that discuss Afro-Latinx histories and racial formation see: Tanya Katerí Hernández, *Unmasking Latino Anti- Blackness and the Struggle for Equality* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2022); Miriam Jiménez Román and Juan Flores, eds., *The Afro-Latin@ Reader: History and Culture in the United States* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010); Antonio M. Lopez, *Unbecoming Blackness: The Diaspora Cultures of Afro-Cuban America* (New York: New York University Press, 2012); Petra R. Rivera-Rideau, Jennifer A. Jones, and Tianna S. Paschel, eds., *Afro-Latin@s in Movement: Critical Approaches to Blackness and Transnationalism in the Americas* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016); Alejandro de la Fuente and George Reid Andrews, eds., *Afro-Latin American Studies: An Introduction* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2018)

[49] In the 1990 Census, almost half of Dominicans in the city self-identified as Black. See Ginetta E. B. Candelario, "'Black Behind the Ears'–and Up Front Too? Dominicans in *The Black Mosaic*," *The Public Historian* 23, no. 4 (Fall 2001): 55-72.

[50] The D.C. Latino Civil Rights Task Force, *The Latino Blueprint for Action: Final Recommendations to the District of Columbia Government*, October 1991, in United States House of Representatives, Committee on Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs, *Effectiveness of Federal Assistance Programs in Meeting Fiscal Distress, Part II*, 102nd Congress, 1st Session (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1991), 20 (hereinafter Task Force, *The Latino Blueprint*); Latino Task Force on Crime and Justice to D.C. Chief of Police, the Hon. Maurice J. Cullinane, March 19, 1976, Folder 1 Latino, Box 5, Series 1, Columbian Newspaper Collection, MLK Library; Scallen, "The Bombs," 240. For a

"If we understand race and culture as political categories, where lines of inclusion and exclusion are constantly shifting, then we must recognize that people of color constructed their racial and cultural identities through a political process."[51] Puerto Rican leaders were not initially interested in forming a slate of Latino political candidates. Rather, they wanted to form a unified political bloc that could operate within the margins of power structures. As Jamie Sánchez, Jr. argues, "Latino politics, then and now, calls for deliberative consensus building and constant self-interrogation."[52]

In cities such as New York, identity politics highlighted distinct Puerto Rican and Dominican heritage. The Puerto Rican population in New York far outweighed the one in Washington, D.C., reaching a population size of 900,000 in 1970 in comparison to D.C.'s 1,074.[53] But in the District, Puerto Rican leaders who held disproportionate power chose to present themselves first and foremost as unified Latinos, centering shared language and culture over nationality. Some Puerto Ricans in New York City politics who prioritized working within the system to "deliver on its promises" had similar motivations to Washington, D.C.'s Puerto Rican leaders.[54] Latino leaders in D.C. chose to work with Marion Barry and other city politicians despite continuously feeling frustrated at the pace of progress. Barry was the first

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[51] Lee, *Building a Latino Civil Rights Movement,* 6.
[52] Jaime Sánchez, Jr., "'What Are We?': Latino Politics, Identity, and Memory in 1983 Chicago Mayoral Election," *Modern American History* 4, no. 3 (2021): 263-84; A. K. Sandoval-Strausz, *Barrio America: How Latino Immigrants Saved the American City* (New York: Basic Books, 2019)*;* Contreras, *Latinos and the Liberal City;* Geraldo Cadava, *The Hispanic Republican: The Shaping of an American Political Identity, from Nixon to Trump* (New York: Ecco, 2020); Benjamin Francis-Fallon, *The Rise of the Latino Vote: A History* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 2019); Emma Amador, "Organizing Puerto Rican Domestics: Resistance and Household Labor Reform in the Puerto Rican Diaspora after 1930," *International Labor and Working-Class History* no. 88 (Fall 2015): 67-86.
[53] U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Puerto Ricans in the United States* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1973) https://usa.ipums.org/usa/resources/voliii/pubdocs/1970/Population/Vol2/42043783v2p1d1gch1.pdf; Laird W. Bergad, "The Puerto Rican Population of New York Metropolitan Regin, 1970-2020," Center for Latin American, Caribbean, and Latino Studies, November 29, 2022, https://academicworks.cuny.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1114&context=clacls_pubs.
[54] José E. Cruz, *Liberalism and Identity Politics: Puerto Rican Community Organizations and Collective Action in New York City* (New York: Centro Press, 2019).

chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and moved to Washington, D.C. in 1965 to open a local chapter. He remained in the city, becoming a prominent local civil rights activist and eventually elected mayor in 1978.[55] They ultimately hoped to reap the long-awaited rewards of loyalty in the form of political appointments and services. In reality, Puerto Ricans in the District were speaking for a Latino community that was not always unified and would eventually displace them from positions of power by the end of the 1991 uprising.

A shared Latino identity, or latinidad, emerged in the District as a pragmatic response to political processes and representation drives.[56] Examining the diversity of D.C.'s Latino community—which not only reflected country of origin, but also encompassed class and mixed-status—builds upon interventions in immigration and Latinx histories that have focused predominantly on Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans.[57] As Central American migrations to D.C. increased in pace in the 1980s due to civil wars and American imperialism, the diversifying Latino communities' desires for access and proportional representation abutted with Black

[55] Barry was first elected as part of the city's first school board in 1971. In 1974 he was elected as an at-large representative in the city council. See Asch and Musgrove, *Chocolate City*, 341–347; Pearlman, *Democracy's Capital*, 31–38.

[56] This dissertation is partially influenced by Eduardo Contreras definition of "Latinidad" as "an ideology emphasizing unity, commonality, and affinity among Latinos." Contreras, *Latinos and the Liberal City*, 8.

[57] This dissertation is indebted to the foundational work of Chicano and Latino Studies historians who explain the development of Mexican American racial identity. See: Vicky Ruiz, *Cannery Women, Cannery Lives: Mexican Women, Unionization, and the California Food Processing Industry, 1930-1950* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1987); Sánchez, *Becoming Mexican American*; Laura Gómez, *Manifest Destinies: The Making of the Mexican American Race* (New York: New York University Press, 2007); Gabriela Arredondo, *Mexican Chicago: Race, Identity, and Nation, 1916–1936* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2008); Edward J. Escobar, *Race, Police, and the Making of a Political Identity: Mexican Americans and the Los Angeles Police Department, 1900–1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009); Anthony Mora, *Border Dilemmas: Racial and National Uncertainties in New Mexico, 1848–1912* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011); Maylei Blackwell, *¡Chicana Power! Contested Histories of Feminism in the Chicano Movement* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011); Stephen J. Pitti, *The Devil in Silicon Valley: Northern California, Race, and Mexican Americans* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002); Julie M. Weise, *Corazon de Dixie: Mexicanos in the U.S. South Since 1910* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2015); Zaragosa Vargas, *Labor Rights are Civil Rights: Mexican American Workers in Twentieth-Century America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

Power and civil rights activism.[58] The development of latinidad in the District resembles more closely processes in San Francisco's Latino community. Like in D.C., the Latino community of San Francisco consisted of a heterogenous group from all over Latin America.[59] Eduardo Contreras explains how politicization, specifically Latinx engagement with liberalism, helped structure latinidad in San Francisco. As stated by Contreras: "Historians have devoted little attention to latinidad. Their investigations of Latinx life have typically focused on individual ethnic or national origin communities (e.g., Mexican American/Chicanos, Puerto Ricans). Part of the logic undergirding these scholarly approaches has been simple: few U.S. localities housed Latinxs of multiple national origins until the late twentieth century."[60]

Puerto Ricans leaders in the District mobilized a concept of latinidad that was capacious of the heterogenous Latino community and attempted to work within a moderate, civil rights tradition. Unlike Puerto Ricans in other urban centers, Puerto Rican managers in the District did not engage with radical movements and racial consciousness. In Chicago, Puerto Ricans who were subjected to crowded, dilapidated housing and continuous forms of displacement developed notions of "brownness" that at times united them with Mexicans, the other major Latino group in the city. Puerto Ricans and Mexicans embraced the "other," brown identifier and used this concept to mobilize against discriminatory systems of power.[61] In the District, Rosario claimed a self-identified group of "Young Lords" pressed him to use his power as head of the city's

[58] In 1979, El Salvador experienced a military coup that instigated years of terror and mass murders in the 1980s. Spurred by the political and humanitarian crisis, Salvadorans began mass migrations and settled in U.S. cities such as D.C. According to Terry Repak, "close to half of the Central American immigrants interviewed in the Washington area claimed that they fled their countries because of oppressive political conditions and civil strife." Terry A. Repak, *Waiting on Washington: Central American Workers in the Nation's Capital* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995), 32-40.
[59] Contreras, *Latinos and the Liberal City*; Sandoval Jr., *Latinos at the Golden Gate*.
[60] Contreras, *Latinos and the Liberal City*, 11-12.
[61] Fernández, *Brown in the Windy City.*

advisory committee to create a youth center in 1970—which he turned down.[62] Left-leaning Latino groups existed in the city and at times pressured the establishment to recognize their demands. However, they were obfuscated by Rosario and other political agents. Changing demographics, from a diverse Latin American group to a Salvadoran majority, altered community organizations and altered leadership in the District. By the late 1980s and early 1990s, the changing community structure forced Puerto Rican leaders to reexamine their organizing goals and political aspirations.

1.1.2 Beyond Black-White Binaries

Latinx voices, their immigration histories, and their multiracial social movements are significant to the stories of American cities. Increasingly, historians have contended with the multiracial contexts of post-1970s metropolises, considering interracial organizing and politics.[63] Scholars have been undoing the Black and white binary prominent in urban histories by centering Latinx experiences to analyze racial formation and systemic inequality in American cities.[64] Lee explains that "intertwined and mutually reinforcing historical processes" of

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[62] Medsger, "Latins form Largest Immigrant Group."

[63] See Raúl Homero Villa and George J. Sánchez, eds., *Los Angeles and the Future of Urban Culture: A Special Issue of American Quarterly* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2005); Brian D. Behnken, *Civil Rights and Beyond: African American and Latino/a Activism in the Twentieth-Century United States* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2016); Shana Bernstein, *Bridges of Reform: Interracial Civil Rights Activism in Twentieth-Century Los Angeles* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Brilliant, *The Color of America has Changed*; Fernández, *Brown in the Windy City*; Kurashige, *The Shifting Grounds of*; Frederick Douglass Opie, *Upsetting the Apple Cart: Black-Latino Coalitions in New York City from Protest to Public Office* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014); Lee, *Building a Latino Civil Rights Movemen*t; Paul Ortiz, *An African American and Latinx History of the United States* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2018); Max Krochmal, *Blue Texas: The Making of a Multiracial Democratic Coalition in the Civil Rights Era* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2016); Natalia Mehlman Petrzela, *Classroom Wars: Language, Sex, and the Making of Modern Political Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015); HoSang, LaBennett, and Pulido, *Racial Formation in the Twenty-First Century*; Tatiana M. F. Cruz, "Boston's Struggle in Black and Brown: Racial Politics, Community Development, and Grassroots Organizing 1960-1985," (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 2017).

[64] In the early 2000s, urban histories incorporated Latino Studies methodology and focused on Latinx urbanism in cities such as New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago. See: De Genova and Ramos-Zayas, *Latino Crossings*; Fernández, *Brown in the Windy City*; Michael Innis-Jiménez, *Steel Barrio: The Great Mexican Migration to South*

racialization facilitated civil rights networks in New York between African Americans and Puerto Ricans.[65] Laura Pulido also argues that "racialization is a relational process: how status and meaning associated with one group are contingent upon those of another."[66] These distinct experiences of racism and comparison are evident at regional and local levels. Moreover, they are revelatory for contextualizing differential racialization and racial hierarchies. Local policies on housing, employment, and policing were key sites where Black, Latino, and white residents debated and asserted their rights to political representation, revealing moments of racial and identity formation.

"The Forgotten Latino Community" analyzes the racial complexities of urban politics by interrogating the relationship between Latino activism with the Black elected leadership. Centering Latino leaders, organizations, and protests in narratives about urban processes in places such as Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant problematizes the prevalence of a Black-white binary in histories of Washington, D.C. Scholars have explained how the city's Black majority in the 1960s faced racialized policies, congressional control, and lack of autonomy.[67]

Chicago, 1915-1940 (New York: New York University Press, 2013); Thomas, *Puerto Rican Citizen*; Jesse Hoffnung-Garskof, *A Tale of Two Cities: Santo Domingo and New York after 1950* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010); Lee, *Building a Latino Civil Rights Movement*.
More recently, historians have expanded their geographic scope to explore new sites, such as San Francisco, Dallas, and Lawrence, Massachusetts and engage with immigration and transnational histories. These more recent works connect urban and immigration history to center the role of Latinxs in revitalizing American cities. See: Llana Barber, *Latino City: Immigration and Urban Crisis in Lawrence, Massachusetts, 1945–2000* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017); Contreras, *Latinos and the Liberal City*; Cruz, *Liberalism and Identity Politics*; Sandoval-Strausz, *Barrio America*.

[65] Lee, *Building a Latino Civil Rights Movement,* 4.

[66] Pulido, *Black, Brown, Yellow, and Left*, 4.

[67] For some D.C. works that center a Black-white binary see: Pearlman, *Democracy's Capital*; Asch and Musgrove, *Chocolate City*; Hopkinson, *Go-Go Live*; Summers, *Black in Place*; Harry Jaffe and Tom Sherwood, *Dream City: Race, Power, and the Decline of Washington* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994); Mary-Elizabeth B. Murphy, *Jim Crow Capital: Women and Black Freedom Struggles in Washington, D.C., 1920-1945* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2018); Sabiyha Prince, *African Americans and Gentrification in Washington, D.C.: Race, Class and Social Justice in the Nation's Capital* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2014); Gillette, Jr., *Between Justice and Beauty*; Gregory M. Borchardt, "Making D.C. Democracy's Capital: Local Activism, the 'Federal State', and the Struggle for Civil Rights in Washington, D.C." (PhD diss., The George Washington University, 2013); James M. Lloyd, "Fighting Redlining and Gentrification in Washington, D.C.," *Journal of Urban History* 42, no. 6 (November 2016): 1091-1109.

Latinx histories of the city predominantly focus on the push-pull factors of migration, labor practices and organization efforts, and finally the formation and significance of the city's Latino festival as a culturally significant moment of identity formation.[68] Latinos in the District agitated for their place within the Black-majority city. At times, they united alongside African American allies by joining coalitions for mayoral elections. They also fought housing displacement and police brutality together. They even jointly challenged the majority's status quo. These moments raise the question: what does it mean to be a non-white minority within a minority-majority city?

Issues of affordable housing, displacement, unemployment, and police brutality afflicted all minority, working-class, and poor communities in the District. These shared experiences provided moments of coalition building between African Americans and Latinos, but they also caused strained relationships over the struggle for resources. As a marginalized political class themselves, Black politicians had to balance their own goals of undoing structural barriers for their inclusion set by previous generations of white political control with the demands of other racial and ethnic minorities in the District. Black city officials who believed Latino problems were similar to those of other minorities and therefore did not require targeted policies were fundamentally at odds with Latino representatives (including Rosario) who argued for the need of tailored services to reflect the unique status of Spanish-speaking residents.[69] Similarly, in New York, the formation of a "Hispanic" identity post-civil rights movement contributed to the collapse of alliances between Puerto Ricans and African Americans in New York City.[70]

[68] For works that center Latinxs in D.C. see: Repak, *Waiting on Washington*; Cadaval, *Creating a Latino*; Margaret S. Boone, *Capital Cubans: Refugee Adaptation in Washington, D.C*. (New York: AMS Press, 1989); Scallen, "The Bombs."
[69] Holden, "Latin Residents."
[70] Lee, *Building a Latino Civil Rights Movement*.

Competing with generations of Black organizing in the District, Puerto Rican leaders had to find ways to overcome the challenges of a mixed-status community where population numbers did not equate voting power. Even though these communities shared challenges, political debates in city council and on the streets were informed by the idea of "deservedness." These pressures over political representation influenced decisions over which constituencies the city served. Black politicians were hyper focused on serving their Black constituents having only recently enjoyed the first benefits of political power after partial home rule. For instance, Black city officials supported amending affirmative action law that exclude Latinos and Asian groups from lucrative city contracts, arguing that those populations did not qualify based on experiences of historic systemic inequality, in order to improve economic opportunities for Black-owned business. In doing so, Black politicians were acting in similar ways to other ethnic minorities who, when first gaining control of city politics, guarded control from other racialized or minority groups.[71] The Latino community initially saw Mayor Barry as their advocate because he supported creating the Office on Latino Affairs and he hired more Latinos to his administration.

[71] Black political power gained a foothold in the District after the passage of the Home Rule Act in 1973. Newly elected Black politicians had to balance their promises to the Black majority with demands placed on them by other disadvantaged populations. These politicians inherited systemic problems and inequalities left in place by federal oversight and federally appointed politicians. This narrative is not only unique to D.C., but it is also evident in other major cities following the election of first Black mayors. For some examples see: Jeffrey Helgeson, *Crucibles of Black Empowerment: Chicago's Neighborhood Politics from the New Deal to Harold Washington* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014); Rich Wilbur, *Coleman Young and Detroit Politics: From Social Activist to Power Broker* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1996); Heather Ann Thompson, "Rethinking the Collapse of Postwar Liberalism: The Rise of Mayor Coleman Young and the Politics of Race in Detroit," in *African-American Mayors: Race, Politics, and the American City*, eds. David R. Colburn and Jeffrey S. Adler (Urban: University of Illinois Press, 2001): 223-225; J. Phillip Thompson, III, *Double Trouble: Black Mayors, Black Communities, and the Call for a Deep Democracy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006); Leonard N. Moore, *Carl B. Stokes and the Rise of Black Political Power* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002). For similar histories that explain how ethnic groups, such as the Irish and Italians, operated city politics and treated other racial and ethnic groups see: David N. Huyssen, *Progressive Inequality: Rich and Poor in New York, 1890-1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014); Thomas C. Leonard, *Illiberal Reformers: Race, Eugenics, and American Economics in the Progressive Era* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017); David R. Roediger, *The Wage of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (New York: Verso, 1991); Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1998); Guglielmo, *White on Arrival*; Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness*.

These jobs gave some (documented) Latinos representation and a formal voice for the community within government. However, Puerto Rican leaders who placed their hopes on prominent political positions were disappointed with the pace of progress, high-profile firings, and dwindling funds.

The Black political elite used their knowledge of and relationships with Puerto Ricans as a frame of reference for engagement with the larger Latino community. This type of relationship led to misguided efforts, such as recruiting Latino police officers from Puerto Rico, that prolonged the feeling of invisibility and frustration felt by non-Puerto Rican Latinos. Since the inception of the Office on Latino Affairs (OLA) in 1970 until 1991, all directors appointed by the mayor and approved by city council were Puerto Rican. The director of OLA's job was a coveted political appointment that positioned that individual as the official voice for the Latino community.[72] Within Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant, Salvadorans and other Latin Americans were also racialized against their Puerto Rican counterparts. In schools and on city buses, Salvadorans recounted how they were considered Puerto Rican and felt invisible in the community.[73] The 1991 uprising elevated the disputes between Latinos and the city and surfaced the reality of tensions between Latinos and the African American community. The uprising forced Black politicians who themselves were activists in the civil rights and Black Power movements to reckon with Latino demands without subsuming them as merely class issues.[74]

1.1.3 Surveillance and Policing

[72] Arturo Griffiths Interview, Mount Pleasant Riot Oral History Project, January 4, 2018, http://hdl.handle.net/1961/dcplislandora:42736; Betty Medsger, "Latins form Largest Immigrant Group," *The Washington Post*, December 4, 1972.
[73] Pedro Avilés Interview, Mount Pleasant Riot Oral History Project, November 15, 2017, http://hdl.handle.net/1961/dcplislandora:42742.
[74] Juan Williams, "Black Power's New Dilemma," *The Washington Post*, May 12, 1991.

Street level interactions in Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant shaped Latinos' understandings of identity, space, and their place in the larger city. As Latin American populations grew in these areas, so did their struggle for affordable housing; Latino families were forced into crowded and inadequate apartments while white gentrifiers bought up affordable houses for redevelopment.[75] Rising unemployment, which reached 16 percent for Latinos in 1980—double the rate of unemployment across the city—compounded housing precarity.[76] High unemployment, in turn, forced men and youths onto the streets where neighbors and the police scrutinized and policed their presence. Latinos in these areas, and in particular young Salvadorans, felt degraded by their white and Black neighbors as well as by the city government.

Latino cultural expression flourished alongside the growing population and allowed the community to make claims to public spaces. In the District, Latin youth and men socialized outdoors on street corners, church steps, and in parks. Historian A. K. Sandoval-Strausz has called this process the "Latinization" of public spaces.[77] However, as gentrification became a mounting force in the neighborhoods, white homeowners rejected congregating Latinos. They associated Latinos with public disorder and called on police to enforce the law. Police officers, acting as agents of gentrification, used discretionary powers to push Latinos out of the streets or

[75] Suleiman Osman, *The Invention of Brownstone Brooklyn: Gentrification and the Search for Authenticity in Postwar New York* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Lance Freeman, *There Goes the 'Hood: Views of Gentrification from the Ground Up* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006); Loretta Less, Tom Slater, and Elvin Wyly, *Gentrification* (New York: Routledge, 2008); Lloyd, "Fighting Redlining and Gentrification in Washington, D.C."; Dennis E. Gale, *The Misunderstood History of Gentrification: People, Planning, Preservation, and Urban Renewal* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2021); Tyler Denmead, *The Creative Underclass: Youth, Race, and the Gentrifying City* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2019); Peter Moskowitz, *How to Kill a City: Gentrification, Inequality, and the Fight for the Neighborhood* (New York: Nation Books, 2017).
[76] Office of Communications, "Adams Morgan-Mount Pleasant Survey Issued by Latino Affairs Office," April 20, 1980, Folder Latino Affairs 81, Box 8, Dwight Cropp 1979–1983, 351-86-0201, District of Columbia Archives, Washington, D.C. [hereinafter Cropp, DC Archives].
[77] Sandoval-Strausz, *Barrio America*; Johana Londoño, *Abstract Barrios: The Crises of Latinx Visibility in Cities* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2020).

arrested them for disorderly conduct.[78] Latinos experienced the real effects of their bodies and activities being criminalized by their neighbors and the police.

This dissertation explores how law enforcement, Black and white residents, and the media racialized and criminalized Latinos in Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant.[79] These everyday occurrences were indicative of rising racial tensions in neighborhood communities and of the practice of "broken windows" policing. Scholars of policing have shown how broken windows theory, which correlates visual cues of disorder with the potential threat of crime, disproportionately targeted and criminalized minority communities. Concepts of community policing also had a similar effect. The cumulative forces of broken windows policing, gentrification, and surveillance of recreational and cultural activities created a combative atmosphere on the streets of Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant.[80] White neighbors, the police, and city officials linked Latino youth with the potential of delinquency at a time of heightened anxieties about crime and drugs in the city and the nation.[81] While the Latino community of the

[78] For some examples of police discretionary powers see: Risa Goluboff, *Vagrant Nation: Police Power, Constitutional Change, and the Making of the 1960s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016); Kristian Williams, *Our Enemies in Blue: Police and Power in America* (Oakland: AK Press, 2015); Nora C. Krinitsky, "The Politics of Crime Control: Race, Policing, and Reform in Twentieth-Century Chicago," (PhD Diss., University of Michigan, 2017).

[79] Heather Ann Thompson labels this process the "criminalization of urban space." Heather Ann Thompson, "Why Mass Incarceration Matters: Rethinking Crisis, Decline, and Transformation in Postwar American History," *Journal of American History* 97, no. 3 (December 2010): 703-734.

[80] George L. Kelling and James Q. Wilson, "Broken Windows: The Police and Neighborhood Safety," *The Atlantic*, March 1982, https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1982/03/broken-windows/304465/; Bench Ansfield, "The Broken Windows of the Bronx: Putting the Theory in Its Place," *American Quarterly* 72, no.1 (March 2020): 103-127; Bernard E. Harcourt, *Illusion of Order: The False Promise of Broken Windows Policing* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005); Alex S. Vitale, *City of Disorder: How the Quality of Life Campaign Transformed New York Politics* (New York: New York University Press, 2009); Mason B. Williams, "How the Rockefeller Laws Hit the Streets: Drug Policing and the Politics of State Competence in New York City, 1973–1989," *Modern American History* 4, no.1 (2021): 67-94; Themis Chronopoulos, "The Making of the Orderly City: New York since the 1980s," *Journal of Urban History* 46, no. 5 (2020): 1085–1116; Anne Gray Fischer, *The Streets Belong to Us: Sex, Race, and Police Power from Segregation to Gentrification* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2022).

[81] Hinton uses a path-dependent model of history to underline the formation and reinforcement of police and politician's beliefs that black youths were automatically "predelinquents" while white youth were categorized as "runaways." Elizabeth Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime: The Making of Mass Incarceration*

1970s and Puerto Rican leaders were initially concerned with Latino representation within the Metropolitan Police Department, Latino youth and Salvadorans shifted the focus to issues of police-brutality in the late 1980s and 90s. It was this contentious atmosphere and negative interactions with law enforcement that informed Latino reactions and protest to the police shooting on May 5, 1991. Central Americans in Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant who were part of the Latino community that Puerto Rican leaders claimed to represent asserted their presence with an uprising.

The 1991 Mount Pleasant uprising exemplified how immigration, gentrification, and policing intersected and erupted at the neighborhood level. In Washington, D.C., the deferral of resources and recognition enhanced tensions between the city government, Latino residents, and the Black majority. Political marginalization played a key role in the 1991 Mount Pleasant uprising. Scholars are beginning to expand the study of urban uprisings by centering Latinx voices and experiences. Pedro A. Regalado's case study of the 1992 Washington Heights Uprising in New York explains how the Dominican community's lack of political visibility opened them up to police violence and brutality.[82] Although smaller in scope, the 1991 Mount

in America (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2016). For more examples of works that engage with the criminalization of minority youth see: Hinton, "Creating Crime: The Rise and Impact of National Juvenile Delinquency Programs in Black Urban Neighborhoods," *Journal of Urban History,* 41, no. 5 (September 2015): 808-824; Victor M. Rios, *Punished: Policing the Lives of Black and Latino Boys* (New York: New York University Press, 2011); James Foreman, Jr., *Locking Up Our Own: Crime and Punishment in Black America* (New York: Farrah, Straus and Giroux, 2017); Carl Suddler, *Presumed Criminal: Black Youth and the Justice System in Postwar New York* (New York: New York University Press, 2019); Edward J. Escobar, "The Unintended Consequences of the Carceral State: Chicana/o Political Mobilization in Post–World War II America," *Journal of American History* 102, no. 1 (June 2015): 174–84; Matthew D. Lassiter, "Impossible Criminals: The Suburban Imperatives of America's War on Drugs," *Journal of American History* 102, no.1 (June 2015): 126-140; Miroslava Chávez-García, "Youth of Color and California's Carceral State: The Fred C. Nelles Youth Correctional Facility," *Journal of American History* 102, no.1 (June 2015): 47-60; Krinitsky, "The Politics of Crime Control."

[82] For some works that include and center Latinx voices in the study of urban uprisings see: Pedro A. Regalado, "The Washington Heights Uprising of 1992: Dominican Belonging and Urban Policing in New York City," *Journal of Urban History* 45, no. 5 (September 2019): 891-1098; Barber, *Latino City;* Max Felker-Kantor, *Policing Los Angeles: Race, Resistance, and the Rise of the LAPD* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2018); Scallen, "The Bombs."

Pleasant uprising illustrates the detrimental consequences of the converging forces of policing and immigration on Latino communities. Salvadorans in Washington, D.C. were exposed to heightened police presence on the neighborhood's streets and to the potential threat of immigration enforcement. Puerto Rican leaders also attributed a general distrust of law enforcement authorities to cultural differences and home country traumatic experiences with paramilitary forces.

Integrating Latinos into histories of policing and Black criminalization in Washington, D.C. exposes moments of interracial tension and difference-making.[83] The racialization and hypercriminalization of minority communities as well as the structural role of the federal government in implementing punitive policies has been dominant in policing and carceral state histories.[84] Congress imposed the application of federal policies on policing, which included mandated hiring waves and community policing practices at a time of perceived crime waves. The implementation of this policy on the streets of Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant resulted in the criminalization of Latino youth. Moreover, the federal government played a central role in shaping the landscape of law enforcement through policies, the law, and funding from the War on Poverty, the War on Crime, and the War on Drugs. From 1985 to 1990, Congress tied up the release of the District's budget with mandatory police hirings and the forced implementation of

[83] See Julilly Kohler-Hausmann, *Getting Tough: Welfare and Imprisonment in 1970s America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017); Lytle Hernández, *Migra!*; Kelly Lytle Hernández, *City of Inmates: Conquest, Rebellion, and the Rise of Human Caging in Los Angeles, 1771-1965* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2017). Although not a book focused on policing, Ngai's work is useful for understanding how legal binaries created and linked race and legal status. This legal basis is a useful model for theorizing subsequent criminalization and policing of these racialized groups. See Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*.

[84] For a selection of works see: Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime*; Felker-Kantor, *Policing Los Angeles*; Simon Balto, *Occupied Territory: Policing Black Chicago from Red Summer to Black Power* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2019); Escobar, *Race, Police, and the Making of a Political Identity*; Goluboff, *Vagrant Nation*; Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness*; Christopher Lowen Agee, *The Streets of San Francisco: Policing and the Creation of a Cosmopolitan Liberal Politics, 1950–1972* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014).

community policing practices. As a result, undertrained rookie police officers, such as the officer at the center of the Mount Pleasant uprising, contributed to escalating instances of police violence. Federal crime policies converged with on the ground policing practices that further criminalized Central Americans, immigrants, and Latino renters, exacerbating the community's feelings of exclusion from the larger city. By the 1990s, Salvadorans, with the support of prominent leaders, made police harassment and violence a central issue for Latinos.

1.2 Chapter Outline

The first body chapter (Chapter Two) "Creating a Latin Quarter: Political Mobilization and Placemaking, 1970–1979" traces the evolution of the Latino community's political engagement in Washington, D.C. spearheaded by Puerto Rican leaders. It includes several key episodes, such as the creation of OLA, immigration raids that rattled the community, the mayoral election of Marion Barry in 1978, and the development but ultimate failure of the proposal for a Latin Quarter in Adams-Morgan. During this time, Latino organizations, including the Council of Hispanic Agencies, were instrumental in creating a shared Latino identity and mission for representation. Out of these organizations came Puerto Rican political leaders and representatives for the Latino communities in Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant. The chapter chronicles the beginnings of the Latino minority's attempt to find a voice within the minority-majority city through their engagement with political processes.

Chapter Three, "'We Feel Left Out': Capitalizing on Political Power Amidst Salvadoran Population Growth, 1980–1989," analyzes the mobilization of Puerto Rican leaders and organizations around concerns of representation, equitable resource allocation, and political power during the 1980s. Puerto Rican leaders confronted changing demographics within the Latino community despite their political gains and allies in the previous decade. Salvadoran

migrations into the city rapidly increased during the 1980s, forcing both the Latino community and the city government to respond to a new set of issues. Moreover, the political mobilization project set up by Puerto Rican leaders came up against the realities of a limited voter base. Although the Latino population was growing, lack of citizenship diluted possibilities for political power. As inter-community tensions heightened, Puerto Rican leaders also faced increasing confrontations with the Black political establishment. The chapter outlines Mayor Barry's retaliatory demotion and firing of José Gutiérrez, the highest-ranking Latino in Barry's administration, from the Office of Personnel Services in April 1985. Gutiérrez's firing raised concerns for Latino leaders about their representation in city administration jobs and broader discriminatory patterns. In May 1985, eighteen local organizations came together to form the Ad Hoc Coalition for a Latino Community Agenda "after months of mounting tensions between the District of Columbia government and the Latino community."[85] Their goal was to consolidate disparate efforts among various Latino organizations and to elevate community needs, such as language discrimination and assistance for refugee and undocumented communities. Latinos in D.C. claimed that langue and cultural differences effectively limited their rights within the city. Moreover, the lack of bilingual officials and institutions created barriers for inclusion. Delicate race relations between Salvadoran and African American communities foreshadowed conflicts in the 1990s.

Chapter Four, "Policing Latinos: Community Grievances, Police Harassment and Violence in the Third and Fourth District, 1980–1993," analyzes how gentrification by white, young professionals in the neighborhoods of Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant contributed to

[85] Ad Hoc Coalition for a Latino Community Agenda, "News Conference Announcement," June 9, 1985, Folder 17, Box 81, Subseries 1, Series 1, David A. Clarke Papers, Special Collections Research Center, Gelman Library, The George Washington University, Washington, D.C. [hereinafter Clarke Papers, GWU].

the criminalization and policing of young Latino men and Salvadoran newcomers. I discuss the policing of Latino street culture in response to concerns of public drinking, and how it reflected and contributed to citywide anxieties over crime, violence, and drugs. In response to Puerto Rican leaders' pressure to hire more Latino police officers, the Metropolitan Police Department launched its first recruitment drive for Spanish-speaking officers in 1985 and created police-community centers in the neighborhoods. MPD recruitment drives targeted Spanish-speaking individuals with citizenship, resulting in predominantly Puerto Rican hires. Consequently, Salvadorans and other non-Puerto Rican Latinos were antagonized by their lack of representation within the MPD. Police used discretionary powers to surveil he behaviors and activities of Latinos deemed deviant by their Black and white neighbors. Disorderly conduct arrests precipitated spikes in civilian complaints about police misconduct. Moreover, the chapter discusses community frustrations about police harassment in relation to the failures of the Civilian Complaint Review Board. Finally, the chapter argues that federal oversight, through the enforcement of police hiring waves and community-policing practices, had deadly consequences for Washingtonians in the 1990s.

Chapter Five, "'A Manifestation Of Frustration:' The Mount Pleasant Uprising of 1991," focuses on and contextualizes the uprising and its aftermath.[86] Latinos' persistent frustrations surrounding issues of political representation, the need for economic and community resources, and, ultimately, a desire for recognition of their growing presence in the metropolis led to the escalation in mistrust for city authorities. Salvadorans, in particular, felt invisible to city officials, Puerto Rican leadership, and law enforcement. On May 5, 1991, a Black rookie police officer

[86] I choose to use the term uprising to describe the series of events starting on May 5th. Sugrue's definition of the term fits the Mount Pleasant situation: "It suggested a spontaneous upsurge of protest or violent expression of discontent, something with political content, but short of a full-fledge revolutionary act." See: Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty*, 334.

shot a Salvadoran man in Lamont Park, sparking three nights of rebellion. Latino youth, angered by the persistence of police harassment and brutality, protested against the city and police, forcing Latino leadership to reconsider their organizing methods. Under new mayor Sharon Pratt, Latinos found new tactics to engage with the city administration to attempt to solve long-term neglect. This 1990s moment also marks a shift in Latino leadership as Salvadoran organizers, such as Pedro Avilés, became the voice of the new Latino community as chair of the D.C. Latino Civil Rights Task Force. However, the Task Force chose to eschew suing the city and to instead write an investigative report outlining recommendations to the city government, foreclosing the possibility of substantive progress for D.C. Latinos. As a result of these political choices, Latinos in the District were unable to escape the cycle of continued underrepresentation despite the renewed mobilization for collective needs. The 1991 uprising was a moment of heightened visibility for the city's Spanish-speaking residents, where a new crop of Salvadoran leaders had their chance to influence race-making and the opportunity to shape what a Latino community might mean for the next decade.

Chapter 2 Creating a Latin Quarter: Political Mobilization and Placemaking, 1970–1979

In the late 1970s, the Council of Hispanic Communities and Agencies (CHCA) proposed the creation of a Latin Quarter in the neighborhood of Adams-Morgan to the mayor and city government of Washington, D.C.[1] The CHCA, which represented Latino religious, education, health, and other social service groups in the nation's capital, created the proposal to establish a tourist attraction in the area that highlighted the neighborhood's growing Latino presence. The main goal of the project was two-pronged: a practical solution to residential displacement and underemployment by promoting local Latino businesses and culture, and an opportunity for the city to rectify injustice. The attempt by the CHCA at establishing a Latin Quarter reflected the larger community's desire to be recognized within the capital city and overcome anxieties about the state of their community. The notion of a Latino community in the District, consisting of shared characteristics including language and cultural heritage, was in flux during the 1970s. The Latin Quarter was one strategy Puerto Rican leaders used to stake a claim to place and to set the parameters of community inclusion. Amidst the background of expanded political power in Washington, D.C. through the passage of the Home Rule Act of 1973, leadership seized on this moment of greater autonomy to push for recognition for their minority community within the Black-majority city.

[1] During the period covered by this dissertation the name of the council and how historical actors referred to it constantly changed. This includes the Council of Hispanic Communities and Agencies, the Council of Hispanic Agencies, the Council of Latino Agencies, or *el concejo*. From now on, I will refer to it as the Council of Hispanic Agencies or CHCA.

Unlike the Latino population of other major cities with a dominant national origin group, D.C.'s consisted of a diverse community that reflected different migration waves from the Caribbean, Central America, and South America. The District's Latino population was diverse not just in country of origin, but in class, immigration status, and racial background. This lack of cohesion made it initially harder to organize as a unified group.[2] However, shared concerns and unmet needs among Latinos led to activism and the creation of mutual aid and community organizations, such as the CHCA, to fill in service gaps and set the parameters for intra-group solidarity. Out of these organizations and programs rose the first crop of leaders from the city's neighborhoods of Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant with a growing Latino presence.

Processes of racial and community formation were politically driven, as Latino representatives contended with the notion of "invisibility" and fears of being left behind or rendered forgotten residents by the city government.[3] Prominent figures in these communities, specifically Puerto Ricans who were familiar with Democratic machine politics, recognized that representation and political power required a unified group that was legible to the city and the federal government. At the same time, local organizers who directly worked with the most vulnerable members of the Latino community and ran social service programs also understood that funding and resources necessitated cohesion.

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[2] Christopher Dickey, "Hispanic Leaders Tour D.C.," *The Washington Post*, November 9, 1978; Olivia Cadaval, *Creating a Latino Identity in the Nation's Capital: The Latino Festival* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1998).
[3] For some works that center political driven processes of racial formation see: José E. Cruz, *Liberalism and Identity Politics: Puerto Rican Community Organizations and Collective Action in New York City* (New York: Centro Press, 2019); Laura Pulido, *Black, Brown, Yellow, and Left: Radical Activism in Southern California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006); Sonia Song-Ha Lee, *Building a Latino Civil Rights Movement: Puerto Ricans, African Americans, and the Pursuit of Racial Justice in New York City* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2014); Lilia Fernández, *Brown in the Windy City: Mexicans and Puerto Ricans in Postwar Chicago* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2012); Geraldo Cadava, *The Hispanic Republican: The Shaping of an American Political Identity, from Nixon to Trump* (New York, 2020); Jaime Sánchez, Jr., "'What Are We?': Latino Politics, Identity, and Memory in 1983 Chicago Mayoral Election," *Modern American History* 4, no. 3 (2021): 263-84.

Puerto Rican leaders and other members of the community who mobilized to assert a Latino presence in the city actively constructed a notion of a distinctive "Latino" community, or representations of "latinidad" which emphasized shared language, culture, and heritage, was during the 1970s.[4] The District's longstanding traditions of civil rights activism, and particularly the Black Power movement, paved the way for Latino organizers to advance their own civil rights agenda. For a coalescing Latino community, the desire to be recognized on a political level emerged when the results of the 1970 decennial census undercounted the population in the District.[5] The city used population statistics to justify funding decisions for various organizations, many of which directly impacted the material conditions of Latino communities. The census undercounting, they argued, significantly reduced Latino standings in the city. Pushing back against these feelings of exclusion, Puerto Ricans politically mobilized the Latino community and helped establish local organizations to assert their presence in the city. During the decade, groups such as the Council of Hispanic Agencies prioritized representing both a real and imagined Latino community to policymakers to promote more just outcomes for their communities. These agencies were disproportionately led by Puerto Ricans, who simultaneously promoted racial unity and celebrated the populations' ethnic and class diversity.

Moreover, the development of a shared Latino identity was shaped in relation to the Black majority in Washington, D.C., as the Latino minority worked to find its voice within a minority-majority city. What did Latino political mobilization and community formation look

[4] I draw on Eduardo Contreras' concept of a "Latinidad" shaped by politics that grew from activism as opposed to a top-down, government-imposed process. "It primarily approaches latinidad as an ideology: a set of ideas deployed for political purposes, in certain moments or epochs, and never quite settled or permanently actualized." See: Eduardo Contreras, *Latinos and the Liberal City: Politics and Protest in San Francisco* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019), 11. Olivia Cadaval's ethnographic study of Latino Washington, D.C. also explains how the term "Latino" was used by the community "as a self-ascribed cultural classification and as a base for action." See: Cadaval, *Creating a Latino Identity*, 13.
[5] Cadaval, *Creating a Latino Identity*.

like in a Black-majority city with a Black political class emerging to dominate city politics?[6] In other words, what did being "Latino" in the District look like? In 1970 the African American population reached 71 percent in the District. Home rule and its aftermath provided important context for understanding District politics, political leaders' responses to Latino demands, and the coalescence of multiracial politics and networks in the city. In 1973 Congress with support from President Richard Nixon passed the Home Rule Act, which enfranchised the District's citizens with the right to vote for their municipal government, to elect their own mayor and city council, and to pass their own laws. However, Congress retained the power to review and approve all legislations passed by the city council and held the ultimate authority over the city's budget. The president also retained emergency powers over the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD). In 1974, the nation's capital conducted its first elections for municipal government. Voters elected Walter E. Washington, a moderate quasi-incumbent who had previously served as Mayor-Commissioner by appointment of President Lyndon B. Johnson. He was the District's first Black mayor after the passage of the Home Rule Act. The Black majority was able to assert political power by gaining control of the mayor's office under Washington and most of the city council during the first election in 1974. All but two council members, David A. Clarke of Ward 1 and Polly Shackleton of Ward 3, were Black.[7] The ability to vote for city council and mayor was pivotal for direct representation, especially for a city with a Black majority. The expansions of Black political power inspired Latino political mobilization.

[6] Lee, *Building a Latino Civil Rights Movement*.
[7] Lauren Pearlman, *Democracy's Capital: Black Political Power in Washington, D.C., 1960s–1970s* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2019), 201; Chris Myers Asch and George Derek Musgrove, *Chocolate City: A History of Race and Democracy in the Nation's Capital* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2017); Harry Jaffe and Tom Sherwood, *Dream City: Race, Power, and the Decline of Washington, D.C.* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994).

The new political dynamics in the city that empowered the Black majority and politicians also structured how Latinos advocated for their share of resources. As the new D.C. government crystalized, high-profile Latino leaders felt the need to assert themselves and form a cohesive Latino community. For these community managers, securing direct representation through their council members was important for asserting Latino needs and visibility in city government. This was particularly true in Ward 1 where the Latino population was concentrated in the neighborhoods of Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant.

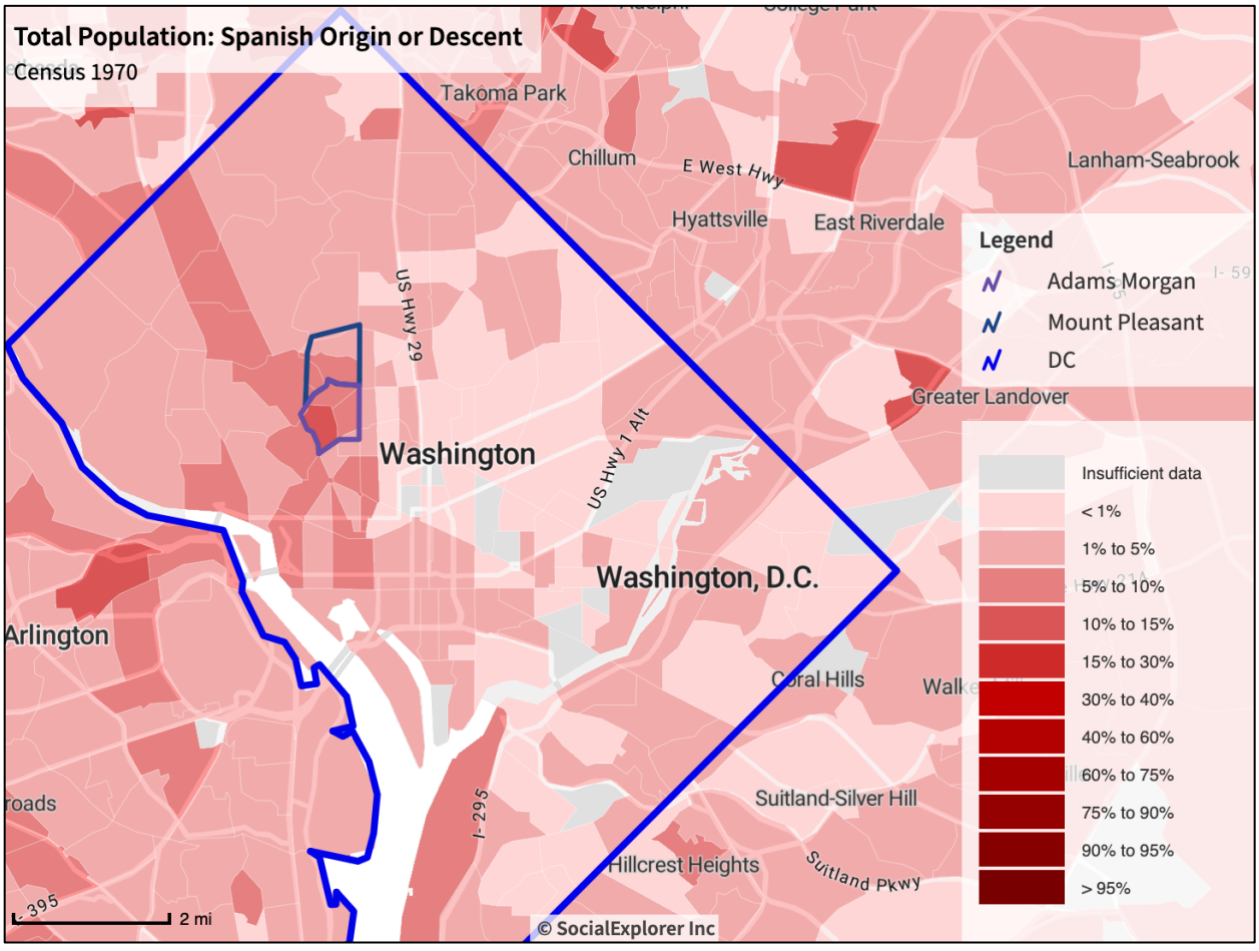


Figure 2.1 Map of Total Population, Spanish Origin or Descent (1970). The map's shading demonstrates the concentration (by percent) of people considered of "Spanish origin or descent" in the District of Columbia. The darker shadings correspond to a higher concentration of the population according to census tract. The outlines within the District denote the boundaries of Mount Pleasant (to the north) and Adams-Morgan (to the south). Source: Map created by author using Social Explorer.

To best understand the process of community formation it is important to recount key moments when D.C. Latinos struggled for unity, became visible to city administrators, and staked claims to a right to the city.[8] The 1970 census undercounting prompted a decades-long battle by the growing Latino population to levy demands of the District government. Puerto Rican representatives of the community continuously highlighted the city administration's neglect of the city's Latino communities. These leaders utilized battles over political representation in the city to push Mayor Walter E. Washington and his successor Marion Barry to secure the establishment of the Office on Latino Affairs. This strategy would lay the groundwork for political activism for the rest of the decade. As part of the multiracial coalition that helped elect Marion Barry as mayor in 1978, Puerto Rican leaders and organizations demanded greater city assistance to address the issues of Latino displacement and underemployment. Proposals for, and debates over, the designation of a Latin Quarter in Adams-Morgan reflected the delicate racial politics of the time, and highlighted Latinos' plight for political power was inherently intertwined with community formation. While Puerto Rican leaders and community organizations focused on empowering a critical mass to build political representation, Latino residents were confronted with the realities of national immigration policies. Multiple large-scale immigration raids in the late 1970s set the community on edge, demonstrating the unique forms of oppression that compounded unequal living conditions for mixed-status populations in the District and its suburbs.[9] The ultimate failure of the Latin

[8] David Harvey, "The Right to the City," *New Left Review* 53 (Sept/Oct 2008): 23-40.
[9] For scholarship that focuses on immigration raids, deportation, and the ripple effects on communities see: Nicholas De Genova and Nathalie Peutz, eds., *The Deportation Regimes: Sovereignty, Space, and the Freedom of Movement* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010); Kelly Lytle Hernández, *Migra!: A History of the U.S. Border Patrol* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010); Adam Goodman, *The Deportation Machine: America's Long History of Expelling Immigrants* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2020); Cindy Hahamovich, *No Man's Land: Jamaican Guest Workers in America and the Global History of Deportable Labor* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011); Daniel J. Tichenor, *Dividing Lines: The Politics of Immigration Control in America*

Quarter project was indicative of challenges facing Puerto Rican leaders, the long struggle for political power, and the delicate racial politics in the nation's capital. Having political representation in the District government was necessary to address the issues of low-income housing, displacement, unemployment, and policing.

2.1 Assembling Community Leaders

Carlos M. Rosario was one of the oldest and most powerful leaders of the Latino community. Born in Puerto Rico, he was an X-Ray technician who had moved to D.C. as a federal employee in the 1950s. Like many other Latinos during this period, Rosario settled in and became an active resident of Adams-Morgan, attending local town hall meetings and advocating on behalf of his Latino neighbors. He became a member of the D.C. Democratic Party's central committee and vice president of the Home Rule Committee. These experiences provided him with opportunities to develop networks with Black activists and city officials and learn how to navigate the federal government for local funding. From these positions of power, Rosario regularly spoke up about the living conditions of Latinos in the city and developed immigration assistance programs. He established important community organizations and programs that promoted bilingual education through the creation of the Educational Organization for the United Latin Americans (EOFULA) in 1967 and the Program of English Instruction for Latin Americans (PEILA) in 1970. Rosario, along with Reverend Antonio Welty and other community members, also founded the *Comité de Ayuda y Desarollo de Latinoamericanos en la Capital de*

(Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002); Tanya Maria Golash-Boza, *Deported: Immigrant Policing, Disposable Labor and Global Capitalism* (New York: New York University Press, 2015); William D. Lopez, *Separated: Family and Community in the Aftermath of an Immigration Raid* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2021); Maria Cristina Garcia, *Seeking Refuge: Central American Migration to Mexico, the United States, and Canada* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

la Nación (CADOLANCA), which was among the earliest groups centering Latino causes.[10] Because of his political activities, Mayor Washington appointed Rosario to be the founding director of the Office of the Spanish Community Advisory Committee, which was the precursor to the Office on Latino Affairs.

The Puerto Rican monopoly on Latino leadership positions was not a given. Rosario gained the de-facto position as representative of the Latino community through competition with other local community leaders. In 1966, Rosario, who at the time was chairman of CADOLANCA, and Israel Lopez, originally from Cuba and head of the International Neighbors Commission of the University Neighborhoods Council, jockeyed for power through the pursuit of funding for their respective organizations. Rosario was able to secure anti-poverty funds from the United Planning Organization, thus cementing his status as leader of the community.[11] By the mid-1970s, Rosario came to represent the "old guard" of Latino leadership. He would go on to unsuccessfully run for Ward 1 councilmember in 1974, attempting to become the first Latino on the City Council. Although he had been criticized for his privilege and not doing enough for disadvantaged Latinos at the "grass-roots level," Rosario remained an influential figure in D.C. politics until he retired in 1984.[12]

Rosario set the blueprint for the type of political organizing that other Latino leaders would engage to secure political representation and government funding. Rosario mentored José Gutiérrez and Sonia Gutiérrez who also became prominent Puerto Rican leaders in the

[10] Translation: Committee for the Aid and Development of Latin-Americans in the Nation's Capital. Paul Delaney, "D.C. Poverty Aid Asked for Spanish-Speaking," *The Evening Star*, December 20, 1967; Patrick Scallen, "The Bombs that Drop in El Salvador Explode in Mount Pleasant: From Cold War Conflagration to Immigrant Struggles in Washington, DC, 1970-1995," (PhD Diss., Georgetown University, 2019), 131.
[11] Philip Shandler, "2 Feuding Latin Factions in District Reach Truce," *The Evening Star*, November 20, 1966.
[12] Isabel West, "Ferment in the Barrio," *The Washington Star-News*, November 11, 1972; Joseph D. Whitaker, "Hispanic Leader Carlos Rosario Dies," *The Washington Post*, February 4, 1987; Carlos Sanchez, "The Old Man's Hispanic Honor," *The Washington Post*, February 10, 1990.

community. José Gutiérrez was a political strategist and organizer dubbed "the brain" by Rosario for his skills navigating political systems. Originally from the South Bronx, Gutiérrez was inspired by the civil rights movement as a youth and first became involved in Latino organizing while living in New York City. During the early 1970s, Gutiérrez was a part of the Puerto Rican Student Union at Columbia University and engaged in various forms of civil rights activism.[13] While in New York, Gutiérrez crossed paths with Ivanhoe Donaldson, prominent civil rights activists and leader of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), who connected him with prominent players in D.C. politics. In 1973 Gutiérrez moved to D.C. and got involved in the home rule referendum campaign, where he worked alongside John Wilson (another former SNCC activist) and became an active member of the local Democratic Party. At the time, he also worked on Rosario's 1974 failed campaign for city council. Through these connections, Gutiérrez met and developed a friendship with Marion Barry and later worked as a volunteer organizer for Barry's 1978 mayoral campaign. He would eventually become the highest-ranking Latino official in Marion Barry's administration, serving as director of the Office of Personnel.[14] Sonia Gutiérrez moved to Washington, D.C. in 1972 from Puerto Rico and quickly became involved in Latino politics. She initially worked as a counselor for PEILA and was eventually named its director by Rosario. Sonia recalled being active in almost every political movement involving Latinos in the District. José and Sonia were married in the 1970s although they would

[13] For more on the Puerto Rican activism in New York and the Puerto Rican Student Union movement see: Sonia Song-Ha Lee, *Building a Latino Civil Rights Movement: Puerto Ricans, African Americans, and the Pursuit of Racial Justice in New York City* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2014); Frederick Douglass Opie, *Upsetting the Apple Cart: Black-Latino Coalitions in New York City from Protest to Public Office* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014).

[14] José Gutierrez interview, April 29, 2016, Series 1, Marion Barry 1978 Campaign Oral History Project, MS2342, Special Collections Research Center, The George Washington University, https://archive.org/details/ms2342_s01_transcript_jose_gutierrez.

later get divorced. The Gutiérrezes were instrumental in the drafting and passage of legislation that created the Office on Latino Affairs in 1976.[15]

Though Puerto Ricans were the most vocal leaders, they also worked closely with other organizers in the community. Rosario and others understood that the community had the most power when united and vocal. They recognized that community organizations and programs needed to be established before federal funds could be leveraged in efforts to close service gaps. A crop of leaders rose from and rotated between leadership positions in community organizations and social service programs. Rosario and others established a wide array of organizations focusing on bilingual education, adult education, youth counseling, legal services, housing, and mental health during the 1970s.

The Wilson Center, or *Centro Wilson*, was a fundamental Latino organization that was started by Rev. Antonio Welty, a Colombian Presbyterian minister and founder of the Latino congregation *La Iglesia Presbiterana Buen Pastor*. Located on 15th and Irving Street Northwest, locals considered the Wilson Center to be a "lighthouse" of the Latino community because it funded and housed many important programs and associations.[16] For instance, the Latin American Youth Center (LAYC), established in 1968 by youth leaders including Panamanian-born Arturo Griffiths, relocated into the Wilson Center in 1973. LAYC grew to be a prominent institution in the community that provided after-school and vocational programs for youth and trained future leaders of the community. Another important organization, AYUDA, was founded in 1971 by Georgetown University law students and became a nonprofit in 1972.[17] AYUDA was

[15] Sonia Gutiérrez interview, Part I & II, Latino Youth Community History Project Oral History, April 17, 1982, http://hdl.handle.net/1961/dcplislandora:77955 & http://hdl.handle.net/1961/dcplislandora:72682.
[16] Cadaval, *Creating a Latino Identity*, 64; Scallen, "The Bombs," 129. For an example of how sacred spaces became sites of Latino activist organizing see: Felipe Hinojosa, *Apostles of Change: Latino Radical Politics, Church Occupations, and the Fight to Save the Barrio* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2021).
[17] *Ayuda* means help in Spanish.

a legal aid agency that provided social services to low-income Spanish-speaking residents and immigrants ranging from immigration to tenant rights. Other organizations that met at the Wilson Center included *El Centro de Arte*, the Central American Refugee Center (CARECEN), and *La Clínica Del Pueblo*.[18]

Carlos Rosario and other prominent Latinos created the Latino Festival to foster and highlight a united community. Carlos Rosario co-founded the Latin-American Festival in 1970 along with Marcelo Fernández-Zayas, Luis Vidaña, Pedro A. Luján, and Casilda Luna. Each of these leaders was shaped by political turmoil in their home countries and used their experiences to inform their activism in the District: Fernández-Zayas escaped Cuba when Fidel Castro and the revolution took power and was active in the Civil Rights Movement in D.C.; Vidaña was originally from Cuba; Luján first came to D.C. on a tourist visa in the mid-1960s and stayed when political turmoil continued in Perú; and Luna escaped the Rafael Trujillo regime in the Dominican Republic and became a domestic worker in D.C. Luna, a self-identified Afro-Latina, went on to establish *Mujeres Unidas Latinoamericanas* (MULA) and was a vehement advocate for Latino tenant rights in Adams-Morgan.[19] This group reflected the diversity of the Latino community and used the festival to push back against notions that Latinos were a separate, small group within the District. Rosario and others pressed for unification of the disparate Latin American community through the development of the festival "to create a synthetic Latino identity, to claim a space, and define a place" in the city.[20] The festival would grow to become a cultural staple in the areas of Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant, helping to assert the presence

[18] Cadaval, *Creating a Latino Identity*.
[19] MULA stands for United Latin-American Women. Cadaval, *Creating a Latino Identity*.
[20] Cadaval, *Creating a Latino Identity*, 14.

of the Latino population in the neighborhoods and the larger city.[21] However, progressives and left-leaning Latinos criticized what they saw as an apolitical form of community formation, favoring more-radical forms of political organizing. Alan Ponze, Peruvian, argued for the need of better political training within the Latino community over the creation of cultural programs: "We can identify with the folk dances and songs. But what about the conditions we come from? I would prefer political orientation, not this romanticism about our culture."[22]

The Council of Hispanic Community and Agencies emerged from these various social service groups. Sonia Gutiérrez and Pedro Luján established the CHCA in 1977 to represent religious, educational, health, and social service groups in the Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant neighborhoods. Sonia Gutiérrez, who at the time represented PEILA, and Pedro Luján believed there needed to be a streamlined process for seeking and applying for government and foundation funding. The goal, according to Gutiérrez, was to manage the infighting among the represented agencies to efficiently secure funds that would directly serve the community's larger interests.[23] Competition between Latino organizations to obtain funding from United Way had become contentious three years prior and risked splintering the community. Sonia Gutiérrez served as CHCA's first president, from 1977 to 1978.[24] Eva Guevara-Erb, who replaced Gutiérrez as head of CHCA, described the mission of the council: to "speak with one voice for

[21] For more on the significance of the Latino Festival for the D.C. Latino community see Cadaval, *Creating a Latino Identity*.
[22] Betty Medsger, "Latins form Largest Immigrant Group," *The Washington Post*, December 4, 1972.
[23] The original groups represented by the Council included: Andromeda Mental Health, Ayuda Legal Services, Bilingual Program, Change Inc. Social Services, Community Group Health Foundation, Dupont Circle Counseling Center, Educational Organization for the United Latin Americans (EOFULA), Gala Hispanic Theatre, Latin American Youth Center (LAYC), PEILA, Rosemount Daycare Center, Sacred Heart Community Center, Spanish American Police Association, Spanish Catholic Center Community Services, Spanish Education Development Center, United Planning Organization (Spanish Office), Woodrow Wilson Center (Social Services), Adelante-Advocacy Center, Housing Counseling Services, Inc., and Domestic Workers Association.
[24] Sonia Gutiérrez interview, Part I & II, Latino Youth Community History Project Oral History, April 17, 1982, http://hdl.handle.net/1961/dcplislandora:77955 & http://hdl.handle.net/1961/dcplislandora:72682.

the needs of the Latino community vis a vis the District of Columbia and the federal government."[25] Reflecting the diversity of the community, members of the council came from Cuba, Argentina, Spain, Peru, the Dominican Republic, Colombia, and Puerto Rico. The Council and its leadership served as intermediaries between Latino residents, community organizations, and the municipal government. As a result, the Council of Hispanic Agencies would position itself as one of the most significant organizations in the Latino community. However, the CHCA created obstacles for working class Latinos to have their voices heard. The CHCA held meetings at noon during the weekdays, thus preventing people who worked from attending and contributing to the most important political matters. "Nosotros como gente de la comunidad, queremos participar en las reuniones del Consejo de Agencias Hispanas," wrote Luis Rumbaut in an editorial for *El Latino*.[26]

2.2 Contending with Federal Power

Since the late 1960s, community activists such as Luis Vidaña hoped to highlight the Latino community's lack of political representation through widespread media attention. "President Nixon talks about the silent majority. The Spanish-speaking people are in the silent majority in this town," stressed Vidaña.[27] Vidaña's comment highlighted how, despite a strong presence in the District, their status as immigrants and as undocumented migrants rendered Latinos powerless and apprehensive. The burgeoning Latino population of Washington, D.C. grappled with federal authorities and oversight during the pre-home rule era. "Even though we

[25] Mary Lenz, "Hectic Start Leads to Unified Hispanic Council," *The Washington Post*, August 17, 1978.
[26] Translation: "As community members, we want to participate in the Council of Hispanic Agency meetings." Luis Rumbaut, "La Mala Hora," *El Latino*, October 16, 1977, from "El Latino 1977-1979," Periodicals Collection, The Washingtoniana Collection, The People's Archive, DC Public Library, Washington, D.C. [hereinafter Periodicals, DCPL].
[27] John Fialka, "Train Police in Spanish Educational Group Asks," *The Washington Evening Star*, December 5, 1969.

are in your own backyard, federal agencies have always succeeded in ignoring us completely," echoed Sonia Gutiérrez a decade later.[28] Latinos in the District understood that the federal government was the main antagonist in the city that failed to recognize, understand, or support the community. Federal assistance programs overlooked the presence of Latino communities and their particular needs in the city. These sentiments persisted and shifted to focus on D.C.'s municipal government when it gained greater autonomy from federal oversight with the passage of the Home Rule Act in 1973.

Federal oversight and power created the all-encompassing structure under which the District operated, and Latino organizing formed in the early 1970s. Congress maintained fiscal control over the city, setting and approving the District's budget. At the same time, the federal government used census data to set the parameters for distributing resources to minority communities nationally. In the District, federal authorities and city officials underestimated the immigrant population in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s based on the Census which resulted in fewer public programs for housing, education, and employment that specifically served the Latino community. Census data obscured the growing and vibrant racial and ethnic diversity of the Latino population. Latinos—or as the census categorized them in the 1950s and 60s, "persons with Spanish surnames" or foreigners—were racially coded as white.[29] In 1960, the Census accounted for people with Spanish surnames in D.C. based on nationality and only tracked Puerto Ricans and Mexicans. According to the 1960 data, 1,001 individuals who were born in

[28] "Latinos Call Themselves A 'Forgotten Community'," *The Washington Post*, September 16, 1978.
[29] According to the 1950 Census, "persons of Mexican birth or ancestry who were not definitely Indian or of other nonwhite race were classified as white." People born in U.S. territories, in this case Puerto Rico, were counted as native. Lastly, the 1950 Census only began to count persons with Spanish surnames in the southwestern states of Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico, and Texas. With this system of categorization in mind, only 325 persons of Mexican descent were recorded by the Census living in Washington, D.C. U.S. Bureau of the Census, *U.S. Census of Population: 1950* Vol. III, *Census Tract Statistics*, Chapter 59. (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1952) https://www2.census.gov/prod2/decennial/documents/41557421v3p4ch07.pdf.

Puerto Rico, 372 individuals of Puerto Rican parentage, and 590 people from Mexico lived in the District.[30] In reality, the Latino community at this time also consisted of Dominicans, Cubans, and other South Americans.[31] Scholars have argued that state apparatuses, such as the Census, have long been used as tools of gatekeeping. These externally imposed racial labels affected the inclusion and exclusion of different foreign-born nationals into American society.[32] Moreover, Puerto Ricans and Mexicans have been the focus of scholarly histories of Latinos in the U.S.[33]

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[30] U.S. Bureau of the Census, *U.S. Censuses of Population and Housing: 1960. Census Tracts* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1962) https://www2.census.gov/prod2/decennial/documents/41953654v11ch05.pdf; Elaine A. Peña, "Latino D.C. History Project: Synopsis and Prototype Case Study Phase 1 (2009-2010)," Smithsonian Latino Center.
[31] Cadaval, *Creating a Latino Identity*.
[32] See: Mae M. Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004); Erika Lee, *At America's Gates: Chinese Immigration during the Exclusion Era, 1882-1943* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003); Thomas A. Guglielmo, *White on Arrival: Italians, Race, Color, and Power in Chicago, 1890-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Kornel Chang, *Pacific Connections: The Making of the U.S.-Canadian Borderlands* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012); Hernández, *Migra!*; Ellen D. Wu, *The Color of Success: Asian Americans and the Origins of the Model Minority* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013); Laura Briggs, *Reproducing Empire: Race, Sex, Science, and U.S. Imperialism in Puerto Rico* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Natalia Molina, *Fit to be Citizens?: Public Health and Race in Los Angeles, 1879-1939* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006); Scott Kurashige, *The Shifting Grounds of Race: Black and Japanese Americans in the Making of Multiethnic Los Angeles* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008); Cindy Hahamovich, *No Man's Land: Jamaican Guest Workers in America and the Global History of Deportable Labor* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011).
[33] For a sampling of works that center Mexicans and Mexican-Americans see: Vicky Ruiz, *Cannery Women, Cannery Lives: Mexican Women, Unionization, and the California Food Processing Industry, 1930-1950* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1987); George Sánchez, *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture, and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900–1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); Laura Gómez, *Manifest Destinies: The Making of the Mexican American Race* (New York: New York University Press, 2007); Edward J. Escobar, *Race, Police, and the Making of a Political Identity: Mexican Americans and the Los Angeles Police Department, 1900–1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009); Anthony Mora, *Border Dilemmas: Racial and National Uncertainties in New Mexico, 1848–1912* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011); Maylei Blackwell, *¡Chicana Power! Contested Histories of Feminism in the Chicano Movement* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011); Stephen J. Pitti, *The Devil in Silicon Valley: Northern California, Race, and Mexican Americans* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002); Julie M. Weise, *Corazon de Dixie: Mexicanos in the U.S. South Since 1910* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2015); Zaragosa Vargas, *Labor Rights are Civil Rights: Mexican American Workers in Twentieth-Century America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005). Some works that center Puerto Ricans see: Thomas, *Puerto Rican Citizen*; Carmen Teresa Whalen, *From Puerto Rico to Philadelphia: Puerto Rican Workers and Postwar Economies* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2001); Johanna Fernández, *The Young Lords: A Radical History* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2020); Carmen Teresa Whalen and Víctor Vázquez-Hernández, *The Puerto Rican Diaspora: Historical Perspectives* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2005); Alene Dávila, *Barrio Dreams: Puerto Ricans, Latinos, and the Neoliberal City* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004). For an example of works that incorporate both Mexican and Puerto Rican history see: Fernández, *Brown in the Windy City*; Nicholas De Genova and Ana Yolanda Ramos-Zayas, *Latino Crossings: Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and the Politics of Race and Citizenship* (New York: Rutledge, 2003).

The release of the 1970 decennial census data, which once again undercounted both the long-established and recent immigrant Latin American population in the District, was a pivotal moment for the burgeoning Latino community and spurred frustrated Puerto Rican leaders into action. According to that year's census, 15,671 or 2.1 percent "persons of Spanish language" lived in the District.[34] However, local organizations claimed conservatively that more than 50,000 Latinos resided across the city.[35] Arguing that the Latino population was at least four times the amount recorded in the census, Carlos Rosario and other prominent community leaders banded together to present a united Latino community that was an established presence in the city and capable of exerting political pressure. Activists and community members felt unseen in the District in comparison to their African American and white neighbors. The undercounting and mixed status of Latinos rendered them invisible to the local and federal government. Layered within this invisibility were the mechanisms present in census data collection and classification that limited the racial categorization of Latinos, especially Afro-Latinos, and their proportional access to local resources.[36]

While pushing back against the inaccurate federal account and mischaracterizations of their population, representatives of the Latino community were simultaneously grappling with what a "Latino" identity meant and who was represented within the community. Through this process, they were deciding how to represent themselves to outsiders in the fight for political power. During this time, there was no majority within the Latino community, although Puerto

[34] U.S. Bureau of the Census, *1970 Census of Population and Housing, Census Tracts* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1972) https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1970/phc-1/39204513p22ch11.pdf.
[35] Olivia Cadaval and Brian Finnegan, "'Our Voices in the Nation's Capital': Creating the Latino Community Heritage Center of Washington, D.C.," *The Public Historian*, Vol. 23, No. 4, 73-90 (Fall 2001); Robert D. Manning, "Washington, D.C.: The Changing Social Landscape of the International Capital City," in *Origins and Destinies: Immigration, Race, and Ethnicity in America*, ed. Silvia Pedraza and Rubén G. Rumbaut (New York: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1996), 373-389; Mary Lenz, "Concerns in Washington's 'Latin Quarter': How Much Longer Can the Melting Pot Survive?" *The Washington Post*, September 7, 1978.
[36] Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*, 267; Schor, *Counting Americans*; Prewitt, *What is Your Race?*.

Ricans held strategic leadership positions. Puerto Ricans had risen to key leadership positions within the group despite their small numbers due to the privilege of citizenship, fluency in English, and ties to existing political networks in cities such as New York.[37] Moreover, Black politicians and activists in the city were more familiar with Puerto Ricans as a constituency and as allies in civil rights struggles.[38] Interracial networks facilitated Puerto Rican ascendance within the Latino population. Unlike much of the immigrant population, Puerto Ricans did not have to worry about immigration raids and threats of deportation. Moreover, their familiarity with U.S. politics and application of tactics for political representation elevated them to organizing positions. Puerto Ricans in the District knew how to operate the levers of the federal government and were successful at securing federal funding for community programs, thus cementing their leadership status.[39]

2.2.1 Creating the Office on Latino Affairs

For the Latino community, having a dedicated office within the city's administration committed to their needs was important for recognizing their existence in the District and revelatory for the institutionalization of community formation. As the population grew, Puerto Rican leaders made the case for their community's status as the largest minority in the city. Of course, this stance assumed that the Black majority in the District set that community apart from

[37] The power that Puerto Rican leaders in the District were able to draw on, particularly the benefits of citizenship, demonstrates the legacy of empire within the U.S. context. See: Julie Greene, *The Canal Builders: Making America's Empire at the Panama Canal* (New York: Penguin Press, 2009); Paul Kramer, *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States, and the Philippines* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006); Laura Briggs, *Reproducing Empire: Race, Sex, Science, and U.S. Imperialism in Puerto Rico* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Jana Lipman, *Guantánamo: A Working-Class History between Empire and Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008); Chang, *Pacific Connections*; Hahamovich, *No Man's Land*.
[38] Lee, *Building a Latino Civil Rights Movement*; Pulido, *Black, Brown, Yellow, and Left*; Cruz, *Liberalism and Identity Politics*; Opie, *Upsetting the Apple Cart*.
[39] Cadaval, *Creating a Latino Identity*, 76; Arturo Griffiths Interview, Mount Pleasant Riot Oral History Project, January 4, 2018, http://hdl.handle.net/1961/dcplislandora:42736.

"minority" status. In the 1970s, the city government had tasked the Office of Spanish Community Advisory Committee with representing the Latino minority in municipal government, addressing community concerns, and advocating for necessary services. As the sole municipal representative of the District's Latinos, the office (later renamed the Office on Latino Affairs) itself became a symbol of the clashes between the community and the city's mostly Black political leadership. The city's Black leadership had been in place for less than a decade and inherited governmental structures previously set by white federal appointees. The role of director, appointed by the mayor, was also a significant leadership position for the Latino community and the site of internal struggles.

Carlos Rosario used his knowledge of the federal government to push city officials to acknowledge the Latino community. City officials, particularly Mayor Walter E. Washington, initially dismissed pressure from representatives to hold formal hearings on the status of Latinos in the city.[40] Established leaders in the community who made up the membership of CADOLANCA understood that they needed to recruit influential voices to advocate on their behalf and took advantage of their proximity to Congress and the federal government. Rosario, on behalf of CADOLANCA, reached out to the White House to get President Nixon's support. Leonard S. Zartman, special assistant to the president, responded in a letter on May 12, 1969:

> The condition of Spanish-speaking residents of the District of Columbia is of course a concern to the President. I am sure he would be the first to assert that our efforts in housing, education and other areas of need have not been adequate. Steps to meet these problems for Spanish-speaking residents of Washington...are being pursued and that effort will continue.[41]

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[40] Carlos Rosario to Chairman Gilbert Hahn, Jr. and Council Members, December 5, 1969, Folder Spanish Speaking Community, Box 60, Subseries 4, Series 9, Polly Shackleton Papers, Special Collections Research Center, Gelman Library, The George Washington University, Washington, D.C. [hereinafter Shackleton Papers, GWU]; Adams Morgan Federation, Inc. to Walter E. Washington, December 6, 1969, Folder Spanish Speaking Community, Box 60, Subseries 4, Series 9, Shackleton Papers, GWU.

[41] Carlos Rosario to Gilbert Hahn, Jr., November 12, 1969, Folder Spanish Speaking Community, Box 60, Subseries 4, Series 9, Shackleton Papers, GWU.

Strategically drawing upon Congress's influence and authority over D.C.'s governance, Rosario and CADOLANCA encouraged the only Latino U.S. Senator at the time Joseph M. Montoya (D-NM) to advocate for recognition of their needs by the federal and city government.[42] Senator Montoya was a part-time resident of the District and his affinity for the Latino population in D.C. made him a powerful ally. He categorized "problems of language" as a top priority for the community and argued that "[p]erhaps by focusing national attention on conditions of the Spanish speaking in our Nation's Capital, we can have the necessary attention focused on the disgraceful conditions in other parts of the Nation."[43] Senator Montoya, like other politicians before him who used Washington, D.C. as a testing ground for federal policies, believed that by elevating Latino issues in D.C. to the national stage he could potentially influence action across the country. Senator Montoya brought the issues facing the local community to the congressional floor and argued that the District's government "had thus far failed to effectively deal with the problems of language, unemployment, and other problems related to Washington's Spanish-speaking Americans."[44] Moreover, Rosario and CADOLANCA sent petitions to Congress and the D.C. government to urge their support for the community and the creation of an office or agency focused on Spanish-speaking people in the District.[45]

Senator Montoya, a member of the Senate Subcommittee on the District of Columbia, also brought the issues facing D.C. Latinos to the subcommittee, pressuring the city council to

[42] Joseph M. Montoya to Carlos Rosario, November 6, 1969, Folder Spanish Speaking Community, Box 60, Subseries 4, Series 9, Shackleton Papers, GWU; Richard E. Prince, "D.C. Spanish Minority Finds Ally in Montoya," *The Washington Post*, December 15, 1969.
[43] 91 Cong. Rec. S16425 (December 11, 1969) (statement of Sen. Montoya), Folder Spanish Speaking Community, Box 60, Subseries 4, Series 9, Shackleton Papers, GWU. See Rosina Lozano, *An American Language: The History of Spanish in the United States* (Berkley: University of California Press, 2018).
[44] 91 Cong. Rec. S16425 (December 11, 1969) (statement of Sen. Montoya), Folder Spanish Speaking Community, Box 60, Subseries 4, Series 9, Shackleton Papers, GWU.
[45] Carlos Rosario, "Petition," November 12, 1969, Folder Spanish Speaking Community, Box 60, Subseries 4, Series 9, Shackleton Papers, GWU.

hold the first formal hearing on Latino matters in 1969. Senator Fred R. Harris of Oklahoma and Senator Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts added their voices in support of the hearings. Long overdue, the hearing on Latino affairs took place on January 27, 1970, and spanned two days as the council tried to include more than fifty people who signed up to speak on issues relating to housing, education, health care, and employment. The meeting was attended by more than two hundred Latino residents, many of whom spoke about their experiences and demanded the city council institute a Spanish-speaking affairs division.[46] Martin G. Castillo, chairman of President' Nixon's Cabinet Committee on Opportunity for the Spanish Speaking, also attended the meeting and questioned the racial politics of the predominant Black city council.[47] During these hearings, Rosario worked on translating the suggestions into action. His goal was to create a department within the mayor's office that could serve as the mouthpiece of the Latino community and arbitrated between the private and public sector. Such a department could embed a liaison into the city government that could connect the people to the mayor directly, raising their needs as a growing minority of the city and promoting assistance programs.[48]

The first iteration of the Office of Spanish Community Advisory Committee (OSCAC) was organized by city council, with approval by Mayor Washington, support from congressional oversight committees, and encouragement from Carlos Rosario. In 1970, Mayor Washington selected Rosario as the inaugural executive director of the OSCAC. This political victory for the Latino community and Rosario was short-lived. The year 1975 marked a key turning point in the

[46] D.C. City Council, "Resource and Witness List," n.d. [December 1969], Folder Spanish Speaking Community, Box 60, Subseries 4, Series 9, Shackleton Papers, GWU.
[47] For more on the adversarial relationship between the Nixon administration and the Black-led city see Pearlman, *Democracy's Capital*.
[48] Senator Montoya, speaking on District of Columbia Hearings Held on Problems of City Spanish-Speaking Residents, on February 17, 1970, 91st Cong., 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* 116, pt.3:3542; Constance Holden, "Latin Residents Tell City Council of Troubles," *The Evening Star*, January 28, 1970; Paul Hodge, "D.C. Council Hearing Airs Ills of Spanish Community," *The Washington Post*, January 28, 1970.

Latino community's support for Mayor Washington, the status of OSCAC, and Rosario's standing in the Latino community. Since its inception in 1970, OSCAC was housed under the Department of Human Resources. Rosario and others pressured Mayor Washington, who gained new powers as the city's first elected mayor after the 1974 election, to move OSCAC out of its current department, allowing it to have more independence and unmediated attention from the mayor. With the support of Rosario, OSCAC members insisted that increasing the number of staff was necessary to better serve the community and address their long stemming demands. Rosario argued, "We want direct access to the mayor instead of going through three or four people to get to him…It takes three weeks to a month to reach him."[49]

Despite these efforts, on August 4, 1975 Mayor Washington approved the transfer of the office and its four employees to the Office of Human Rights. The main directive of the Office of Human Rights was to review discrimination complaints in the city and report directly to the mayor. City administrator Julian R. Dugas initiated the transfer in an August 1, 1975 memorandum to the mayor that argued that the Office of Human Rights was overloaded and short-staffed, resulting in a backlog of work. Dugas reasoned that moving personnel from OSCAC would "relieve" the staffing issue and ease the workload. The four staff members were given only a few hours' notice of their transfer. In addition to the transfers, one of the positions was to be demoted in the job rating.[50]

Rosario immediately turned to his network to protest the move. The response from the Latino community and allies in the city council was immediate. Representatives of the Latino community, mobilized by Rosario, expressed their concern over the unannounced move, arguing

[49] LaBarbara Bowman, "Latinos Protest Plan to Shift Office," *The Washington Post*, August 9, 1975.
[50] Julian R. Dugas to Mayor Walter E. Washington, August 1, 1975, Folder 9, Box 131, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU.

that the transfer would render all services relating to Latinos a matter of "human rights," thereby shifting conversations about community needs to ones pertaining to general human need and exacerbating the relegation of this minority as a "problem" community. Activists argued that their desire was for their concerns not to be solely arbitrated as matters of "human rights." Instead, they once again demanded a dedicated centralized office that would be able to advocate directly to the mayor and raise awareness of the Latino presence and issues in the District.[51]

Puerto Rican leaders drew on their experiences working alongside civil rights activists to mobilize the Latino community into action. Upon learning about the plan to restructure OSCAC, Rosario called Sonia Gutiérrez to communicate the news to Jose Gutiérrez and spread the word across the community. A meeting between the employees of the OSCAC and the directors of major Latino organizations was held on August 5, where the group discussed their concerns with the unannounced move and strategized about next steps. Afterwards, Rosario and "*mi gente*" (my people) marched to the mayor's office, initiated a sit-in, and sang "We Shall Overcome" until Mayor Washington came out to address the group.[52] Carmen L. Felices, Frank Fuentes, and Raquel M. Frankel (all members of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Spanish Speaking Affairs), wrote to the mayor requesting clarification of the rationale for the decision. "The undersigned are eager to do everything necessary to insure the permeance and growth of the office, to increase its effectiveness and closeness to the community, and to expand the resources available to it." The group encouraged the mayor to express support for the continuation of the office and the overall representation of the minority community.[53]

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[51] Carlos M. Rosario to David M. Clarke, August 1975, Folder 9, Box 131, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU.
[52] Sonia Gutiérrez interview, Part I & II, Latino Youth Community History Project Oral History, April 17, 1982, http://hdl.handle.net/1961/dcplislandora:77955 & http://hdl.handle.net/1961/dcplislandora:72682; Cadaval, *Creating a Latino Identity*, 68.
[53] Carmen L. Felices, Frank Fuentes, and Raquel M. Frankel to Mayor Walter E. Washington, August 7, 1975, Folder 9, Box 131, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU.

The threat to OSCAC tested multiracial solidarity and marked the first moment the city council was called to act on the behalf of the Latino community following passage of the Home Rule Act. City council members quickly called for compromise. Councilmember David A. Clarke wrote to the mayor in his capacity as Ward 1 representative, which included the Latino communities of Mount Pleasant and Adams-Morgan. David "Dave" Clarke had long been active in the D.C. civil rights movement, serving as director of the Washington Bureau of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLS), and a lawyer until his election as council member in 1974. Councilmember Clarke relayed concerns discussed at the meeting, outlining the tumultuous history of the office. He highlighted how the absence of an independent office that served Latinos would contribute to the absence of resources and services that would support that community.[54] Nadine P. Winter, councilmember for the majority-Black Ward 6, also shared her concerns over OSCAC's impending restructuring in a letter to Councilmember Arrington Dixon, who served Ward 4. "It appears a particularly inappropriate action at just the time when we should be more aware than ever of the needs of this growing segment of our community," expressed councilmember Winter. She believed the city council's response to the matter provided a pivotal oversight opportunity for city agencies. Dixon shared Clarke and Winter's apprehensions and urged Washington to think carefully about his actions.[55]

After an August 5 community meeting, leaders in the Latino community and their representatives in government offices organized a "Bill of Particulars of the Spanish-Speaking Community." In the Bill, sent to the mayor, the group laid out their frustrations stemming from

[54] David Clarke to the Honorable Walter E. Washington, August 6, 1975, Folder 9, Box 131, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU.
[55] Nadine P. Winter to Councilmember Arrington Dixon, August 6, 1975, Folder 9, Box 131, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU; Arrington Dixon to Mayor Walter E. Washington, August 6, 1975, Box 131, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU.

the staff shakeup and outlined their broad-spectrum demands. The Office of the Spanish Community Advisory Committee, they argued, represented a "lifeline" to the city, albeit a weak one. The transfer highlighted the "reality the Spanish community and its office had no legislative legitimacy, and no formalized relationship to the channels of elected government." The "Bill of Particulars" listed eight demands for better services and resources, including the city's compliance with the federal civil rights laws by filing an affirmative action plan for Latinos; programs for social, housing, and economic development; Latino voter registration drives; and increases in Latino contracts and subcontracts with the city. Finally, the bill called for the "non-negotiable" retention of OSCAC in its present form until the city council could find a new structure that better addressed the "problems" of Latinos.[56]

Additionally, Puerto Rican leaders connected the bill's demands to the longstanding history of civil rights activism and local campaigns for home rule, appealing to the mayor and Black politicians for interracial solidarity. The bill's writers drew upon shared experiences of racialization and oppression to build alliances with the Black community and apply pressure to elected government officials. "We are especially disturbed that this should occur in the infancy of home rule when the ascendancy of a former minority to power has brought so much hope to those who were once powerless."[57] Reaffirming solidarity with the broader Black Power struggle in the city was a strategic move by Puerto Rican leadership who understood the power that Black activists held within city politics. By appealing to shared experiences and a tradition of activism, Rosario sought to bolster popular backing and extend the political power in supporting for the

[56] "Bill of Particulars of the Spanish-Speaking Community," Aug 8, 1975, Folder 9, Box 131, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU.
[57] "Bill of Particulars of the Spanish-Speaking Community," Aug 8, 1975, Folder 9, Box 131, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU.

rights of Latinos within city government. A broad coalition in support of Latinos could pressure the mayor to save OSCAC.[58]

In addition to the demands outlined in the "Bill of Particulars," Rosario and other leaders organized protests to increase pressure on Mayor Washington. On August 8, approximately 400 Latinos marched and held a vigil outside of the District Building where the mayor's office was located. The mass gathering was organized by Pedro Luján, the new president of the Latino Festival, and other activists to show solidarity for that day's meeting between Luján, Rosario, city councilmembers, and Mayor Washington on August 8. As a result of the meeting and public pressure, Washington agreed to temporarily keep the office in the Department of Human Resources while Rosario and his team worked on creating a Task Force to outline a statement of needs and long-term issues described in the "Bill of Particulars."[59] Despite the agreement, Rosario, Luján, and Gutiérrez continued to be concerned about the status and operation of OSCAC. A month after the meeting, Councilmember Clarke wrote to Mayor Washington to confirm that the creation of an independent office that served the Latino community within the executive branch was still expected.[60]

City council and Puerto Rican leaders worked quickly to capitalize on public pressure against Washington and negotiated the establishment of a permanent Office on Latino Affairs (OLA) in 1976. D.C. Public Law 1-86, which placed OLA in the Executive Office of the Mayor of the District of Columbia, was drafted in collaboration among José Gutiérrez, Sonia Gutiérrez,

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[58] Sonia Song-Ha Lee explains that "intertwined and mutually reinforcing historical processes" of racialization facilitated civil rights networks in places like New York City between African Americans and Puerto Ricans. Sonia Song-Ha Lee, *Building a Latino Civil Rights Movement*, 4.

[59] Carlos M. Rosario to the Honorable David A. Clarke, August 1975, Folder 9, Box 131, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU; LaBarbra Bowman, "Latinos Protest Plan to Shift Office," *The Washington Post*, August 9, 1975.

[60] David Clarke to the Honorable Walter E. Washington, September 12, 1975, Folder 9, Box 131, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU.

and Bruce C. French, legislative counsel for the city council. The bill was co-sponsored by council members Marion Barry, Polly Shackleton, and John A. Wilson, reflecting a broad coalition of support. Barry's key backing of the bill elevated his recognition and standing within the Latino community. Along with the newly created OLA, the city council bill set up the Commission on Latino Community Development (CLCD). The CLCD served as a companion advisory group made up of fifteen members of the public who represented public and private local organizations. Members were to be nominated by the mayor and approved by the council. Significantly, at least two of the seats were reserved for "residents aliens" indicating that the bill writers understood the diversity of the mixed-status Latino population and wanted the commission to be representative of all people in the community.[61]

The CLCD was tasked with representing and advocating on the behalf of the Latino community to OLA and the mayor. Under the new law, the mayor retained the right to appoint OLA's director from a list of candidates submitted by CLCD. Mayor Washington selected Carlos Rosario to continue his role as acting director of the new OLA while Pedro Luján became the acting chairman of CLCD.[62] Luján believed that the creation of OLA and CLCD signaled a positive step towards more access and representation in the city. "For so long we have been second class citizens. We hope this new commission will give us the power, in a united effort, to help the people," claimed Luján.[63] Despite these gains, the relationship between the Latino community and Walter E. Washington continued to fracture. Latino leaders were skeptical of

[61] *District of Columbia Latino Community Development Act,* D.C. Public Law 1-86, < https://code.dccouncil.gov/us/dc/council/laws/1-86>.
[62] Other members of the commission included: Isabel Bayona, Dr. Ricardo Galbis, Casilda Luna, Rev. Sean O'Malley, Aida Luz Berio, Lucy B. Caravajal, Dr. Lucy M. Cohen, Marcela Q. Davila, Josephine Ades Sanchez, Francisco Delgado, Rev. Julain Hernandez, Mary Ann Justiz, V. Hector Rodriguez, and Arturo Valle.
[63] Thomas Morgan, "Renamed Latino Commission Hopes for Influence," *The Washington Post*, August 4, 1977.

Washington's commitment to their causes and believed he had not gone far enough to appoint more Latinos in his administration.

2.2.2 Immigration Raids Amidst a Changing Political Climate

At a time when Puerto Rican leaders were consolidating political power and pushing for political representation, the Latino community's attention also turned to mass immigration raids in the late 1970s. High-profile raids on social gatherings prompted activist concerns about local law enforcement's collaboration with the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). Federal immigration policies and activities within Washington, D.C. permeated fear and affected Latin American immigrants' mobility in the city. These moments also marked the expansion of Puerto Rican-led movements in the District to include an emerging Central American population. Immigration enforcement and its aftermath made Central American migrants visible in the city, particularly to local politicians, and forced a re-examination of who was part of the imagined Latino community. Latin American immigrants distrusted federal authorities and recognized how immigration enforcement opened the door to racial profiling in the community. These moments once again tested the strength of Black and Latino solidarity. City politicians had to reckon with the local application of federal immigration policies and determine how their newly independent local government would address immigration issues.

On a national scale, geopolitical changes in Latin America affected migration waves, intersected with changes in immigration policies, and transformed the makeup of the local population.[64] As part of the global Cold War, U.S. interventionist policies and military support for coups and dictatorships in Latin America during the 1960s and 1970s pushed people to

[64] Paul Kramer has labeled this process the "geopolitics of migration." Paul A. Kramer, "The Geopolitics of Mobility: Immigration Policy and American Global Power in the Long Twentieth Century," *The American Historical Review* 123, no.2 (April 2018): 393–438

escape turbulence in home countries. Many migrated to D.C., joining embassy workers already in the capital city who chose to remain and settle in Adams-Morgan, Mount Pleasant, or nearby suburbs in Maryland and Virginia.[65] U.S. immigration policy changes, from the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 to increased reliance on "voluntary" deportations in the 1970s, sorted mixed-status Latino immigrants in the District and influenced the level of need in the community. The parameters of national immigration policies substantially changed with the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, otherwise known as the Hart-Celler Act. For the first time, Congress and federal policy levied immigration quotas on Western Hemisphere countries, which thus led to illegal immigration from Mexico and Central America.[66] The new law shifted the contours of migration patterns to the United States and settlement in Washington, D.C. by increasing the number of undocumented peoples in the area. In 1976, INS estimated that around 45,000 to 50,000 "illegal aliens" lived in the District and the Maryland and Virginia suburbs.[67]

Responses to immigration raids provide yet a different story of how collective action prompted community formation during this period. On November 28, 1976, a crowd of around 350 spectators gathered at the West Potomac Park to watch a soccer game between local teams from El Salvador and Perú. The park was located between the Potomac River and the Tidal Basin and across the street from the Lincoln Memorial and Reflecting Pool. At around two in the afternoon, six INS officers walked through the crowd profiling spectators and asking questions about nationality and immigration status. The first couple of individuals the INS officers targeted

[65] For some comprehensive accounts of Latin American history and U.S. intervention see: Tulio Halperín Donghi, *The Contemporary History of Latin America* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993); Thomas E. Skidmore and Peter H. Smith, *Modern Latin America*, 5th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).
[66] Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*.
[67] Paul Hodge and Louise A. Reid, "Immigration Told to End Raids on Aliens in Parks," *The Washington Post,* December 2, 1976.

proved to be foreign nationals, prompting INS to call the U.S. Park Police, which had jurisdiction over all federal parks areas, to provide backup arresting "illegal aliens." As the crowd began spreading the word about INS presence, twenty federal Park Police officers showed up to assist with crowd control.[68] Panic spread through the crowd, and some people jumped into the Tidal Basin to escape officers. Twenty-six individuals were arrested and taken to the INS building at 1025 Vermont Avenue Northwest for processing; two were eventually released after they had proved their legal status. The remaining group of twenty-four people detained (twenty of whom were migrants from El Salvador, and two each from Guatemala and Colombia) faced immediate deportation within seven days. Maurice Pirez, a spectator at the game and relative of one of the young detainees from El Salvador, claimed: "They're not criminals. They just came over here to work."[69] In the end, nineteen of the individuals arrested opted to "voluntarily" depart instead of legally fighting against the deportation process.[70]

The involvement of the national Park Police in immigration enforcement and the raid of the social event was unusual yet followed precedent set by Park Police involvement at a previous soccer match. The previous Sunday, November 21, Park Police had assisted bondsmen searching for an individual who had allegedly jumped bond for a pending deportation hearing. Park Police tipped off INS officials of the new soccer match the following week and racially profiled the Latino gathering by making assumptions about the legal status of individuals. Joseph A.

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[68] For more on the punitive history of the Park Police and their enforcement on the National Mall see: Pearlman, *Democracy's Capital*.
[69] Louise A. Reid, "Illegal Aliens Raid Nets 26 Suspects," *The Washington Post*, November 29, 1976.
[70] For some scholarship on immigration deportation, including "voluntary" departure see: Tichenor, *Dividing Lines*; Goodman, *The Deportation Machine*; Nicholas De Genova and Nathalie Peutz, eds., *The Deportation Regimes: Sovereignty, Space, and the Freedom of Movement* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010); Kelly Lytle Hernández, *Migra!: A History of the U.S. Border Patrol* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010); Tanya Maria Golash-Boza, *Deported: Immigrant Policing, Disposable Labor and Global Capitalism* (New York: New York University Press, 2015); Torrie Hester, "Deportability and the Carceral State," *The Journal of American History* 102, no. 1 (June 2015): 141-151.

Mongiello, director of INS in the District, claimed Park Police alerted the local INS office that "there was a group disturbing the soccer game and that there appeared to be illegal aliens involved." City council members and local activists criticized Park Police for creating unsafe conditions and using "tactics [that] endanger innocent bystanders in the parks."

The interdepartmental collaboration between INS and Park Police officers is a prime example of how the federal law enforcement agencies that operated in the nation's capital produced anxiety within the Latino community about their status and place in the city. In the aftermath of the soccer match raids, twenty individuals representing nine Latino agencies from the Council of Hispanic Agencies held a news conference to address the disconcerting events. The group claimed that the incident highlighted a pattern of discriminatory practices, particularly racial profiling. Richard Gutiérrez, director of AYUDA, stated "This smacks of Gestapo tactics…This is the kind of thing that is happening in Yugoslavia and other European countries…What next? Are they going to come into our churches?" [71] Deportations were not an uncommon practice in the U.S. during the 1970s. Under the Nixon administration, INS increased the use of raids and deportations to curtail undocumented migrants in response to heightened national anxieties about high unemployment amidst recessions.[72]

The surveillance and profiling of Spanish-speaking people created fear in the community, heightened by the incursion of immigration enforcement in spaces ranging from bus stops to major gathering spaces. The CHCA critiqued INS patterns of operation, claiming that similar incidents occurred at a Spanish-language theater in Adams-Morgan, where federal agents profiled Latino patrons while watching a show. INS's intrusion into everyday spaces of life, not

[71] Hodge and Reid, "Immigration Told to End Raids."
[72] Goodman, *The Deportation Machine*, 107-133.

just workplace raids, was troubling and anxiety-producing to the local immigrant communities.[73] Moreover, the raids and street interrogations raised concerns among the community that naturalized citizens could be profiled and arrested for not carrying papers. Groups such as *El Comité Unidos Para Contra-Atacar del D.C.* organized demonstrations against deportations and INS's targeting of undocumented employees.[74] Councilmember Clarke expressed his concern about the raids to MPD Chief Maurice J. Cullinane, arguing that, even though the MPD was not involved during the soccer raids the incidents represented a violation of constitutional rights and could "hamper" cultural expression.[75] Chief Cullinane was vague in his response to Clarke about future MPD collaboration with INS: "Regarding my promise earlier this year to the Latin Community, my intentions remain the same."[76] As a result of mounting disapproval, the Nation Park Service formally objected to future INS's activity and barred mass arrests on their local spaces. INS also acknowledged that the raid was "not an example of our normal operations," which usually took place at places of employment.[77]

The Metropolitan Police Department's promise to avoid cooperating with INS activity was short-lived, confirming Latino fears that local police served as veiled immigration agents. In May 1979 MPD assisted an INS-led raid of an apartment-hotel in downtown D.C. MPD officers supported thirteen INS officials at Annapolis Towers near Chinatown after surveillance of the building led immigration officials to believe it was a "drop house" for new migrant arrivals. One

[73] For a recent example of how immigration enforcement, raids, and deportation create trauma and negatively affect communities see: Lopez, *Separated*.
[74] Translation: The D.C. Committee United to Strike-Back. El Comité Unidos Para Contra-Atacar del D.C., "Exijamos Igualdad de Idiomas," 1976, Folder 9, Box 131, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU.
[75] David A. Clarke to Chief Maurice J. Cullinane, December 1, 1976, Folder 9, Box 131, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU.
[76] Chief Maurice J. Cullinane to David A. Clarke, December 2, 1976, Folder 9, Box 131, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU.
[77] Paul Hodge and Louise A. Reid, "Immigration Told to End Raids on Aliens in Parks," *The Washington Post,* December 2, 1976.

hundred and four people were arrested in what is considered the "biggest single one-shot" raid in the District.[78] Although ten people were released upon proof of legal residency, the rest remained in custody or were processed for deportation. Most of the individuals arrested were men, restaurant employees, and from El Salvador or Central America, reflecting the growing profile of new Latino migrants in the District.[79] The predominance of Salvadoran individuals detained by INS foreshadowed changing migration patterns of Central Americans into the District. Before 1980, around 70 percent of the Central Americans who settled in the District were women who had either moved with embassy families or who were recruited as domestic workers and had access to documentation. These women created social networks, recruited others for jobs, and eventually brought their families over.[80] The high-profile raid on the Annapolis Tower hotel signaled a new trend that centered low-wage working men and the incoming wave of Salvadoran refugees.

In line with responses to previous incidents, activists criticized MPD's collaboration in the raid for exposing the Latino community to unsafe living conditions. The Council of Hispanic Agencies circulated a press release that highlighted their concerns:

> At a time when we are striving for better police-community relations, the participation of D.C. police in this raid serves only to place a greater strain between us. It would come as no surprise if the alarmingly high rate of unreported crimes committed against Hispanics increases as a result of this action.[81]

Mistrust between the Latino community and MPD was ever-present, especially as the number of migrants to the city increased. Community activists understood that this tension exacerbated

[78] Tom Sherwood, "94 Arrested as Illegal Aliens in Northwest Stakeout," *The Washington Post*, May 2, 1979.
[79] Sherwood, "94 Arrested as Illegal Aliens in Northwest Stakeout."
[80] Repak, *Waiting on Washington*, 73-92.
[81] Council of Hispanic Community and Agencies, "Press Release," May 3, 1979, Folder 8, Box 131, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU.

crime and safety in the neighborhoods as people without documentation were afraid to reach out to law enforcement.[82]

The issue of immigration also affected debates between politicians and residents over jobs and unemployment in the city, reflecting national trends. With support from labor unions, politicians in the late 1970s focused on undocumented workers as a scapegoat for rising unemployment and a poor economy.[83] At the local level, unemployment was on the rise across the city. The media and some politicians began to blame "illegal aliens" as the source of this problem. A large-scale INS raid had occurred in June 1976, targeting the Good Humor ice cream factory in the suburb of Hyattsville, Maryland. Forty-eight individuals were arrested at the plant, most from Nigeria, Thailand, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Iran. Newspaper reports alleged that immigration services had increased deportation efforts because of Leonard F. Chapman Jr.'s congressional testimony the previous year. Chapman, commissioner of Immigration and Naturalization Service, had alleged that "millions of jobs would be available for U.S. citizens if the aliens were deported."[84]

In October 1976, councilmember Wilhelmina Rolark of Ward 8 introduced Bill 2-224, titled Illegal Alien Employment Act of 1977, aimed at punishing employers in the district who hired undocumented migrant laborers with fines and jail time.[85] The proposed bill quickly faced pushback from fellow council members, Latinos, and other immigrant communities, who protested for the next two years in attempts to stop the bill's passage. In February 1978, 300

[82] Tensions between the police and the Latino community are the central focus of Chapter 4.
[83] Goodman, *The Deportation Machine*.
[84] Richard E Prince, "48 Alien Suspects Arrested at Plant," *The Washington Post*, June 16, 1976. For more on Chapman and rhetoric connecting undocumented workers to unemployment see Goodman, *The Deportation Machine*.
[85] Rolark, a Black councilmember from Anacostia and a trained lawyer, was a locally known civil rights activist. She, along with her husband, Dr. Calvin Rolark, founded the United Black Fund, a fund granting non-profit organization.

people gathered outside the Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church to protest the bill. The protest was organized by Arturo Griffiths, an Afro-Panamanian immigrant and chairman of the DC Coalition on Migration and Full Employment, and supported by the Pacific-Asian Coalition and the Office of Haitian Refugee Concerns. This multiracial and multiethnic group of protesters, with support from City Council Chairman Sterling Tucker and councilmembers David Clarke and Hilda Mason, raised alarms about the language of the bill and its potential for discrimination.[86] Significantly, INS opposed the bill, arguing it would be unenforceable.[87] Moreover, opponents were concerned such a move would spark divisions between the Black community and foreign nationals. Councilmember Clarke argued before the Committee on Employment and Economic Development that the bill could lead to the discrimination of individuals with Hispanic surnames and the criminalization of hiring of certain groups of people. "They feel that this bill will work great harm no matter what the citizen or immigration status of the particular person involved," stated Clarke.[88] Colleagues also urged Rolark to rethink the racially charged "illegal aliens" terminology. Councilmember Rolark agreed to reform the proposed bill and remove all racially charged language but hoped to resubmit the bill at a later time. However, councilmember Rolark never revisited the bill in part because of pressures from a new local election cycle.

2.3 Marion Barry's Election and First Term

Despite continued frustrations with the D.C. government, Latinos actively participated in local politics and played a crucial role during the Democratic primary and mayoral election of

[86] Joe Murchison, "Hispanos Fight Bill on Hiring of Aliens," *The Washington Post*, February 23, 1978.
[87] Christopher Dickey, "Bill on Illegal Aliens in Jobs is Protested," *The Washington Post*, March 2, 1978.
[88] Statement of Councilmember David A. Clarke (Ward-One) on Bill 2-224, the "Illegal Alien Employment Act of 1977" Before the Committee on Employment and Economic Development, March 1, 1978, Folder 8, Box 131, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU.

Marion Barry in 1978. According to Lauren Pearlman, "if the 1974 mayoral election served to restore to the District and elected municipal government, the 1978 election functioned as a referendum on the city's civil rights movement."[89] Black activists who had hoped to seize control of the city after home rule were unsatisfied with the pace of progress in the city under Mayor Washington. Similarly, Latinos who witnessed their community grow during this time wanted more political representation within government and believed Mayor Washington did not take their demands seriously.

Puerto Rican leaders leveraged their influence over the community to largely support Barry's election. Barry had earned the support of Latino Democratic voters in part due to his sponsorship of the OLA legislation in 1976. José Gutiérrez, Sonia Gutiérrez, Pedro Luján, Marcelo Fernández-Zayas, and Carlos Rosario took on organizing roles within the Barry campaign. Called "Latinos for Barry," their main goal was targeting 1,000 Latino voters within wards 1 and 4 for the primary. Although the number of votes was relatively small, it made a substantial difference in the election amidst a divided voter base. Barry's name recognition in the city had steadily grown and he entered the race as the incumbent At-large representative in the city council. However, in the early days of the campaign Barry was polling third in the list of candidates, falling behind frontrunner Sterling Tucker who was supported by Black ministers and the business community, and incumbent Mayor Walter Washington who was backed by the city's unions. Barry's campaign, managed by Ivanhoe Donaldson, hoped to use a rainbow-style coalition to secure the primary. Barry had the support of white liberals, the gay community, civil rights activists, and the D.C. Board of Trades. The Latino vote was an important component of

[89] Pearlman, *Democracy's* Capital, 231.

Barry's final primary push.[90] Two weeks before the election, Barry received a surprising endorsement from *The Washington Post*. Barry won the Democratic primary by a slim margin with 35 percent of the vote, about a 1,400 vote difference, over Sterling Tucker's 33 percent and Walter Washington's 32 percent. José Gutiérrez believed that Latinos were instrumental in helping Barry come from behind in the Democratic primary and win the party's nomination. Barry then dominated and won the general election, winning 70 percent of the vote over his Republican opponent Arthur Fletcher.[91]

Puerto Rican leaders of the Latino community moved quickly to capitalize on Barry's election in order to secure support for their causes. Sonia Gutiérrez, speaking as president of the Council of Hispanic Agencies, presented the "Latino Community Position Paper" to the mayor-elect upon his election. Gutiérrez bluntly wrote: "In exchange for our vote in the primaries we expect our recommendations to be taken seriously by you and your Administration." The group had developed a task force during a November 14 leadership meeting to quickly draw up their position paper and mobilize resources.[92] Simply put, "they owe and they have to pay," stated Sonia Gutiérrez.[93]

The "Latino Community Position Paper" aimed to crystalize the group's political agenda and constituted an official introduction of the Latino population to the mayor-elect. The position

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[90] For a similar history of how Latinos played an important role in the Chicago mayoral election of Harold Washington see: Jaime Sánchez, Jr., "'What Are We?': Latino Politics, Identity, and Memory in 1983 Chicago Mayoral Election," *Modern American History* 4, no. 3 (2021): 263-84.

[91] José Gutierrez, April 29, 2016, Series 1, Marion Barry 1978 Campaign Oral History Project, MS2342, Special Collections Research Center, The George Washington University, https://archive.org/details/ms2342_s01_transcript_jose_gutierrez; Paul W. Valentine, "Mayor Says Barry Won D.C. Vote," *The Washington Post*, September 28, 1978; Harry Jaffe and Tom Sherwood, *Dream City: Race, Power, and the Decline of Washington, D.C.* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994); Pearlman, *Democracy's Capital*; Asch and Musgrove, *Chocolate City*.

[92] Sonia Gutiérrez to the Honorable Marion Barry, Mayor-Elect, December 28, 1978, Folder 4, Box 34, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU.

[93] Milton Coleman, "Barry Gathers Team Today for Transition," *The Washington Post*, November 9, 1978.

paper outlined key issues and recent achievements, highlighting problems related to housing, youth, employment, daycare, the elderly, and education as top concerns for the community. Moreover, it set the intention to collaborate with "our Black sisters and brothers" on shared concerns. Drawing attention to the potential for interracial coalitions, the group stressed a mutual commitment to the cause of statehood as an area of overlapping efforts. "We hope this recognition will contribute to Black and Latino solidarity, making the District a model nationwide."[94] The task force vowed to lobby Congress to pass the D.C. Voting Rights Amendment to the Constitution and leverage their networks in states with similar Latino constituencies—specifically Puerto Ricans, Cubans, and Mexicans—to support the ratification of the amendment.[95] Overall, the group wanted to assure greater representation in the city while maintaining a distinct cultural and linguistic identity.

The position paper illustrated hopes for a better working relationship between Barry and the Latino community. Outlined in various sections of the paper, the task force recalled the contentious relationship with former Mayor Washington. Latinos, they described, did not vote for his reelection. They boycotted his meetings because he never fully funded the Office on Latino Affairs and failed to appoint Latinos at high levels of the cabinet. The group argued in the paper that a general sense of disregard and underfunding resulted in the discrimination of Latinos, claiming the Office of Human Rights was the "most serious violator of the principle of Equal Employment." They sought to prioritize political representation for the approximate

[94] "Latino Community Position Paper for Mayor Elect Marion Barry and his Administration," December 1978, Folder 4, Box 34, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU.
[95] The D.C. Voting Rights Amendment would have repealed the Twenty-third Amendment, which granted the District proportional electoral votes to the least populous state. The new amendment proposed allowing the District to have full Congressional representation, full representation in the Electoral College, and equitable participation in the constitutional amendment process. Although the amendment passed the two-thirds majority in the House and Senate in 1978, it was not ratified by the required thirty-eight states and expired in September 1985. Pearlman, *Democracy's Capital*, 240.

75,000 Latinos in the city in the form of more jobs across bureaucratic agencies and positions of advisory capacities.[96] Puerto Rican leaders did pull back on their criticisms of the mayor after expressing their point of view in the position paper. However less than a month into Barry's administration they threaten to initiate protests fearing that Barry would renege on his promise to appoint Latinos to his administration. "There isn't one damn Latino in his cabinet," lamented Sonia Gutiérrez. "We really have trusted this man. Now he's too busy to see us. We're more hurt than angry.... He promised to deliver and he has not."[97] As Puerto Rican faith in Barry and his administration were fading, Barry recognized the need to maintain the Latino community's support and met with power brokers of the Latino community to in an effort to reduce tensions.[98]

The position of director of the Office on Latino Affairs was a source of community infighting under Barry's administration and foreshadowed Carlos Rosario's waning political power. Although the Commission on Latino Community Development prepared a substantive list of possible candidates for the role, the two candidates who were ultimately in the running were Carlos Rosario and Aida Luz Berio. Supporters of Rosario credited his decades-long service and mentorship for the community as justification for maintaining his position as director. Rosario had served as the director of OLA since 1976, and he and his supporters assumed Barry would select him to continue his role because of his strong campaigning in support of the mayor. While publicly it seemed like Rosario had the majority's support, privately some individuals raised concerns about his tactics of quid pro quos for funding. "They call me 'The Old Man'… 'The

[96] "Latino Community Position Paper for Mayor Elect Marion Barry and his Administration," December 1978, Folder 4, Box 34, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU.
[97] Chuck Stone, "Hispanic Residents Say There's Discrimination in Barry Cabinet Choices," *The Evening Star*, January 25, 1979; Milton Coleman, "Barry Campaign Backers Vying for Appointments," *The Washington Post*, January 18, 1979.
[98] Marion S. Barry, Jr. to Sonia Gutierrez, n.d. [1979], Folder Latino Affairs 79, Box 8, Cropp, DC Archives; Christopher Dickey, "Hispanic Leaders' Criticism Reversed in Barry Session," *The Washington Post*, January 20, 1979.

Leader'….and they call me 'The Godfather'….but the reason they call me that is because I'm the founder of the community," claimed Rosario.[99] Some unidentified people in leadership positions saw him as "old school" and were disenchanted by his "godfather" complex, arguing it was more akin to a mob-boss mentality. Additionally, opponents of Rosario criticized him for the ineffectual function of OLA, which they argued operated as a referral service rather than a strong advocate of community needs. In the end, the CLCD ranked Rosario fifth in the list of top candidates for the office. Aida Berio, also Puerto Rican, had worked in the federal government for over a decade and co-founded the National Conference of Puerto Rican Women in 1972. In 1978, she became a high-profile figure when she sued the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for racial discrimination and won the case a year later. Berio was endorsed for the OLA position by the D.C. Coalition for Women and was ultimately ranked as the number two candidate for the position by the CLCD. Tomas Cedan-Pintado, who worked for the Internal Revenue Services, was the top choice of the CLCD, and William "Willie" Vazquez was fourth.[100] Barry initially proposed nominating both Rosario and Berio as co-directors of OLA, but Berio rejected the offer in a private meeting.[101] In the end, Barry selected Aida Berio to be his new director of OLA. This move signaling a major shift in Latino leadership away from Rosario's decade-long service.[102]

[99] Christopher Dickey, "'Godfather' of Hispanics Finds 'Style' and Obstacle," *The Washington Post*, May 20, 1979.
[100] George R. Harrod to Marion S. Barry, Jr., "Memorandum," March 22, 1979, Folder Latino Affairs 79, Box 8, Cropp, DC Archives.
[101] Christopher Dickey, "Aida Berio Selected to Direct D.C. Office of Latino Affairs," *The Washington Post*, June 7, 1979.
[102] Rosario was not gone from politics. He would later serve as assistant director of the Office of Aging in Barry's administration and maintained an influential grip on Latino leadership until his death in 1987.

2.4 The Latin Quarter

Puerto Rican and other prominent community leaders were hopeful that Latinos were progressing in the district: they had created a network of social service institutions, worked alongside Black activists to secure political gains, and were on their way to acquiring more government positions through their support of Barry. The next step was asserting a right to public and private spaces in the Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant neighborhoods. After the uprising along the 14th Street corridor in response to Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination in 1968, middle- and upper-class white and Black residents moved out of the Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant neighborhoods into the surrounding Maryland and Virginia suburbs. Likewise, upwardly mobile Latinos left the post-uprising areas in favor of the suburbs, leaving behind less-privileged groups including poorer, working-class, recent immigrants, undocumented workers, and Afro-Latinos. Residents of these neighborhoods and the media identified the area as "our Latin Quarter" as early as 1969 as the streets were increasingly populated with Latino cultural expressions, restaurants, grocery stores, and theaters.[103] In the 1970s, the demographics of Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant changed with the steady settlement of Latino immigrants. The neighborhoods flipped from 61 percent white and 39 percent non-white in 1960 to 31 percent white and 69 percent non-white in 1975.[104] As a result of this shift in demographics, its residents, city officials, and the media had lauded the neighborhoods as a "melting pot."[105] Media representation of these neighborhoods depicted a racial utopia, where residents commingled and operated in resistance to a segregated city. These depictions of the

[103] "Our Latin Quarter," *The Washington Post*, December 27, 1969.
[104] "Adams-Morgan/Mount Pleasant: A Neighborhood Analysis Based Upon Census Data," n.d. [1977], Folder 18, Box 131, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU.
[105] Lee Daniels, "Diversity Marks First Ward," *The Washington Post*, August 14, 1974; Christopher Dickey, "Community Strives to Keep its Diversity," *The Washington Post*, September 10, 1978.

neighborhoods coupled with the availability of affordable housing also attracted a wave of young, white professionals into the area who sought to be a part of the progressive environment generating gentrification threats.[106]

Across the District, rent spikes, evictions, displacement, and economic insecurity exacerbated housing shortages and disproportionately affected the city's most disadvantaged populations. Even though residents of Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant celebrated its cultural diversity and Latinos created a sense of community through institutions such as the Latino Festival, Puerto Rican leaders argued that language barriers "aggravated" poor living conditions. These conditions included rundown housing, absentee or predatory landlords, shortage of community facilities, and high unemployment. Residents considered real estate speculation the top problem facing minorities and affordable housing. Speculators would buy up dilapidated houses and apartment buildings only to flip or convert them into condos to attract young, white families. Increasing white homeownership threatened minority and low-income families, displacing Black residents to other low-income areas in the city and Latinos into the suburbs or more crowded apartments in the area.[107] At a D.C. Advisory Committee meeting, a Latino "victim" of displacement claimed: "[I] feel that the reason they asked [us] to vacate is because [we] are Hispanics and blacks, and they don't want Hispanics and blacks in the area, and they want to move them out."[108] Tenant organizations, such as the Adams-Morgan Organization, were formed by multiracial, low-income groups in the area to push back against housing speculation. Despite efforts by the Adams-Morgan Organization to oppose new licenses for development

[106] For a comparative model of white progressives perpetuating gentrification in Brooklyn, New York see: Suleiman Osman, *The Invention of Brownstone Brooklyn: Gentrification and the Search for Authenticity in Postwar New York* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).
[107] Blair Gately, "Adams Morgan, Mt. Pleasant Residents Protest High Rent, Evictions, Joblessness," *The Washington Post*, February 16, 1978.
[108] District of Columbia Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights, *Neighborhood Renewal: Reinvestment and Displacement in D.C.* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. GPO, 1981), 2.

projects until solutions for displacement could be found, displacement and gentrification persisted. Limited ability for affordable housing, compounded by increasing unemployment, resulted in displacement of low-income families in the area.[109] AYUDA also worked within the Latino community to provide bilingual legal services to tenants who faced discrimination by landlords who used deportation threats to intimidate vulnerable immigrants. In February 1978, residents in both neighborhoods marched to protest evictions, increases in rent, and lack of jobs.[110]

Puerto Rican leaders and the CHCA attempted to create a Latin Quarter project located in Adams-Morgan to secure Latinos' place in the neighborhood and to support persistent community needs. The project aimed to address the main issues of housing displacement and unemployment in the Latino communities of Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant by establishing a tourist and cultural complex. The idea for such a development arose after a community meeting organized by the CLCD on September 25, 1977. From the meeting, the CLCD ranked the pressing issues expressed by residents: inadequate housing, lack of employment and training opportunities, and lack of adequate funding for health and educational programs. The issue of housing, specifically the lack of "decent" and "quality" affordable housing, was a constant concern for Latinos in the District. The Office on Latino Affairs submitted the first version of the project, titled "Latin Quarter Comprehensive Development Plan," on behalf of the Council of Hispanic Agencies to the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) in January 1977. The proposed project never gained traction. Some Latino leaders, such as Pedro Luján, believed the plan was purposefully stalled by the city. Luján claimed the delays served to

[109] The Adams-Morgan Organization was a tenants rights organization started in 1972. James M. Lloyd, "Fighting Redlining and Gentrification in Washington, D.C.," *Journal of Urban History* 42, no. 6 (November 2016): 1091-1109.
[110] District of Columbia Advisory Committee, *Neighborhood Renewal,* 25.

continue the displacement of Latinos from Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant so that "the whole flavor is going to disappear."[111]

In June 1977, the Council of Hispanic Agencies sent a letter to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) outlining discrimination at the hands of the District's government. They argued that the city was not meeting the Latino community's housing needs and perpetuating their displacement from the multicultural neighborhoods of Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant. Central to the issue was the disregard of proposals, specifically the Latin Quarter plan, and the absence of Community Development Block Grants from HUD for the areas. Moreover, the 1970 Census and the undercounting of the Latino population in those communities continued to influence the city's rejection of proposals. The ambiguity of the exact population count contributed to the stalling of proposals that centered Latino assistance. Roy Priest, head of the DHCD Office of Policy Planning, denied that discrimination played a role in the rejection of proposals, but acknowledged the leadership's frustrations. Priest claimed that the city could not approve neighborhood development programs "unless we know whether the population is 20,000 or 200,000."[112]

Although the 1977 version of the plan was shelved, the Council of Hispanic Agencies saw an opportunity to revive the project under the new Barry administration. Alfredo Echeverria, a Cuban architect and member of the Council's housing committee, re-wrote and submitted the Latin Quarter proposal plan to OLA and DHCD on the Council's behalf on March 30, 1979. The Echeverria proposal placed the Latin Quarter solely in Adams-Morgan, reasoning that the area, bounded by Columbia Road between 16th Street and Connecticut Avenue, had the highest

[111] Mary Lenz, "Concern in Washington's 'Latin Quarter': How Much Longer Can the Melting Pot Survive," *The Washington Post*, September 7, 1978.
[112] Lenz, "Concern in Washington's 'Latin Quarter'."

concentration of Latinos in the city. The project's goal was to emphasize the Latino heritage and culture that already existed in the area by forming a tourist attraction, fashioned after New Orleans French Quarter. The development would siphon tourists already drawn to the nation's capital, drawing in shopping and entertainment dollars that would directly enrich and revitalize the neighborhood's economy, particularly aiding disadvantaged communities.[113] The proposal also recognized how the mixed status of the Latino population exacerbated their likelihood of experiencing unemployment or displacement. By centering Latino voices and communities in the planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of the project, Echeverria argued that the Latin Quarter project sought to redress historic and ongoing injustices faced by this minority population.[114]

The Latin Quarter plan included short- and long-term objectives to expand minority homeownership in Adams-Morgan. The plan included the creation of a community development credit union along with a multitude of corporations: a tourist investment corporation, housing development corporation, community development corporation, and a small business investment company. The plan recommended the creation of a 21-member advisory committee consisting of business and community leaders that would then hold town halls and public hearings to finalize the scope of the Latin Quarter. Overall, the project's focus on housing and employment concerns intended to remedy gaps in the District's government services by expanding the potential economic-base in Adams-Morgan.

[113] Tourism was the number two industry in the District during this time. According to a Washington Post article, the city attracted 12 million tourists yearly. Blair Gately, "City Considers Latin Quarter Development," *The Washington Post*, August 2, 1979.
[114] Alfredo Echeverria, "Latin Quarter: An Economic Development Strategy 'Study Proposal'," March 30, 1979, page 4, Folder 19, Box 81, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU.

The Latin Quarter plan fits into a constellation of proposals and attempts by Latino professional elites to gain recognition from the District by proposing alternate ways of funding and support. Community initiated programs, subsidized by federal and local funding, were the main source of assistance for the Latino community. The plan was also a way to test Mayor Barry's commitment to the community and his stated campaign promises.[115] The Council of Hispanic Agencies made the Latin Quarter proposal their top priority for the new administration and pushed Councilmember Clarke to raise the mayor's attention to the project.[116] The group argued that the Latino population provided a "stabilizing force" in Adams-Morgan, counteracting white flight and the displacement of low-income families.[117] The council also stressed the persistence of discrimination faced by Latinos and argued the proposal was an opportunity for the city to rectify injustice. "The Latino community is truly the forgotten minority in the District since previous renewal and community development programs have not addressed the peculiarities of such a community.…It is considered that the funding for this proposal is equitable, fair, timely and urgently needed."[118]

The project represented a crossroads for Barry's Latino-community relations. Although the project foregrounded Latinos, the proposal claimed to be a test for the "united wills" of city officials, professionals, and residents to address inequality in both the Latino and Black

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[115] "Alcalde Empleara Mas Latinos," *El Latino*, September 17 to October 12, 1979, from "El Latino 1977-1979," Periodicals, DCPL.
[116] Eva Guevera Erb to the Honorable Dave Clarke, January 8, 1979, Folder 4, Box 34, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU.
[117] "Latino Community Position Paper for Mayor Elect Marion Barry and his Administration," December 1978, Folder 4, Box 34, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU.; A.K. Sandoval-Strausz argues that historians should consider how increases in Latino populations contribute to the reversal of white flight trends and how Latino communities have led the way in revitalization of communities. See A. K. Sandoval-Strausz, *Barrio America: How Latino Immigrants Saved the American City* (New York: Basic Books, 2019); Sandoval-Strausz, "Latino Landscapes: Postwar Cities and the Transnational Origins of a New Urban America," *The Journal of American History* 101, no.3 (December 2014), 805, 816.
[118] Alfredo Echeverria, "Latin Quarter: An Economic Development Strategy 'Study Proposal'," March 30, 1979, page 4, Folder 19, Box 81, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU.

communities. Latino and Black residents of Adams-Morgan faced displacement because of a shortage of suitable housing and gentrification. Relatedly, high unemployment contributed to housing difficulties. The proposal stated that since the service industry was the main source of jobs for its minority communities the creation of tourism-focused businesses, such as restaurants and shops, would expand employment opportunities. The goal of the Latin Quarter was to capitalize on Latino businesses and culture to intentionally draw in tourism foot traffic to Adams-Morgan that would alleviate employment and housing issues. Echeverria wrote: "Many consider that this proposal is a matter of vital importance to the preservation of District ethnic richness which without it, relocations will atomize its integrity; its character will give way to the pressures of the 'Melting Pot'."[119] Preventing further minority displacement would preserve the prized diversity of Adams-Morgan. Echeverria argued that the project's participatory process ensured that members of the Latino and Black communities were represented throughout the plan.

Debates between the diverse communities of Adams-Morgan and the city over the proposal are indicative of the complicated interracial dynamics in the District during this time. With support from Mayor Barry and city officials, OLA moved forward with the project to secure funding for initial studies. The group hoped to secure $430,000 in funding for the project through the federal and local Community Development Block Grant program. By August 1979, the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) planned on providing $250,000 towards the study of the Adams-Morgan Latin Quarter. Robert Moore, director of DHCD, considered the proposal promising, especially because the area had never received funding from Community Development Block Grants. The funds were to be transferred to the

[119] Echeverria, "Latin Quarter," 4.

Office on Latino Affairs, which contracted Echeverria to conduct the study. However, the Latin Quarter project faced difficulties once the general public and non-Latino residents became aware of the proposal when it was opened for community feedback. Anita Bonds, aide to Mayor Barry, indicated that the project would receive funding after a thirty-day review period during which the Adams-Morgan chapter of the Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) was tasked with soliciting residents' comments and input.[120]

Despite the plan's claim of inclusivity, non-Latino residents and officials of Adams-Morgan vehemently opposed the project. ANC members felt slighted by the short notice of the project and the short turn-around for their comments for revision. Ann Hughes Hargrove, chairman of the ANC, opposed the plan's predetermined focus on Latinos. Frank Smith, Jr., an ANC member and prominent former SNCC activist, argued he did not want the area turned into a tourist attraction.[121] Moreover, Black and white residents opposed the project's exclusive focus on Latino culture fearing it would cause their own displacement. By foregrounding Latino culture, these residents argued, the "melting pot" characteristics of their neighborhood would be ignored. Residents also raised complaints about the ethics of the proposal–specifically suggesting that Echeverria's role posed a conflict of interest. Although Echeverria claimed to have resigned from his bureaucratic posts on June 30, he was still a staff member at the Department of Environmental Services when he submitted the proposal. Echeverria was also a consultant in the Office of Planning and Development. Because of these government positions, Echeverria was disqualified to lobby the city government on behalf of the proposal.[122]

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[120] ANCs were established in the Home Rule Act of 1973 with support of local activists. The charter created 360 unpaid elected positions divided among thirty-six neighborhood councils. ANC commissioners represented their local neighborhoods and provided input on policy issues to the different local government agencies. Gately, "City Considers." Pearlman, *Democracy's Capital*, 202.

[121] In 1982 Smith was elected to replace David Clarke as council member for Ward 1.

[122] Blair Gately, "Latin Quarter Plans Shelved After Complaints," *The Washington Post*, August 23, 1979.

Community pushback of the Latin Quarter proposal also targeted Mayor Barry and highlighted the racial and class tensions that were characteristic of this period in the city. The very "flavor" of Adams-Morgan's racial and international diversity was the source of tension. Residents' opposing interests clashed with a shared desire to prevent large development projects that would instigate displacement. Some residents of Adams-Morgan sent a letter to Mayor Barry on August 11, labeling the proposal "racist" and urging the mayor to reject it:

> We, your constituents in Adams Morgan, wish to inform you that the Echeverria Proposal to turn this neighborhood into a tourist attraction 'Latin Quarter' modeled after the New Orleans French Quarter, is a cynical racist move which would quickly and thoroughly, displace poor Hispanics, Blacks and the elderly from the most racially and ethnically cooperative neighborhood in D.C. and perhaps in the country.[123]

As with other city redevelopment projects during this time, community members, including low-income Latinos, feared that developers would turn the proposal into another excuse to remodel the area with minimal low-income housing, exacerbating displacement and gentrification. For the CHCA, however, the symbolism of recognizing the Latino community in the area, and thus in the city, was an important step towards self-help and the ability to make claims for more city funding.[124]

Disputes among racial groups in the neighborhood over the proposal tugged at racial and class tensions over the question of "deservedness." Some Black residents publicly pushed back on Mayor Barry's support of immigrant communities, arguing that the new mayor was not doing enough to meet the needs of existing communities. At a public press conference in the community, a Black female resident questioned Barry: "How in the world are you gonna do so much for so many immigrants when you have people already here who don't have nothin'?"

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[123] Letter to Mayor Marion Barry, August 11, 1979, Folder 19, Box 81, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU.
[124] "El Barrio Dividido," *El Latino*, August to September 1979, from "El Latino 1977-1979," Periodicals, DCPL.

Mayor Barry acknowledged the tensions in Adams-Morgan but believed most Black residents were not threatened by the proposal. "One or two people in the crowd doesn't represent the feeling of the community.…We're doing so much for blacks everywhere else, so I'm not worried," stated Barry. In response to white residents' concerns, Barry dismissed them as "racists."[125] Barry argued that he supported the proposal to address a pattern of disadvantage faced by Latinos. "The Latino community has gotten very little money. They've been neglected. They deserve the money even if the end point doesn't satisfy the community," claimed Barry.[126] Additionally, many Black and white residents believed the Latino community was putting pressure on Barry to return election favors and resented the mayor's endorsement of the project. "Many of us are already feeling betrayed by your insistence on currying racial favor by fostering one ethnic group over another."[127]

The Latin Quarter proposal was a harbinger of both racial and political tensions in the neighborhoods. By August 21, 1979, OLA and the city scrapped the Latin Quarter project because of community pushback and Echeverria's potential conflict of interest. Aida Berio, representing OLA, and Robert Moore officially withdrew the proposal with the hope to rework the plan for future resubmittal. James Clay, deputy director of DHCD, claimed the funding was already earmarked and would be saved until the plan's revisions. Despite the termination of the project, some residents—in particular Black constituents—were angered by Barry's move to return political favor. The plan was never revised or revived. Informally, Mount Pleasant and Adams-Morgan continued to be considered by the Latino community as their Latin Quarter.

[125] "Mayor Barry Learns Hard Lesson About Adams-Morgan Ethnic Mix." *The Washington Post*, August 23, 1979.
[126] Blair Gately, "Citizens Opposed to Latin Quarter Temper their Dissent," *The Washington Post*, August 9, 1979
[127] Letter to Mayor Marion Barry, August 21, 1979, Folder 19, Box 81, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU.

2.5 Conclusion

The 1970s were a formative moment for Washington, D.C.'s Latino community. As the Latino population in the city was growing, Puerto Rican leaders saw a moment of opportunity to shift their political and material futures. Carlos Rosario was able to become the self-identified founder of the Latino community by leveraging his leadership role within community agencies to gain political power, setting the blueprint for future political mobilization. Puerto Rican leaders understood that the city's continued neglect of the Latino community had cumulative effects on their status and wellbeing. If unity was the key to being considered a political entity, then the diversity of the Latino community had to be subsumed under shared identity characteristics. Language difference became the boundary over which Puerto Ricans and other leaders demarcated Latino identity. These leaders unified Spanish speakers with different nationalities into one Latino group to better mobilize for political representation in the city. Distinctive sites of political and racial tension—from Census undercounts, the plight for an Office on Latino Affairs, immigration raids, and plans for a Latin Quarter—created the conditions that shaped Latino identity formation.

The concept of latinidad allowed Puerto Rican leaders to present a united front that could petition the local and federal government for representation, advocate for an equitable share of resources, and establish a right to the city. The Latin Quarter would continue to be a source of contention between Puerto Rican leaders, Black residents, and the city, laying bare the paradoxes of the multiracial "melting pot" of Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant. Latino people did not feel adequately represented by Mayor Walter E. Washington and had high hopes for Marion Barry. Barry's election signified a moment where their political power was beginning to coalesce, having aided Barry in his Democratic primary and ultimately his election as new

mayor. However, from the perspective of the Council of Hispanic Agencies and Puerto Rican leaders, the Barry administration failed to fulfill promises to the campaign's interracial coalition during his first year in office. In the following decade, the issues central to the Latino community, such as housing, employment, bilingual services, and greater representation, persisted and became even more pressing with the increase in Central American migrants in the District.

Chapter 3 "We Feel Left Out": Capitalizing on Political Power Amidst Salvadoran Population Growth, 1980–1989

While the Latino struggles of the 1970s were about overcoming perceived invisibility in the District, the 1980s became a moment to capitalize on population growth and secure gains from newfound political power. With Marion Barry as mayor, Latino leaders believed they had an ally at the top of city government. However, amidst Barry's two reelection campaigns and political and economic difficulties during his tenure, Latinos were forced rethink and debate what tactics were best suited for the moment. Barry, in turn, had to balance maintaining support among Latinos and his assurances to Black constituents. As he moved to cultivate support from Black communities that originally did not back his campaign, Barry understood that his relationship with Latinos was still important to preserving a broad coalition of supporters and secure reelection.[1] As in the previous decade, the threat of protest remained an important tool for Latino leaders to bring awareness to their demands and pressure politicians.[2] At the same time, waves of Central American refugees and undocumented migrants steadily increased, pressing the boundaries of Latino identity. Latino leaders were forced to redefine their political agenda to incorporate Salvadoran newcomers and their corresponding demands.

[1] During the 1978 campaign, Barry was able to secure the white middle class and Latino votes in the wards, while predominantly Black and poorer wards remained skeptical, at best, of Barry. By his second election in 1982, Barry had gained most of the Black vote in all wards and control of the local Democratic Party. Lauren Pearlman, *Democracy's Capital: Black Political Power in Washington, D.C. 1960s-1970s* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2019); Myers Asch and George Derek Musgrove, *Chocolate City: A History of Race and Democracy in the Nation's Capital* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2017).
[2] Antonio Melus, "Latidos de la comunidad," *El Latino*, May 1981 from "El Latino 1977-1979," Periodicals, DCPL.

The Puerto Rican establishment prioritized speaking with one united voice to cement Latino status in the capital city. The group believed that incremental progress during Marion Barry's first term as mayor in the form of political appointments and hires in local government were symbolically and materially important for the community. The Gutiérrezes imagined that municipal jobs would trickle down into more resources and funds for the community. "Yo no soy Dios, pero estoy dispuesto a hacer un trabajo de verdad," claimed José Gutiérrez upon his appointment as acting director of the Office of Personnel in 1979.[3] Sonia Gutiérrez posited that intermediaries within the administration such as her husband could look out for their fellow Latinos and advocate on the community's behalf.[4] José Gutiérrez claimed to have done more for the Latino community in 112 days in office than was done over the past twelve years under Walter Washington's administration.[5] Although securing appointments was the strategy of the early 1980s, by the middle of the decade contested leadership between the established Puerto Rican political contingent and newer leaders forced the coalition to shift their tactics to better address different demands arising from Salvadoran migrants and to assist a community facing growing poverty and displacement. Prioritizing unity over public infighting insulated the community from embarrassment and damage to their standing in the city.

The nationwide economic recession and local budget deficit crisis of the 1980s affected the city's ability to provide services and had a ripple effect on Latino organizations. At the end of 1980, Barry proposed austerity measures to rectify the city's budget and deal with the more than $400 million deficit. The proposed measures called for severe cuts to city services and schools.

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[3] Translation: "I am not god, but I am willing to do an honest job." "Hispanos comparten el poder," *El Latino*, April 30–May 18, 1979, from "El Latino 1977-1979," Periodicals, DCPL.
[4] Sonia Gutiérrez Interview, Latino Youth Community History Project Oral History, April 17, 1982, http://hdl.handle.net/1961/dcplislandora:72213.
[5] "Hispanos al Poder," *El Latino*, April 30–May 18, 1979, from "El Latino 1977-1979," Periodicals, DCPL.

Latino service organizations, which were already pressed for resources, relied on government funding to continue serving the needs of the community. These organizations filled in the gaps where the city could or would not provide programs that targeted Latinos. These organizations faced a compounding problem of slashed funding amidst growing community demand. Unemployment, poor and crowded housing, and public schools that failed to meet the needs of new migrants contributed to a worried climate in the Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant neighborhoods. The mayor's budget proposal included a budget increase to the Office on Latino Affairs (OLA), doubling its funding by 1982. Leaders placed their hopes on OLA as the main interlocutor between the community and the city administration.[6]

A significant increase in migrants and refugees to Washington, D.C. since 1979, prompted by the beginning and escalation of the civil war in El Salvador, forced established Puerto Rican leadership to grapple with changing community needs and to adapt their organizing tactics to include these newer voices. Despite the visible (if at times imprecise) growth in population and multiple official accounts, the census record continued to provide a more conservative estimate of the number of Latino residents in D.C. and to exclude undocumented populations.[7] By 1985 the Office on Latino Affairs official estimate of the Latino population was a modest 75,000, which included both documented and undocumented residents, totaling 10

[6] Eugene Robinson and Thomas W. Lippman, "Barry Unveils Austere '82 D.C. Budget," *The Washington Post*, October 2, 1980; Asch and Musgrove, *Chocolate* City, 396.

[7] The 1980 census showed that the Latino population accounted for less than 10 percent of the total population, totaling 17,679. The vast majority, 14,049, lived in the Northwest quadrant of the city, which included Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant. By 1990 the population grew to 32,710; U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, "General Population Characteristics: District of Columbia," in *1980 Census of Population*, August 1982, https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1980/volume-1/district-of-columbia/1980a_dcabcd-02.pdf; Elaine A. Peña, "Latino D.C. History Project: Synopsis and Prototype Case Study Phase 1 (2009-2010)," Smithsonian Latino Center; Asch and Musgrove, *Chocolate City,* 383.

percent of the city's population.[8] Notably, migrants from El Salvador constituted the largest Latino group in the city in the 1980s, making up an estimated 40 to 46 percent of the Latino population by 1982.[9] Salvadorans, however, had yet to achieve prominent leadership positions within the community. Puerto Rican leaders pushed to create a coherent yet culturally diverse unified community, focusing on a shared common language, experiences of discrimination, and social service needs. In doing so, these leaders failed to account for how the city government racialized migrants without paths to citizenship against other more established Puerto Rican and Mexican groups. Possessing citizenship facilitated leadership roles within the Latino community. Meanwhile, Latino organizations began to advocate on behalf of undocumented migrants and Salvadoran refugees demanding that the city politics work for everyone.

Community representatives argued that language differences and mixed citizenship status configured Latino rights in the capital city. The lack of bilingual officials, resources, and institutions created barriers for their full inclusion in the District. In 1985, an Ad Hoc Coalition for a Latino Community Agenda, made up of prominent leaders and institutions, was formed in response to Mayor Barry's retaliatory demotion and firing of José Gutiérrez, who had become the highest-ranking Latino in Barry's administration. Gutiérrez's firing became the catalyst for Latino leaders to raise concerns about their waning representation in city administration jobs and broader discriminatory patterns. Moreover, the Ad Hoc Coalition raised concerns related to growing refugee and undocumented communities. Their goal was to consolidate disparate efforts among various Latino organizations and to elevate issues, such as language discrimination,

[8] United States House of Representatives, Committee on Appropriations, *Hearings Before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations on the District of Columbia Appropriations for 1985*, 98th Congress, 2nd Session (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1984), 1148.
[9] Ad Hoc Coalition for a Latino Community Agenda, "Washington, D.C.'s Latino Community Agenda," June 7, 1985, Folder 17, Box 81, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU, ii.

diversity in the Metropolitan Police Department, funding for bilingual education and the Latin American Youth Center, and assistance for refugee and undocumented communities. This coalition's agenda represented efforts to push Barry and other Black leaders to share a slice of political power. The decade closed with simmering interracial tensions between Black political control and Latino desire for recognition in the form of resources.

3.1 Contested Political Formation

As Mayor Barry's first term in office was underway, the Latino community was growing and changing with an influx of migrants from Central America who posed new challenges to the city. The relationship between the mayor, the city bureaucracy, and the Latino community remained delicate. With the Latin Quarter plan scuttled at the end of 1979, Puerto Rican leaders were eager to win some gains from the administration in order to show the community that their decision to support Barry had been the right choice. These leaders continued to push for more representation within the administration in the form of appointees and hires at all levels to demonstrate that the new mayor was beholden to Latino interests and recognized their political power. While Puerto Ricans in city politics criticized the administration's and city council's policies toward the Latino community, they were careful to exclude Barry from direct reproach. They believed that while Barry was primarily concerned with the city's Black majority, he still needed Latino numbers to maintain power.

The rapid expansion of the Salvadoran population in Washington, D.C. posed an existential problem for Latino leaders and the city and federal government. In 1979, El Salvador experienced a military coup that instigated years of civil wars and mass murders. As the civil war intensified in the 1980s with direct U.S. involvement, Salvadorans hoping to escape the humanitarian crisis began mass migrations to the United States. Some settled in the capital city

attracted by an already established group of Salvadorans and a flourishing Latino community base.[10] Washington, D.C. became the third-largest destination for Salvadoran refugees during the 1980s.[11] According to Terry Repak, "close to half of the Central American immigrants interviewed in the Washington area claimed that they fled their countries because of oppressive political conditions and civil strife."[12] For example, large migrations of Salvadorans from the city of Intipucá settled in the Adams-Morgan area leading to the establishment of a regional grocery store and a soccer team called the *Club de la Cuiudad de Intipucá*.[13]

Nationally, immigration laws were becoming more punitive during the 1980s, first under President Jimmy Carter and then President Ronald Reagan. These laws were shaped by Cold War politics, which made asylum claims harder for Salvadorans fleeing noncommunist regimes as opposed to other groups, such as Nicaraguans, leaving communist and leftist regimes. First, the Refugee Act of 1980 signed by President Carter amended earlier laws by increasing the number of refugees allowed into the country and redefining the legal meaning of "refugee" to include an individual with a "well-founded fear of persecution."[14] Although the intention of this law was to broaden the definition of refugee to bring it in line with international laws, under Ronald Reagan immigration law and policies toward El Salvador took a rightward turn. President

[10] The U.S. government considered the government in power in El Salvador an ally in the Cold War. The Carter and Regan administrations provided funding and military supplies to support the government's regime. For more detailed accounts of this history see: Patrick Scallen, "The Bombs that Drop in El Salvador Explode in Mount Pleasant: From Cold War Conflagration to Immigrant Struggles in Washington, DC, 1970-1995," (PhD Diss., Georgetown University, 2019); Tulio Halperín Donghi, *The Contemporary History of Latin America* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993); Thomas E. Skidmore and Peter H. Smith, *Modern Latin America*, 5th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).
[11] The other top destinations included Los Angeles, San Francisco, and New York.
[12] Terry A. Repak, *Waiting on Washington: Central American Workers in the Nation's Capital* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995), 32-40.
[13] "Perfil de la comunidad salvadoreña en Washington D.C.," *El Latino*, Vol. 5, No. 54, March 1982, from "El Latino 1977-1979," Periodicals, DCPL. For a more detailed account of the relationship between Intipucá and metropolitan Washington, D.C. see: David Pedersen, *American Value: Migrants, Money, and Meaning in El Salvador and the United States* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013).
[14] *Refugee Act of 1980*, Pub. L. No. 96-212, 94 Stat. 102 (1980).

Reagan signed Congress's Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA) which ushered in a more punitive era for immigration. The Reagan administration was supportive of the Salvadoran regime, funneling military aid to assist the anti-Marxist institutions. Under IRCA, most Salvadorans were ineligible to receive refugee status because they were labeled "economic" migrants despite the civil war raging in their home country. The amnesty program excluded Salvadorans who arrived after the cutoff date or were unable to prove otherwise. According to OLA, IRCA's eligibility requirements for amnesty excluded 90 percent of D.C.'s undocumented Salvadorans who entered the country after January 1982. Even Salvadorans who entered before the cutoff date lacked appropriate documentation to prove their case.[15] The standards set by this new law constrained the ways that migrants could articulate their deservingness, no longer being able to make to a case for asylum based on factors such as poverty or seeking better opportunities.

On the ground, federal immigration policies had an immediate effect on everyday life and racialized Salvadoran communities. IRCA included provisions making knowingly employing undocumented individuals a finable offense, which resulted in the racial profiling of Latinos regardless of their documentation status. Although this provision did not go into effect until 1988, some construction, restaurant, and hotel employers began laying off Salvadoran employees immediately over fears of the law's enforcement in the metropolitan area. Fear and confusion after the passage of IRCA led many Salvadorans to pull their children from school in an attempt to relocate or leave the country or to find jobs to sustain their families. Passage of IRCA

[15] Arlene F. Gillespie, "Issues Related to the Impact of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 on the District of Columbia," June 1987, Office of Latino Affairs 1979, Vertical Files, DCPL.

intensified poverty rates of the metropolitan Salvadoran population and essentially allowed for a legalized form of discrimination by employers, landlords, and school officials.[16]

The wave of refuge migrants from El Salvador presented new challenges for the existing Latino community. As their numbers grew, Salvadorans became more involved in all aspects of the community, but ultimately, they did not have much in terms of political power because leadership was headed by Puerto Ricans who had established relationships and history with the city government. The majority of Salvadorans were not citizens and therefore could not vote. Although they were the largest Latino population in the city, Salvadorans were not in charge of deciding the direction the community should take in relation to the local government. According to Sonia Gutiérrez, these newcomers were largely from rural areas and lacked basic education, creating a bigger demand for assistance.[17] Local leaders and organizations had to teach Salvadoran newcomers about "American" culture, particularly race relations. Leaders, such as Sonia Gutiérrez, believed that the newcomers' rural background made them unaware of Black culture and practices as opposed to an older Caribbean group whose Afro-Latino connections were more evident.[18] Teaching Salvadorans how to "deal" with their Black neighbors, how to treat them with respect, and reinforcing positive race relations were important parts of the acculturation process according to Gutiérrez.[19] Delicate relations between Salvadorans and African Americans foreshadowed racial tensions that would later come to a head in the 1990s.[20]

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[16] Marc Fisher, "Legal Confusion Disrupts Area Salvadorans' Lives," *The Washington Post*, March 2, 1987; Mary Jordan, "Many Roads Blocked for Salvadorans," *The Washington Post*, December 17, 1987; Scallen, "The Bombs."
[17] Sonia Gutiérrez interview, Latino Youth Community History Project Oral History, April 17, 1982, http://hdl.handle.net/1961/dcplislandora:72682.
[18] Ginetta E. B. Candelario, "'Black Behind the Ears'–and Up Front Too? Dominicans in *The Black Mosaic*," *The Public Historian* 23, no. 4 (Fall 2001): 55-72.
[19] Sonia Gutiérrez interview, Latino Youth Community History Project Oral History, April 17, 1982, http://hdl.handle.net/1961/dcplislandora:72682.
[20] This development is more fully discussed in Chapter 5.

This new population forced Latino leaders to take up immigration and legal issues more seriously.[21]

The growing Salvadoran majority disrupted the political model upon which Puerto Rican leaders had based their success. Barry continued to recruit Puerto Ricans to serve in his administration despite the Latino community's diversity and the emerging Salvadoran majority due to his established network with the group and their citizenship status. A revolving door of leadership, both in the local government and community organizations, highlighted the precarious relationship between old and new principles. The established Puerto Rican leadership group continued to prioritize unity and incremental wins through political representation, while the younger cadre of emerging leaders pushed for immediate change and results.[22] Carlos Rosario's organizing model of using threats of protests and sit-ins was waning.[23] Marcelo Fernandez-Zayas, former chairman of Latinos for Barry group, saw Latinos as a "third force" who could be decisive for close elections as they had been in 1978. "Our approach is to support a candidate whose platform or interest coincides with the aspirations of the Hispanic community," Fernandez-Zayas explained, "we're not talking a color coalition; we're talking an interest coalition.…If you put enough money and enough votes into that person, he will answer to you [as] if he were Hispanic."[24] The establishment was not interested in creating a slate of Latino candidates to solve political problems by running for office; instead, they prioritized solidifying a

[21] Arturo Griffiths Interview, Mount Pleasant Riot Oral History Project, January 4, 2018, http://hdl.handle.net/1961/dcplislandora:42736; Zita Arocha, "Haven for Central Americans," *The Washington Post*, November 18, 1985.
[22] Puerto Rican political actors in New York similarly prioritized working within political systems and institutions in hopes of reaping long-term promises. See José E. Cruz, *Liberalism and Identity Politics: Puerto Rican Community Organizations and Collective Action in New York City* (New York: Centro Press, 2019).
[23] Olivia Cadaval and Brian Finnegan, "'Our Voices in the Nation's Capital': Creating the Latino Community Heritage Center of Washington, D.C.," *The Public Historian* 23, no. 4 (Fall 2001): 73-90.
[24] Caryle Murphy, "Old-Style Ethnic Voting Blocs on the Wane," *The Washington Post*, December 18, 1987.

Latino voting bloc. In so doing, the political establishment disempowered Latino groups that did not have voting rights.

The role of director in the Office on Latino Affairs was the most visible symbol of Latino success and had become a coveted position within the community and a battleground for these differing ideals. Puerto Rican organizers hoped that the permanent position within the mayor's cabinet would advance Latino interests within the city administration and serve as the mouthpiece of the community. In turn, OLA served the community by keeping organizations and residents informed of upcoming opportunities. During Barry's three terms as mayor, the position of director of OLA became a revolving door of leaders, reflecting changing demands and ideologies within the community. However, Puerto Rican control of OLA remained consistent; all of Barry's OLA directors were Puerto Rican. Aida Berio won a contested campaign against Carlos Rosario in 1979 to become the new director of the Office on Latino Affairs during Barry's first term. Berio was among a few Latinos selected to positions in Barry's administration. William P. Vazquez, Berio's acting director and eventual replacement, was also Puerto Rican from New York, and a growing prominent figure in local politics. Carlos Rosario, who had lost the fight to be director of OLA to Berio, was appointed by Barry as the assistant director of the D.C. Office on Aging in 1980.[25] Finally, Jose Gutiérrez, who worked on Barry's campaign targeting the Latino vote, and who had become the most prominent member of Barry's administration, first in his role as acting city personnel director and then as head of the Department of Administrative Services, was likewise a member of the Puerto Rican community and from New York.

[25] Rosario served in the position until his retirement in 1984. Joseph D. Whitaker, "Hispanic Leader Carlos Rosario Dies," *The Washington Post*, February 4, 1987.

From the perspective of some members of the Latino community, the Barry administration was failing to fulfill his promise to appoint more Latinos to high-profile jobs by selecting from a smaller, privileged Latino cluster. Although there was Latino presence in his administration with Aida Berio as director of OLA and José Gutiérrez as acting director of the Office of Personnel, his appointments were consistently Puerto Rican. A *Washington Post* article questioned: "Why do D.C. Hispanics Spokesmen all have Bronx Accents?"[26] The administration had recruited and nominated Puerto Rican leaders, some originally from New York, to serve as representatives and mediators between the D.C. government and the Latino community. William P. Vazquez was originally from East Harlem. Vazquez, Gutiérrez, Berio, and Rosario represented a Puerto Rican "clique" of influence in the community.[27] The move to recruit from outside the growing D.C. Latino community was made, according to the Barry administration, based on established political experience and, notably, citizenship status.[28]

Local politicians used citizenship as the gatekeeping excuse for the lack of representation of Central Americans in political offices. José Gutiérrez justified Barry's selection pattern by arguing that the profile of the younger Latino community in the District had disqualifying characteristics for the types of jobs activists were pushing for. "It's primarily first-generation," Gutiérrez claimed in 1983, "the communities with oldest roots in the United States are the Mexicans, Puerto Ricans and Cubans, but in the District the largest groups are Salvadoran and Nicaraguan. There aren't enough Latinos here with U.S. citizenship, and those that are are too old."[29] Puerto Ricans held U.S. citizenship due to the formal territorial relationship between the

[26] Cecilio J. Morales Jr., "Imported 'Local' Latin Leaders," *The Washington Post*, July 21, 1985.
[27] Arturo Griffiths Interview, Mount Pleasant Riot Oral History Project, January 4, 2018, http://hdl.handle.net/1961/dcplislandora:42736.
[28] For an example of interracial coalition building between Puerto Ricans and African Americans in the civil rights movement in New York see: Lee, *Building a Latino Civil Rights Movement*.
[29] Alma Guillermoprieto, "District's Growing Hispanic Community Seeks Political Clout to Match Numbers," *The Washington Post*, September 11, 1983.

U.S. and the island, and Puerto Ricans from New York, in particular had administrative experience.[30] While District residents who lacked citizenship were barred from working for the federal government, citizenship was not a prerequisite to be employed by the D.C. government.[31] The U.S. Labor Department, along with other federal agencies, had created programs to hire more Latinos to be in compliance with congressional mandates to expand Hispanic representation in the federal government.[32] Yet, the program mostly recruited from outside the District because of status barriers and unskilled population.[33]

3.1.1 Challenging Leadership and Representation

By October 1980, Aida Berio resigned from her position as director of the Office on Latino Affairs. Just sixteen months after her appointment in 1979, Berio was uneasy about the relationship among Latino leaders, the public, and the city bureaucracy. Berio cited lack of sufficient funds and staffing and the agency's low priority within the District's government as the top reasons for her leaving the post.[34] "Let's face it. The overall idea is that we [Latinos] don't come as a priority," stated Berio. Upon taking office, Berio expected to have a robust budget that allowed her to hire up to ten staff members to implement the appropriate programming that the Latino population needed. However, OLA's budget of $106,000, approved by Congress, allowed for at most three staff members. Citywide budget constraints also made it

[30] Cruz, *Liberalism and Identity Politics*; Lee, *Building a Latino Civil Rights Movement*.
[31] The exception was the Metropolitan Police Department and the Metropolitan Fire Departments. United States Commission on Civil Rights, *Racial and Ethnic Tensions in American Communities: Poverty, Inequality, and Discrimination: A Report of the United States Commission on Civil Rights: Volume 1: The Mount Pleasant Report* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. GPO, 1993), 83 (hereinafter USCCR, *The Mount Pleasant Report*).
[32] As part of the Equal Employment Opportunity Program, established by President Richard Nixon with Executive Order 11478 in 1969, the program targeting more Hispanic hires was renamed the Hispanic Employment Program (HEP) on February 28, 1978.
[33] Judith Valente, "Hispanic Search: Labor Department Angers Local Latinos by Recruiting Elsewhere for Govt. Jobs," *The Washington Post*, November 20, 1980.
[34] "Desafío en la cuidad," *El Latino*, No. 44, November 1980, from "El Latino 1977-1979," Periodicals, DCPL.

hard to support supplemental programming. Despite her frustrations, Berio remained publicly loyal to Barry, citing Congress's reticence to approve a larger budget for the office as part of the problem.[35] Upon her departure, William Vazquez became interim acting director of OLA.[36]

The director of OLA position was the site of competition among Latino leadership and heralded budding divisions within the community. Once again, Carlos Rosario vied for the post against Vazquez, forcing Barry to choose which Latino constituency he wanted to support. While Rosario represented an older, established generation of leadership, Vazquez—at 33 years-old—embodied the younger voice of Latinos. "Rosario represented people who have been around a long time, people who maybe are a little afraid—the do-nothings," claimed an anonymous Latino activist.[37] In private, Latino managers of organizations also expressed concerns about Vazquez's youth and his lack of ties to the older leadership group. "There's been a lot of uproar in the community, but that's healthy," argued Sharon Armuelles, director of AYUDA.[38] Armuelles' comment reflects a desire of organizers to move past infighting to show a united front once again. Behind closed doors, leaders were concerned over divisiveness and outside perceptions of Latino stability but ultimately hoped that negotiating among themselves would strengthen their power. Some Latinos criticized OLA's unreliable role as a mediator between the city and community that stalled other forms of organizing: "It has taken away a lot of incentive for Hispanics to organize cohesively as a political action group," argued José Sueiro, a New Yorker of Spanish descent and publisher, editor, and writer of *El Latino*, one of the top three Spanish-language newspapers in the region.[39]

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[35] For more on congressional oversight in the District see: Pearlman, *Democracy's Capital*; Asch and Musgrove, *Chocolate City*.
[36] "Latino Affairs Director Quits, Cites Lack of Support, Funds," *The Washington Post*, October 21, 1980.
[37] Eugene Robinson, "Barry Backs Hispanics for Personnel, Latino Unit," *The Washington Post*, February 12, 1981.
[38] Michel McQueen, "An Aggressive Advocate in the City's Hispanic Hot Seat," *The Washington Post*, March 12, 1981.
[39] Caryle Murphy, "Old-Style Ethnic Voting Blocs on the Wane," *The Washington Post*, December 18, 1987.

Since Rosario's plans in the late 1960s to create a united Latino community in the District, established Puerto Rican leaders had prioritized harmony over factionalism whenever possible. They believed that projecting a unified voice to the public would garner D.C. Latinos political power and access in local government. However, younger organizers saw those tactics as complacent, pushing instead for greater return on their political investment in Barry in the form of more funding and vocal support. In the end, Barry sided with Vazquez and nominated him for OLA director to the city council.[40] Latinos rallied behind Barry once again during his second campaign for mayor and tactically supported his reelection in 1982. However, some members of the Latino community had mixed feelings about the status of progress in the District. José Gutiérrez argued that slow, incremental progress was better than the alternative. "We're not saying the situation is perfect," he contended, "but you have to look at the fact that there are now more Hispanics than ever on the boards and committees of a number of city agencies. Barry has shown he is in the business of fulfilling his campaign promises towards Hispanics."[41] Gutiérrez's own high-ranking position served to prove the point that Barry took the growing population seriously. Jobs translated to representation and thus, political power.[42] Gutiérrez also believed education and skills training were important for allowing Central American migrants to access jobs in the city.[43] The need for equitable housing, bilingual education, and mental health services was growing as newcomers continued to arrive. Jobs were necessary but were not the only way to show recognition of the fastest growing minority. Representing the Council of Hispanic Agencies, executive director Alberto Gomez maintained that securing funding through the

[40] Félix Toledo, "Oficina de Asuntos Latinos Tiene Nuevo Director," *El Latino*, April 1981, from "El Latino 1977-1979," Periodicals, DCPL.
[41] Alma Guillermoprieto, "District's Growing Hispanic Community Seeks Political Clout to Match Numbers," *The Washington Post*, September 11, 1983.
[42] Sonia Gutiérrez interview, Latino Youth Community History Project Oral History, April 17, 1982, http://hdl.handle.net/1961/dcplislandora:72213.
[43] Guillermoprieto, "District's Growing Hispanic."

inclusion of programs within the city budget that were proportionate to the group's size and level of needs was key.

However, as the city experienced a budget crisis and federal funding cuts in the early 1980s, these very programs suffered. The implementation of the federal Block Grant program, which meant that cities received a lump sum of discretionary funds as opposed to targeted funds for programs, resulted in greater competition among all nonprofits in the city.[44] This shift in funding hit Latino-focused nonprofits particularly hard, as most social service programs were organized by these groups rather than directly by the local government. For example, Andromeda, the only Latino-serving mental health service in the city, lost city funding in 1981 for a drug rehabilitation program. In a 1982 interview, Sonia Gutiérrez anticipated the "devastating" effects of President Ronald Reagan administration's budget cuts on Latino programs. She argued that Latinos had less support systems than other groups in the city and that funding restrictions would compound already affected social service networks in the areas.[45]

Budget cuts and narrow avenues for funding forced Latino agencies to also compete with other minority-serving organizations in the District, raising racial frustrations. Puerto Rican leaders recognized that they needed a strong voter base in order to have political power and to push the city council to support their causes. Although the population was growing, Latinos were still a smaller population than their African American counterparts. "Until we start participating in the electoral process, we will not be making the changes. People will be making the changes for us," stressed Arlene Gillespie, Puerto Rican, and deputy director of OLA under Vazquez.[46] Although the Latino population was growing in numbers, most Central American newcomers

[44] Jim Kalish, "D.C. Nonprofit Services Must Unite," *The Washington Post*, November 19,1981.
[45] Sonia Gutiérrez interview, Latino Youth Community History Project Oral History, April 17, 1982, http://hdl.handle.net/1961/dcplislandora:72682.
[46] Caryle Murphy, "Old-Style Ethnic Voting Blocs on the Wane," *The Washington Post*, December 18, 1987.

were undocumented or not eligible voters. Latinos had far to go in order to grow their numbers as a voter base and contended with suburban competition.[47] As the Latino population experienced rapid growth from the waves of Central Americans, rising housing costs and limited employment opportunities pushed more affluent Latinos into the suburbs in Takoma Park, East Silver Spring, Langley Park, Hyattsville, College Park, Arlington, Alexandria, and other areas of Virginia. These groups also took voting power with them when they moved away from the city.[48]

Program managers questioned whether the Black majority was willing to share political power. As the principal advocates for increasing support of Latinos, these managers challenged Black city officials who were at best reluctant to respond to their pressure. These officials argued that they needed more voters to justify the reallocation of funds for Latino-focused programs. For instance, voting limitations were a wedge issue in 1983 during school board meetings. Alberto Gómez, on behalf of the Council of Hispanic Agencies, argued in favor of keeping a bilingual education center open. "The city is 75 percent black," responded John Warren, Ward 6 school board member, "and in a democracy those who vote, in terms of the majority, make the difference, okay?"[49] The issue was framed as an "us versus them" matter, placing the needs of the Latino community in conflict with the needs of a Black majority. Moreover, Warren's statement emphasized how citizenship reinforced the limitations of inclusion and exclusion. Gómez asserted that he was a voter but was met by Warren's insistence that when the community gathered enough votes then the programs would be financed.[50] Even though Latinos

[47] Sonia Gutiérrez interview, Latino Youth Community History Project Oral History, April 17, 1982, http://hdl.handle.net/1961/dcplislandora:72682; Lisa Wheaton interview, Latino Youth Community History Project Oral History, http://hdl.handle.net/1961/dcplislandora:72753.
[48] Zita Arocha, "Haven for Central Americans," *The Washington Post*, November 18, 1985.
[49] Guillermoprieto, "District's Growing Hispanic."
[50] "Controversia Entre Negros y Latinos," *El* Latino, August 1981, from "El Latino 1977-1979," Periodicals/DCPL. For more on the relationship between citizenship and the boundaries of inclusion see: Mae M. Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004); Thomas

made up close to 10 percent of the population, they did have a substantial voter base to pressure the city for their representation.

Black politicians and Latinos debated over who qualified as a minority for the purposes of city contracts and was another key site where identity categories were shaped. City administrators raised the question "who is a minority?", exposing fragile lines of competition for resources between the Black and Latino communities. In response, members of Barry's administration revealed a proposal in 1979 to alter the affirmative action law and limit city minority contracts, which automatically reserved 25 percent of contracts for minority-owned companies, by preventing "minority status" designation for Latinos from Europe, South America, and Central America.[51] Under the proposal, only Puerto Ricans or people of Mexican descent were represented in the minority category. The new law reinforced Puerto Rican and Mexican American hegemony within Latino communities. While members of the Barry administration argued that the move would allow Black business owners to receive their "fair share" of lucrative affirmative action contracts, Latino leaders warned that this move would deepen the wedge between themselves and African Americans, exacerbating an already contentious atmosphere for city contracts. An anonymous powerful Latino ally to the Barry administration harshly reacted to the proposal: "If Marion [Barry] agrees to do something like that, then it's really going to be a political war between Hispanics and blacks, and that would be terrible."[52] The city council, led by Ward 7 representative Willie J. Hardy and with the support of

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A. Guglielmo, *White on Arrival: Italians, Race, Color, and Power in Chicago, 1890-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Erika Lee, *At America's Gates: Chinese Immigration during the Exclusion Era, 1882-1943* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003); Natalia Molina, *Fit to be Citizens?: Public Health and Race in Los Angeles, 1879-1939* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006); Margot Canaday, *The Straight State: Sexuality and Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011).

[51] In addition, Vietnamese, Indian, Chinese, and Korean people as well as Africans were excluded from eligibility. Vernon C. Thompson, "City Agency Weighs Restricting Some Ethnics' Minority Status," *The Washington Post*, May 22, 1979.

[52] Thompson, "City."

the mayor's administration, succeeded in removing Latinos of European descent, such as Spaniards, and Asian Americans from the designation of minorities in the contracts program in 1980. Only African Americans, Native Americans, and Latinos from Central and South America and the Caribbean had the minority designation. Politicians justified the law based on historical patterns of discrimination and the fear that wealthy Latinos of European descent were benefiting disproportionately from the program.[53]

The debate over affirmative action in the city's contracts program resurfaced during Barry's campaign for reelection in 1982. Prompted by the growth in both the Asian and Latino communities, city council revisited and debated the Minority Contracting Act.[54] Council members Clarke and John Wilson (Ward 2) co-sponsored proposed changes to the law after interest groups in the Asian and Latino community successfully lobbied them. "It's not right for one minority to discriminate against another," argued Ronald Hsu, an owner of a local construction firm and one of the lobbyists in favor of the change.[55] Some in the city council feared that revising the new law would disadvantage Black businesses. Wilhelmina J. Rolark (Ward 8), Hilda Mason (At Large), and Polly Shackleton (Ward 7) initially abstained from voting. Rolark, whose ward was predominantly Black and included the Anacostia neighborhood, was particularly concerned about the competition and survival of Black-owned businesses during the current difficult economic climate.

The yearly $115 million minority city contracts program was the site of multiracial fighting as each minority group recognized the value of winning bids for redistributing wealth.

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[53] Tom Sherwood, "Minority Contract Measure Advance," *The Washington Post*, July 21, 1982.
[54] Like Latino leaders, spokespersons of the Asian community in the District claimed that their population numbers were ten times higher than the numbers given by the 1980 Census. Juan Williams, "Asians' Exclusion from Minority Law May Cost Barry Votes," *The Washington Post*, March 18, 1982.
[55] Tom Sherwood, "Minority Contract Measure Advance," *The Washington Post*, July 21, 1982.

Barry and his administration used lucrative contracts to promote Black middle-class businesses, increasing African American employment.[56] Latino organizers understood that getting a part of those business contracts could also positively affect their prosperity and thus it was important to be recognized as minorities under the law. The amended law finally passed city council in September of 1982 and was signed by Mayor Barry in October after promises to Asian and Latino constituents. However, two weeks after signing the law, Barry wavered and proposed amending the law once again to limit who could be considered a minority to streamline the process. Barry argued that the newly signed law singled out minorities by ethnic group and "geographic distribution." Instead, the mayor proposed limiting minority qualifications to those who were economically or socially disadvantaged by historic patterns of discrimination by US institutions.[57] Barry floated the changes two days before election day on November 11. The burden of proving historic discrimination would seemingly fall on the individuals. "To say that only some Hispanics or some Asians could be included that would be a kind of discrimination… Would Puerto Ricans and Cubans be included but no Argentinians…I don't know what he's doing but it's dangerous. This is very disturbing," worried Eduardo Perdomo, head of Perdomo & Associates, a contracting firm, and former president of the Hispanic American Construction Enterprises. On the other hand, Malcolm Beech, president of the D.C. Chamber of Commerce and member of the Black Businessmen's Coalition, posited: "Our fear is that people coming over here can wipe out black businesses in the city." Although Beech was expressing protectionist sentiments, he did not support changing the new law.[58] Beyond the issue of affirmative action in contracts, the needs of the Black and Latino communities in terms of access, resources, and

[56] Although in 1978 only 7 percent of Black businesses had city contracts, by 1985 35 percent of contracts were awarded to Black-owned businesses. Asch and Musgrove, *Chocolate City*, 395.
[57] Juan Williams, "Mayor Asks Redefining of Minorities," *The Washington Post*, November 9, 1982.
[58] Juan Williams, "Mayor Asks Redefining of Minorities," *The Washington Post*, November 9, 1982.

representation prompted some politicians to continue to pit African Americans and Latinos against each other as these two groups increasingly competed for similar jobs and housing assistance.

3.2 Demanding Political Accountability

Jose Gutiérrez and his position within the Barry administration was a litmus test for the status of Latinos in Washington, D.C. and in the local government. Over time, Puerto Rican leaders increased pressure for more Latino personnel and appointments in high-ranking positions in Barry's cabinet. By 1980, Latinos made up 10 percent of the District's population. Barry promoted Gutiérrez from deputy assistant to acting director of the Office of Personnel in April 1979 when the director, George R. Harrod, was placed on administrative leave after an indictment for assault.[59] In this position, Gutiérrez became the highest ranking and most influential Latino member of Barry's administration. "This (appointment) means the mayor means business," claimed Eva Guevara-Erb, "this is putting his commitment on the line and it's a message to the rest of his administration which may not yet be as responsive to our needs as he has he wants to be." However, once he was in the acting position, some employees in the department criticized Gutiérrez for what they saw as unfair hirings and firings, along with questionable promotion policies.[60]

Despite these concerns, Latino leaders and even some Barry aides pushed for Gutiérrez's appointment as permanent director of personnel. Anything short of that would result, aides and

[59] Harrod was charged with sexual assaulting a staff aide in 1979 and was on leave during his trial. He eventually stepped down from the position in December of 1980. Joseph D. Whitaker and Milton Coleman, "City Personnel Chief Indicted, Placed on Leave," *The Washington Post*, April 5, 1979; Al Kamen, "Harrod is Acquitted," *The Washington Post*, August 27, 1981.
[60] Christopher Dickey, "1st Latino Named to Major Job as Acting City Personnel Chief," *The Washington Post*, April 5, 1979.

Latino leaders feared, in deteriorating Latino relations. In January 1980, Barry made a surprise visit to the Hispanic Community Center at the Wilson Center in Mount Pleasant, what many considered the heart of the Latino *barrio*, to ease tensions. The stopover at the press conference was a calculated political move by Barry to remind community leaders of his pledge and respond to the Latino community to quell growing concerns at the beginning of the year. Earlier in the week, Barry moved to win over the group by visiting Pedro Luján's home to discuss their concerns. At Luján's home, Latino leaders, including Gutiérrez himself, made it clear to Barry that he had until the end of the month to figure out Gutiérrez's position. During the visit to the Wilson Center, Barry reminded the public at a press conference of his commitment to the community and his recent securing $40,000 of the budget for the Office on Latino Affairs. Barry made this move to address some of OLA director Aida Berio's requests for more staffing and assistance. Representatives from the Council of Hispanic Agencies, the Spanish Catholic Center, and other local groups as well as Pedro Luján and Gutiérrez met with Barry to reiterate their concerns. Maria Casauranc, spokesperson for the CHCA, stated: "We will not be rolled over, stepped on, ignored or taken for granted anymore.…We will not be quiet when we are being attacked by racism and politics."[61] Concerns among the group also surrounded Gutiérrez's job security amidst staff pushback, which Barry had already come out in public support of him. Barry's surprise presence at the meeting quelled some concerns yet highlighted the delicate balance he had to navigate between showing support in terms of appointments to the Latino community and his promises to his Black constituents.[62] Mayor Barry made Gutiérrez's appointment as director of the Office of Personnel permanent in 1981, fulfilling his promise to Latino leaders.

[61] Art Harris, "Barry Averts Trouble with Hispanics," *The Washington Post*, January 11, 1980.
[62] Harris, "Barry Averts Trouble."

In May 1984, Barry relocated Gutiérrez from director of Office of Personnel to director of the Department of Administrative Services, the city's main purchasing agency. The position was short-lived, however. Less than a year into the job, Gutiérrez was once again reassigned on March 6, 1985 to director of policy and program evaluation. Although the exact reason for the move was not immediately evident, it followed tensions between Gutiérrez and Thomas M. Downs, city administrator and major ally to Barry.[63] Gutiérrez, who had sent a memo to Barry about his concerns over Downs's actions on February 14th, had privately agreed on the transfer in a meeting with Barry and his advisors in return for public support of his work. Downs and Gutiérrez had an acrimonious relationship, often disagreeing about who should be awarded city contracts and the structure of the department. Gutiérrez publicly claimed that Downs pressured him to award city contracts to companies as returns for political favors. On the other hand, Downs called into question Gutiérrez's work ethic and effectiveness as leader. Gutiérrez not only questioned Downs' ethics, but he also put into question the whole Barry administration and become the first high ranking aide to call into question the administration's practices.[64] Barry ordered an investigation into Gutiérrez's actions as director and argued the demotion was a result of a "lack of respect for the family creed" by speaking publicly of internal disputes.[65] Downs and

[63] Eric Pianin, "Barry Shifts Staff in Major Shake-Up," *The Washington Post*, March 8, 1985.
[64] Arthur S. Brisbane, "D.C. Corruption at Issue," *The Washington Post*, August 3, 1986. Gutiérrez's alleged whistleblowing was a prelude to a series of high-profile corruption scandals during Barry's third term in office related to ethics violations and theft of funds from the city during previous years. Increasingly, Barry faced off against a suspicious federal government and investigations into himself and his administration. By 1986, at least ten officials in his administration were charged and convicted of crimes related to their official positions, the most high-ranking being Ivanhoe Donaldson. Donaldson was the former deputy mayor and was convicted of stealing city funds from 1981 to 1983. Although Barry managed to avoid direct culpability in these corruption schemes, his association and close relationships with these individuals affected his popularity and public opinion of his administration. For more on this history see: Asch and Musgrove, *Chocolate City*; Harry Jaffe and Tom Sherwood*, Dream City: Race, Power, and the Decline of Washington (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994).*
[65] Eric Pianin and Joe Pichirallo, "Jose Gutierrez's Telling Tale of Political Miscalculation," *The Washington Post*, March 31, 1985.

Barry both claimed that the department shift was due to dissatisfaction with Gutiérrez's performance and not retaliatory in nature.

The issue over city contracts as political favors exploded in 1985 and centered Gutiérrez as a polarizing figure. In turn, the Latino community rallied behind their highest-ranking representative in Barry's administration. Upon his demotion, Gutiérrez assembled thirty Latino leaders to convey his concerns and rally support. The personnel dispute became intertwined with Latino concern. Latino leaders began facing pushback from the administration for their public support and questioning of Gutiérrez's move. "If we continued to press this issue, I was to understand that [city] contracts in the Hispanic community…and funding for Hispanic programs could be jeopardized," alleged Enrique S. Rivera-Torres, president of the Council of Hispanic Agencies and executive director of the Latin American Youth Center. This incident resurfaced concerns about Barry's commitments to the Latino community, among them slow progress in hirings and promotions, contracts to Latino businesses, and little response to complaints of police brutality.[66] In turn, Barry and his allies questioned Gutiérrez's actions as director of Administrative Services, specifically a leasing contract awarded to a Latino businessman. Gutiérrez himself pushed back, commenting: "I'm tired of the notion that it's okay for blacks to get contracts, but it's something sneaky or dirty when Hispanics get contracts."[67] While Gutiérrez had the support of high-profile Latino leaders, some groups saw his actions as unnecessarily divisive. The Institute of Afro-Latino American Studies believed his actions were "polarizing" and pitted the Black and Latino communities against each other over a personal matter.[68]

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[66] Eric Pianin, "D.C. Aide Claims Contract Pressure," *The Washington Post*, March 23, 1985.
[67] Eric Pianin and Joe Pichirallo, "Barry Demotes Aide in Dispute Over Contracts," *The Washington Post*, March 26, 1985.
[68] Pianin and Pichirallo, "Jose Gutierrez's Telling Tale of Political Miscalculation."

The public back-and-forth between Gutiérrez and the Barry administration escalated quickly, eventually leading to Gutiérrez's firing in May amid more revelations of ethics violations. This incident highlighted two major critiques of Barry's administration at a time when the mayor was about to launch his third election campaign. Opponents of Barry, including Council members Betty Ann Kane (At Large), John Wilson (Ward 2), and William S. Spaulding (Ward 5), believed he acted too politically, arguing he traded favors and contracts in return for support.[69] Gutiérrez became a scapegoat and was fired after the release of an investigation and report. The report claimed Gutiérrez acted improperly when he negotiated a city lease of property with Angel Roubin, a well-known Latino businessman. The report also discredited Gutiérrez's claim that he was pressured to award contracts for political favors by city officials such as Downs.[70] Secondly, Latinos leaders resurrected longstanding complaints about the city's neglect of the group in both jobs and city contracts. Aware of the power of his position and status, Gutiérrez argued: "I can't afford to do anything that smells bad because it negatively affects my ability to pursue the Hispanic agenda."[71] Gutiérrez's status as the highest-level cabinet appointment, which had previously served as evidence of Barry's commitment, was now gone.

Gutiérrez's firing in 1985 created a structural problem that Latino leaders needed to respond to alongside changing internal dynamics. The incident had a ripple effect on the Latino community's public opinion of Barry and reignited complaints over the city's treatment of Latinos. The highest-ranking Latino representative in the administration had been ousted, leading

[69] Eric Pianin, "Barry's Campaign Dampened," *The Washington Post*, May 30, 1985; Eric Pianin, "Employee Hired for Investigation of D.C. Contracts," *The Washington Post*, April 3, 1985; Pianin and Pichirallo, "Jose Gutierrez's Telling of Political Miscalculation"; Jaffe and Sherwood, *Dream City*.
[70] Eric Pianin, "Probe Report Said to be Critical of Gutierrez," *The Washington Post*, May 17, 1985; Eric Pianin, "Report Faults Gutierrez," *The Washington Post*, May 21, 1985.
[71] Eric Pianin and Joe Pichirallo, "Barry Demotes Aide in Dispute Over Contracts," *The Washington Post*, March 26, 1985.

Latino leaders to be concerned about their future representation in political matters. Once again, they argued that Latino political power did not match their growing numbers. The episode raises questions about the delicate balance between arguments of equity in representation among minority groups. Latino leaders and residents were conflicted about Gutiérrez's firing and their status in the city as a growing minority and ability to gain support and resources. While some Puerto Rican leaders were vocal about their support for Gutiérrez and misgivings about his treatment, they also continued to voice trust and backing for Barry as their best ally. They were simultaneously careful about framing the problem of political power and representation as an issue of fairness rather than a competition between the Black and Latino communities, assertive about speaking with a unified voice and not casting blame. "We feel left out," expressed Tomas Carlo, a Puerto Rican street vendor.[72] Carlo's statement represented the sentiments of some residents who had previously supported Barry and his administration but questioned his loyalty and decisions in the Gutiérrez case, especially as election year neared. "This is a community that for a long, long time tried to work ourselves into the system," lamented Carlo, "now all of a sudden, when we have somebody [Gutiérrez] who represents us, somebody we can tell our children to look to, he's wiped out."[73]

Latino organizers maintained that their numbers had grown from 60,000 to 80,000—about 10 percent of the city's population. However, they remained only about 1 percent of the city employees. Leaders such as Enrique Rivera-Torres of the Council of Hispanic Agencies and Rev. Jose Somoza, director of the Spanish Catholic Center, believed that part of their obstacle was newer residents of the Latino community, especially undocumented individuals from Central

[72] Kenneth Bredemeier and Michel Marriott, "Barry Not Sharing Power, Hispanics Say," *The Washington Post*, April 1, 1985.
[73] Bredemeier and Marriott, "Barry Not Sharing Power, Hispanics Say."

America. That is why, according to resident and business owner Coco Bueno, a Salvadoran from earlier migrations, it was significant to have someone like Gutiérrez in a position of power. "I think we need more push for Hispanics. We need more people in a position that can help Hispanics," argued Bueno.[74] Despite splintered opinions, agency heads represented Latinos as unified in their support of Gutiérrez and backed his decision to sue the city over his firing.

3.2.1 Ad Hoc Coalition for a Latino Community Agenda

The Gutiérrez incident became a watershed moment for city-community relations in the District. The much-reported event brought local media attention to the growing minority and provided a moment for representatives to speak with a unified voice about persistent problems they faced. Heightened publicity allowed leaders to capitalize on the moment by airing their grievances and forcing the city to recognize the community. In June 1985, "after months of mounting tensions between the District of Columbia government and the Latino community," local organizations came together to form the Ad Hoc Coalition for a Latino Community Agenda. Led by Enrique Rivera-Torres as its spokesperson, the Ad Hoc Coalition consulted thirty community organizations and consisted of the Council of Hispanic Agencies and its eighteen organization members, the D.C. Hispanic Employees Association, the Hispanic American Contractors Association, the Mayor's Commission on Latino Community Development, the Afro-Latino Institute, the Haitian CHIDAS center, and the Hispanic American Festival Committee. These groups represented a multiracial coalition of community organizations at the forefront of aiding Latino communities.[75]

[74] Bredemeier and Marriott, "Barry Not Sharing Power, Hispanics Say."
[75] Ad Hoc Coalition for a Latino Community Agenda, "News Conference Announcement," June 9, 1985, Folder 17, Box 81, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU.

The Ad Hoc Coalition revealed their plan to the public in a report, called "Washington, D.C.'s Latino Community Agenda," that enumerated their grievances and proposed recommendations. Gutiérrez's firing at a time of cuts in the city budgets and decreased funding for social services created a compounding problem. These social service and community networks created by Puerto Rican and other Latino leaders to fill in service gaps by the local government were strained from a lack of funds and, in turn, modified quality of life for their constituents as the population grew.[76] According to the D.C. Office of Policy and Program Evaluation (OPPE), the Latino population in D.C. had grown by 10,000 per year since 1980. By 1985 the low estimate was 67,500 Latinos, of whom 40-to-46 percent were Salvadorans. However, services to the community remained at the pre-1980 level and were straining to assist the growing number of refugees and undocumented individuals.[77]

The Latino Community Agenda's main goal was to "rectify long-standing systemic imbalances and socio-economic problems," and the coalition hoped that outlining their concerns would motivate Barry and the city to become a partner in finding solutions.[78] As the Ad Hoc Coalition continued to support Barry on the eve of his third reelection campaign, Latino feelings of marginalization by the local government accumulated. The group sought to work in partnership with the city to address their concerns, reflecting an organizing principle that prioritized mutual cooperation. "We wish to stress the fact that our community is not seeking handouts from the District government, or seeking to become helpless wards of the city," Rivera-Torres explained. Instead, he continued, it was the hope of the coalition members that the report

[76] Ad Hoc Coalition, "News Conference Announcement."
[77] Ad Hoc Coalition for a Latino Community Agenda, D'Emilio Associates, and Nena Terrell, "Washington, D.C.'s Latino Community Agenda," June 7, 1985, Folder 17, Box 81, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU.
[78] Ad Hoc Coalition, "Washington, D.C.'s Latino Community Agenda," page iii.

"should not be viewed as a set of demands upon our city government, but rather as a collection of ideas on what we need to do to begin to correct the problems faced by Latinos in our city."[79]

The Ad Hoc Coalition's agenda reflected a decade of struggle and frustration, but also the attempts of Latino leaders to reframe their demands to reflect the population changes of their communities and the District at large. The "Latino Agenda" outlined fifteen areas of concern, highlighting the real-world effect of failures using case studies. The fifteen issue areas included: refugees & undocumented; services to the handicapped; family and protective services; services to the elderly; childcare services; health services; housing programs; income maintenance services; economic development; municipal employment; employment training; public safety; education, recreation and the arts; human rights enforcement; public transportation. The range of issues covered everyday areas of life and aimed to concretize "unheeded recommendations, ignored issues and the absence of a comprehensive City response."[80] Significantly, the agenda included immigration issues related to refugees and undocumented people who were quickly becoming a sizable population.

Although many of the concerns were universal across the city, some were uniquely Latino-focused, such as the population's bilingual and cross-cultural capability. The agenda called for the city to take four immediate steps to address their concerns. Language barriers, especially because newcomers only spoke Spanish, were a major problem for the city and residents. The first stipulation argued for the promotion and recruitment of Latinos to fill policymaking, planning, and public service positions where bilingual expertise might be relevant. Second, the coalition wanted the city government to acknowledge that language and culture were

[79] Kenneth Bredemeier, "Hispanic Leaders Accuse City of Shortening Latinos on Jobs, Services," *The Washington Post*, June 11, 1985.
[80] Ad Hoc Coalition, "Washington, D.C.'s Latino Community Agenda," iii.

a significant hurdle that should be reflected in funding to enhance and provide social services. The city should also print bilingual forms and educational materials and provide cross-cultural training to staff who directly encounter the diverse community. The third demand implored the mayor to order DHS and the Department of Vital Statistics to properly identify and count the Latino population. This request emphasized the unremitting dissatisfaction of Latino leaders who understood that undercounting the population resulted in less funding and resources. Finally, the coalition desired a clear reporting procedure and schedule plan to track proposed aid and services to hold the administration accountable. Transparency and a clear enforcement of policies were key for solving the problems created by years of neglect and for holding the city administration accountable.[81]

Echoing the demands of previous decades, the coalition requested bilingual services and officials with knowledge of cultural differences for each of the main subject areas highlighted in the agenda. The goal of each platform was to get public government involvement and funds to stimulate greater private investment in the Latino community. Employment in city departments and offices that provide services to Latinos, including disability, elderly, health, childcare, and family services, was necessary to reach and assist the mostly Spanish-speaking population. For instance, the "Latino Agenda" called for an increase in the number of Latino police officers and the creation of bilingual services to improve deteriorating police-community relations and growing mistrust.[82] The main concerns relating to the MPD involved instances of police brutality as well as discriminatory practices, including a lack of bilingual forms.[83] Jobs and training mattered and had clearcut effects of everyday quality of life for the community. The

[81] Ad Hoc Coalition, "Washington, D.C.'s Latino Community Agenda," iv.
[82] Ad Hoc Coalition, "Washington, D.C.'s Latino Community Agenda."
[83] I discuss this issue in depth in Chapter 4.

underrepresentation of Latinos in the MPD, who made up just up 1.2 percent of the department, affected other issue areas, for instance the reporting of domestic violence incidents. Additionally, the Ad Hoc Coalition wanted the establishment of a multi-social service center in Adams-Morgan that would assist in overcoming language barrier problems by providing services in Spanish to the community. As the coalition argued,

> Latino community agencies, highly accessible by virtue of their bilingual, cross-cultural capability, have been heavily hit by the thrust of accumulated demands for services which they were only intended to supplement. While increasingly obliged to perform tasks which ordinarily correspond to city government agencies, they have not had parallel increases in city funding, technical cooperation or support. Basic material needs remain unmet and problems compound. There is little or no provision for dealing with the weekly influx of refugees and the situation of the undocumented.[84]

Latinos from beyond the city boundaries, including undocumented populations, would trek to Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant for assistance knowing that the neighborhoods were the center for Spanish-speakers assistance. The one stop place would facilitate needed programs, such as income maintenance, WIC, Food Commodities, emergency assistance, and health referral services.[85]

3.2.2 1985 Latino Community Agenda and the Growing Salvadoran Community

The 1985 Latino Community Agenda opened with a case study of an undocumented Salvadoran family, demonstrating the Ad Hoc Coalition's attempt to start anew in response to changing dynamics. Reflecting a shift towards a Salvadoran majority, the case study also reflected the coalition's petition to the city that the most vulnerable members of the community set the baseline for the level of assistance needed. While in the previous decade D.C.'s Latino community consisted of an amalgamation of various nationalities, with a majority coming from

[84] Ad Hoc Coalition, "Washington, D.C.'s Latino Community Agenda," iii.
[85] Ad Hoc Coalition, "Washington, D.C.'s Latino Community Agenda."

South America and the Caribbean, by 1985 Salvadorans had become the largest fraction of the population with an estimated weekly arrival of 160 refugees. Ana Patricia Rodriguez argues that despite reaching majority status within the D.C. Latino population during this time period, "Salvadorans have remained politically invisible and under-represented for a variety of different reasons, not the least of which is the white/black racial binary structuring much of D.C. politics."[86] This "invisibility" is apparent when analyzing the city government's continuous misguided efforts to provide services for the Latino community and address perceived language and cultural differences. Moreover, even though the Ad Hoc Coalition led with the Salvadoran case study, their circumstances were still subsumed as part of a larger Latino problem. Salvadorans were simultaneously visible and invisible, distinct in needs but also representative of the persistent needs of the community whether or not they identified as part of the unified Latino vision.

The case study of Francisco and Rosario's family experiences navigating life in the District demonstrated gaps in social services for Latinos and areas for negotiation with the city. Francisco and Rosario struggled to find housing for themselves and their four children who eventually joined them in the city from El Salvador. The family was rejected from city shelters because of their undocumented status and denied housing assistance by the city's housing agency because of unsteady paychecks. Eventually, they were able to find housing in a slum building. Francisco also had medical issues from an ill-treated gunshot wound he received during the war in El Salvador but was denied hospitalization because of his lack of health insurance. The family claimed that Francisco's debilitating medical issues triggered depressive episodes and abusive behavior. At one point, Protective Services removed and placed the children in an orphanage for

[86] Ana Patricia Rodriguez, "Becoming 'Wachintonians': Salvadorans in the Washington, D.C., Metropolitan Area," *Washington History* 28, no. 2 (Fall 2016): 3-12.

two weeks without notifying the family after a series of miscommunications attributed to language barriers with the school. Social workers involved in the matter also did not speak Spanish. Eventually the children were released back to their mother. Although Francisco and Rosario applied for public assistance, their aid was delayed for four months due to missing paperwork and dropped casework, again related to language difference.[87]

The Ad Hoc Coalition argued that language and cultural impediments were the root cause of each of the incidents faced by Francisco and Rosario, along with city agencies ill-prepared to handle undocumented families. Salvadorans who arrived in the city with limited resources required assistance with legal, employment, housing, and health services. The group wanted clearer policies and actions taken by city administrators and the mayor to allow for equal access to benefits regardless of citizenship status. In 1984, Mayor Barry had taken initial steps to outline a citywide policy to explain their stance on benefits for undocumented residents. On August 2, 1984, Mayor Barry issued memorandum 84-41, which barred city employees from asking benefit applicants about citizenship or U.S. residency status for the purposes of determining eligibility. The memorandum, however, maintained that city officials would comply with "federal and District regulations and judicial decisions," which included proof of citizenship for federally funded programs such as Medicare, food stamps, Social Security, and Aid to Families with Dependent Children.[88]

While Barry's administration had implemented the initial policy guideline for the municipal government's collaboration with INS in 1984, the Ad Hoc Coalition wanted more forceful clarification and assurances from the mayor. The group recommended in the Latino

[87] Ad Hoc Coalition, "Washington, D.C.'s Latino Community Agenda," v-vi.
[88] Mayor's Memorandum 84-41, "Clarification of Benefits Available to Individuals Who Are Not Citizens or Do Not Have U.S. Residency Status," August 2, 1984, Folder Latino Affairs, Box 3, Subject Files - Clifton S. Smith 1983-1986, Accession # 351-88-0814, District of Columbia Archives, Washington, D.C.

Community Agenda that Mayor Barry issue an executive order "to encourage equal access by all persons residing in the District to full benefits, opportunities and services provided by programs funded with local revenues and not subject to Federal regulations."[89] The recommendations acknowledged federal immigration regulations and limitations placed on the local government, but the group encouraged city administrations to avoid voluntary cooperation. Among the recommendations, the agenda proposed the removal of citizenship and residency questions from non-essential forms that were required to access benefits and services. They argued that health services, especially in prenatal, infant, and childcare, should be universally available. Moreover, the group advocated for changes in the Legal Services Corporation, which was barred from providing legal services to undocumented individuals.[90] Although the focus was on Salvadoran refugees, the report also advocated for the fair treatment and protection of Guatemalans and Haitians by local agencies. A years later, on June 9, 1986, Mayor Barry fulfilled the Ad Hoc Coalition's recommendation and made the memorandum official law. He issued Mayor's Order 86-91, ensuring city agencies and employees would not inquire about immigration status.[91] These policies effectively meant that city officials would not collaborate with INS unless required by federal law. By refusing to "volunteer information" to immigration authorities, Barry and his administration hoped to "alleviate the fears" of Salvadorans and undocumented populations who needed to access social services.[92]

[89] Ad Hoc Coalition, "Washington, D.C.'s Latino Community Agenda," 1.
[90] Ad Hoc Coalition, "Washington, D.C.'s Latino Community Agenda," 36.
[91] Mayor's Order 86-91, "Clarification of Benefits Available to Non-Citizens or Individuals Without U.S. Residency Status," June 9, 1986, District of Columbia Municipal Regulations and District of Columbia Register, https://www.dcregs.dc.gov/Common/NoticeDetail.aspx?NoticeId=N0012149, accessed August 2, 2023.
[92] "Barry Administration Accomplishments on Behalf of the Latino Community," n.d. [September 1989], Folder Latino Affairs, Box 2, Office of the Press Secretary for D.C. 1989-1990, Accession # DCA-91-0005-1, District of Columbia Archives, Washington, D.C.

Although a sanctuary movement existed in the District, city officials did not claim the city to be an official sanctuary city.[93] Local institutions, including churches and universities, declared themselves sanctuary spaces for undocumented migrants as early as 1983. Three years after the high-profile murder of Salvadoran Archbishop Oscar Romero, a fervent critic of the regime in El Salvador, the congregation of Luther Place Memorial Church announced on March 24, 1983 their move to provide sanctuary for Salvadorans in the District.[94] On October 28, 1985, Takoma Park, a Maryland suburb of D.C., announced itself a sanctuary city. The city's declaration focused on providing a safe haven specifically for Salvadorans and Guatemalans migrants and barred INS officials and activity in the area.[95] The student body at American University, located in the Spring Valley neighborhood of northwest D.C., pronounced the campus a sanctuary space for Salvadoran and Guatemalan refugees on March 6, 1986. By 1987, eleven religious congregations became sanctuaries for Central American refugees.[96]

The 1985 Latino Community Agenda made visible the plight of Salvadorans in the District by centering their experiences as indicative of systemic problems faced by all Latinos in the city. The Ad Hoc Coalition believed that pressuring the city for assistance with Salvadoran refugees would also lift the burden on community agencies that were overburdened with increasing demands for assistance. The press releases announcing the agenda did not mention

[93] For a more detailed history of the sanctuary movement in Washington, D.C. see: Scallen, "The Bombs." For more on the national sanctuary movement see: Norma Stoltz Chinchilla, Norma Hamilton, and James Loucky, "The Sanctuary Movement and Central American Activism in Los Angeles," *Latin American Perspectives* 36, no. 6 (November 2009): 101-126; Susan Bibler Coutin, *The Culture of Protest: Religious Activism and the U.S. Sanctuary Movement* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993).
[94] Judith Valente, "D.C. Church to Shelter Refugees Facing Deportation," *The Washington Post*, March 24, 1983. For more on the murder of Archbishop Oscar Romero see: Matthew Philipp Whelan, *Blood in the Fields: Óscar Romero, Catholic Social Teaching, and Land Reform* (Washington, D.C: Catholic University of America Press, 2020).
[95] Carlos Moncada, "Takoma Park Offers Refugees Sanctuary from Two Countries," *The Washington Post*, October 30, 1985.
[96] For a list of these congregations see: Scallen, "The Bombs," 168.

Salvadorans or refugee communities; instead it refenced a growing Latino community and used similar language to that used by Puerto Ricans in the 1970s to describe the unified group.

Salvadoran newcomers experienced poverty at high rates because of dwindling resources and harshening immigration policies and the tough conditions of their migration context. INS's implementation of employer sanctions on businesses that employed undocumented individuals after 1986 made finding jobs challenging. As a result, many Salvadorans were forced to work under the table in the service industry, compounding their potential of experiencing poverty or homelessness. According to the Washington Building Trades Council, around 20 to 25 percent of construction workers were immigrants, the majority from El Salvador. Similarly, 30 percent of janitorial workers, 40 percent of hotel workers, and 60 to 70 percent of restaurant workers were immigrants.[97] "If you ask employers most will say off-the-record that they'd rather have Salvadorans than blacks because, they say, blacks are lazy and Salvadorans are better workers," explained Benjamin Davis, organizer for the Service Employees International Union. "What those employers are really saying is an American black knows he has rights and is unwilling to work for an indecent wage."[98] Moreover, Salvadorans' undocumented status made them ineligible to receive federal aid.[99]

Increasingly, Salvadorans making their way to the District were younger, escaping unavoidable violence in their home country. Undereducated Salvadorans also needed to be trained for jobs and, for the youth, integrated into schools. A study by the Department of Health and Human Services in 1985 found that most of the migrants from El Salvador were between the

[97] These statistics come from the Service Employees International Union and the Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union respectively. Chris Spolar, "New Working Class in the Making," *The Washington Post*, December 15, 1987.
[98] Spolar, "New Working Class in the Making."
[99] Mary Jordan, "Many Roads Blocked for Salvadorans," *The Washington Post*, December 17, 1987.

ages of 16 and 22.[100] Younger migrants either reconnected with distant families or were completely alone, exacerbating a profound feeling of loneliness and trauma, and signaled a growing demand for mental health services. Many Salvadoran adolescents were also entering directly into the workforce, forced to bypass school in order to feed, clothe, and house themselves.[101]

The District school system was not equipped to serve migrant children and adolescents. According to Hugo Galinvo, executive assistant for bilingual education in the D.C. Public Schools, Central Americans, specifically Salvadoran youth, accounted for a tripling of the Latino population in the city schools. While in 1979 there were 99 Salvadoran children enrolled in D.C. public schools, by 1985 there were about 1,695 enrolled.[102] Racial disparities between Latino and Black students were evident in the classrooms as predominantly Black teachers struggled to communicate with their new students and their parents. Pedro Avilés, a Salvadoran community activist and youth organizer with the Latin American Youth Center at the time, pinpointed classroom experiences as the origins of racial tensions that led to rioting in 1991.[103] Language discrimination was present in area schools that already lacked resources and could not hire ESL (English as a second language) teachers to meet growing demands.

The Ad Hoc Coalition advocated for more bilingual instruction and opportunities in the 1985 Latino Community Agenda, highlighting the ripple effects of poor education on the community and interracial tensions. Some in the community saw the warning signs of discontent

[100] Carlos Sanchez, "Barrio Stories Reflect Uprooted Lives," *The Washington Post*, December 17, 1987.
[101] Michel Marriott, "Growing Up Salvadoran in the U.S.," *The Washington Post*, April 22, 1985.
[102] Mayor's Office on Latino Affairs, "Annual Report, Fiscal Year 1985," February 1, 1985, Folder 5, Box 48, Subseries 2, Series 2, Nadine P. Winter Council of the District of Columbia Papers, Special Collections Research Center, Gelman Library, The George Washington University, Washington, D.C. [hereinafter Winter Papers, GWU]; Zita Arocha, "Haven for Central Americans," *The Washington Post*, November 18, 1985.
[103] Pedro Aviles Interview, Mount Pleasant Riot Oral History Project, November 15, 2017, http://hdl.handle.net/1961/dcplislandora:42742; Scallen, "The Bombs."

growing among Salvadoran youth. "They will get money some way. The government is pushing them to do something bad," believed Virginia Maldonado, an Adams-Morgan business owner and Salvadoran immigrant with documentation. A city survey of Salvadoran youth in 1987 found that 63 percent had "problems" with Black residents. "I don't think there will be riots, but if we drive these people into the choice of doing nothing at home or making it in the underworld, even the most law-abiding person when backed up against the wall, will resort to making a living the best way they can," stated Raul Yzaguirre, president of the National Council of La Raza, about the local circumstances facing Salvadoran youth.[104]

Moreover, immigration laws and social service policies created two levels of care within the Latino community: one for those with the financial or language abilities and documentation, and one system for undocumented Salvadorans. Blocked from seeking assistance from the federal government due to their undocumented status, Salvadorans turned to community organizations as vital interlocutors between themselves and the city. The rapid increase in demand for social assistance, in turn, put pressure on local service organizations that faced limited funding. The Spanish Catholic Center was a major advocate of Salvadoran human rights, both locally and abroad, and became an intermediary for the community.[105] Organizations such as Casa El Salvador and Central American Refugee Center (CARECEN), whose missions aimed to help refugees displaced by wars in El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Guatemala through legal services, were established during this time period as a response to growing community needs.[106] CARECEN, founded in 1981, also assisted Central Americans transition into the community,

[104] Mary Jordan, "Many Roads Blocked for Salvadorans," *The Washington Post*, December 17, 1987.
[105] "Alto a las deportaciones de salvadoreños," *El Latino*, No. 46, January 1981, from "El Latino 1977-1979," Periodicals, DCPL.
[106] "Joaquín Domínguez Parada, Director del Centro de Refugiados de Centroamérica CARECEN," *El Latino*, Vol. 5, No. 55, April 1981, from "El Latino 1977-1979," Periodicals, DCPL.

providing information about housing and employment, and advocating for their rights as District residents.[107] Andromeda, the only Latino-serving mental health clinic, reported an increase of Salvadorans seeking services who had experienced trauma and who felt discriminated against and defenseless against predatory landlords and employers. The clinic maintained that, as a result, domestic violence, alcoholism, and suicide rates were higher in this population. A survey by the Office on Latino Affairs showed that of the seventy-two Salvadoran youths polled, 92 percent identified alcoholism in their families, 77 percent frequently experienced domestic violence, and 75 percent experienced child abuse.[108] The Metropolitan Police Department also estimated that the majority of the 1,500 people who lived on the streets or vacant houses of Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant were Latinos. Adelante, an Adams-Morgan housing counseling and advocacy group, claimed that from 1985 to 1987 the demand for their services doubled to 3,000 individuals seeking service.

Housing assistance was a major problem for the ballooning population. Affordable housing options were limited and forced vulnerable populations into crowded and dilapidated housing or the streets. Landlords also took advantage of undocumented families, using the threat of deportation as a manipulation tactic. This fear also prevented Salvadorans from reporting crimes to police, whom they also distrusted. Rev. Kevin Farrell, director of the Spanish Catholic Center, a major service provider to the community, claimed: "If someone beats them up in the street, they are not going to call the police. It's a terrible situation. We have created a whole new subsociety, a subculture, an underground society that exists outside the laws."[109]

[107] Scallen, "The Bombs."
[108] The poll was taken in Adams-Morgan. Jordan, "Many Roads Blocked for Salvadorans."
[109] Jordan, "Many Roads Blocked for Salvadorans."

3.3 Conclusion

By the end of the decade, the Latino population in the District was on the precipice of a new era. Salvadoran migrations into the city provided a substantial boon for Puerto Rican leaders who pointed to the population size to justify their claims to funding and equitable representation. By 1985, Latinos in Washington, D.C. made up 10 percent of the total city population with almost half being Salvadoran. The Latino community not only expanded but was redefined along changing demographics. At the same time, Salvadoran presence contested and redrew the boundaries of what the Latino community encompassed and who was included. With the release of the Latino Community Agenda in 1985, the Ad Hoc Coalition formally included for the first time Salvadorans in their petitions to the city. The agencies and leaders who made up the group not only were responding to the local effects of federal immigration policies but were also attempting to get the city to work for everyone. The problems of language and cultural difference present in the 1970s were exacerbated by the limits of undocumented status.

Barry's policy declaration of noncooperation with INS in 1986 annoyed local INS officials but did not alleviate all threats of punitive immigration enforcement in the metropolitan area. The sanctuary movement grew in the 1980s, influencing local churches and institutions to become sanctuary spaces. However, undocumented migrants, especially Salvadorans, continued to fear immigration enforcement. INS officials argued that the city's policy on non-citizens "worked against the INS" and contributed the large influx of Salvadoran migrants into the city.[110] After the Regan administration and Congress passed IRCA in 1986, Barry responded by establishing an inter-agency task force on June 16, 1987 to analyze the effects of the new law on

[110] Joyce Price, "INS Says Barry's Sanctuary Policy Lured Salvadorans," *The Washington Times*, May 19, 1991.

the local population.[111] Despite new city policies for undocumented populations, sanctuary movement support, and INS's claim of a hostile environment, deportations continued being a reality. In 1989, for example, INS deported 108 refugees from Washington, D.C.[112]

Puerto Rican leaders had set up a model for political influence that made voter engagement a central component. However, Salvadoran refugees disrupted this model that leadership had based their success on because of their ineligibility to vote. Puerto Ricans took a political gamble in prioritizing support of Barry hoping that their allyship would result in support of the community and its causes. While initially their plan succeeded in securing Barry's assistance, they still had to confront a Black political majority that they perceived was unwilling to share power and resources. While the city made some progress to address community demands, many of the concerns and issues brought up by the Ad Hoc Coalition in the 1985 Latino Agenda deepened, setting the stage for the powder keg moment of the 1990s. Many of the same themes from the 1985 Latino Community Agenda appeared in the demands levied by leaders during the aftermath of the 1991 uprising, reinforcing these long-standing community concerns and showing the compounding effect of unmet needs and recognition. Barry's political problems peaked with his arrest for crack cocaine possession and use in January 1990, which eventually forced him to drop out of a fourth mayoral run. With a key ally gone from office, Latino leaders faced the uncertainty of Sharon Pratt's new mayoral administration. Internally, frustrations over the direction of the community and Puerto Rican leadership continued. Carlos Rosario died unexpectedly on February 1, 1987, closing an important chapter and opening the

[111] Mayor's Order 87-141, "Establishment of Inter-Agency Task Force on the Impact of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 on the District of Columbia," June 16, 1987, District of Columbia Municipal Regulations and District of Columbia Register, https://www.dcregs.dc.gov/Common/NoticeDetail.aspx?NoticeId=N0012149, accessed August 2, 2023.
[112] Price, "INS Says Barry's Sanctuary Policy Lured Salvadorans."

door for new directions in the community. Puerto Ricans, however, maintained a political advantage in the community because of their command of urban machine politics and citizenship until they were forced to recognize the Salvadoran plurality during the 1991 Mount Pleasant uprising.

Chapter 4 Policing Latinos: Community Grievances, Police Harassment and Violence in the Third and Fourth District, 1980–1993

As Puerto Rican and political leaders of the Latino community focused on securing representation and power in the District in the early 1980s, community members increasingly focused on their relationship with the police as a major issue. For recently arrived Central American migrants, their home-country experiences with law enforcement authorities influenced their perceptions of and experiences with District police. Tensions among the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) and Central American migrants, the working-class, renters, and young Salvadoran and Dominican youth affected everyday activities and quality of life in Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant. Police harassment and brutality were a growing concern for these community members and reflected patterns of increased police violence across the city. Street corners, parks, and church steps became sites of over-policing and surveillance. Moreover, pressure from middle-class homeowners and city and federal officials to rein in rising crime and drugs in these neighborhoods directed police attention and resources towards Latino youth and in the process criminalized their behaviors.

Latino residents were part of a larger tradition of activism against police brutality in the District. From the civil rights era onward, Black residents of the District organized to pressure the local and federal government to address their concerns over police misconduct.[1] As early as

[1] For some histories of policing and anti-police activism in D.C's African American community see: Bell Julian Clement, ed. "Meeting the Moment," Special issue, *Washington History* 32, no. 1 & 2 (Fall 2020); John W. Hechinger, Sr., "Black and Blue: The D.C. City Council vs. Police Brutality, 1967-69," edited by Gavin Taylor, *Washington History* 11, no. 2 (Fall/Winter, 1999/ 2000): 4-23; Lauren Pearlman, *Democracy's Capital: Black*

1957, African Americans viewed the MPD and its mostly white police officers as an occupying force that maintained the color line in the city, protecting the white minority, property, and their control of public spaces. Marion Barry, who himself experienced police harassment and brutality during his early organizing days, called the MPD an "occupying army" before his foray into local government.[2] Even Sterling Tucker, a former director of the Urban League who President Johnson appointed as vice chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia in the years before the Home Rule Act, described the atmosphere in the District during the late 1960s: "To a lot of people in the black ghetto, it's like occupied territory—those who run it, control it, and make the decisions and the profits don't live there. The feeling…is that they are hemmed in and cornered, and the natural reaction is to fight back."[3]

Solving the issue of police brutality was a cornerstone of Black activism in the District. In 1957, the NAACP initiated a lawsuit against the MPD and its practice of discrimination in hiring and promotions; at that time, Black officers only made up 11 percent of the police force at a time when the Black residents surpassed 50 percent of the total population.[4] Black residents wanted a police department that reflected the city's demographics. By 1978 the MPD had finally become a majority-Black police force and had its first Black police chief, Burtell M. Jefferson.[5] Progressive organizers also wanted community control and oversight over the MPD's

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Political Power in Washington, D.C. 1960s–1970s (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2019); James Foreman Jr., *Locking Up Our Own: Crime and Punishment in Black America* (New York: Farrah, Straus and Giroux, 2017); Chris Myers Asch and George Derek Musgrove, *Chocolate City: A History of Race and Democracy in the Nation's Capital* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2017).

[2] "New Civil Rights Group Charges Police Brutality," *The Washington Post*, April 1, 1967; Chris Myers Asch and George Derek Musgrove, "Learning from Our Ancestors," in "Meeting the Moment," ed. Bell Julian Clement, special issue, *Washington History* 32, no. 1 & 2 (Fall 2020), 66.

[3] Hechinger, Sr., "Black and Blue," 11.

[4] Hechinger, Sr., "Black and Blue," 10; By the 1960 census, Black residents made up 53.9 percent of the total population. U.S. Bureau of the Census, *U.S. Censuses of Population and Housing: 1960. Census Tracts* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1962) https://www2.census.gov/prod2/decennial/documents/41953654v11ch05.pdf.

[5] Pearlman, *Democracy's Capital*, 237.

disciplinary enforcement. MPD often ignored citizen complaints against police officers and created a cycle of police retaliation and violence on the very communities, even as they demanded better treatment. The Black United Front, formed in 1968 to bring together various organizers in the city, became ardent advocates of community control of police activities in Black communities. After public pressure, the city council established a Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB) in 1980 to field complaints made against MPD officers.

As the war on crime and drugs ramped up nationally, the federal government used Washington, D.C. as a testing ground for more punitive law enforcement policies that directly affected the city's minority communities. Politicians imagined D.C. as a "national laboratory" for federal policies and appropriated the nation's capital as an example of the need for stronger crime legislation.[6] Each presidential administration used the nation's capital as an example of their tough-on-crime stance and policies on crime control, demonstrating a disregard for home rule when it related to law enforcement. Politicians from both sides of the isle blamed local government for the failure to contain the crime and drug problem and stepped in to establish showcase programs aiming to clean the streets.[7] As stated by historian Howard Gillette, Jr., "What federal authorities have provided in the way of programs for Washington most often has reflected their national goals for urban policy."[8]

After the passage of home rule in 1973, District politicians debated which path to take regarding concerns over crime and drugs, from the decriminalization of marijuana and drug

[6] Richard Nixon, "Remarks in New York City: 'Toward Freedom From Fear'," May 8, 1968, online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/326773; Vesla M. Weaver, "Frontlash: Race and the Development of Punitive Crime Policy," *Studies in American Political Development* 21, no. 2 (Fall 2007): 230-265.
[7] Asch and Musgrove, *Chocolate City*; Foreman Jr., *Locking Up Our Own*; Pearlman, *Democracy's Capital*; Jaffe and Sherwood, *Dream City*.
[8] Howard Gillette, Jr., *Between Justice and Beauty: Race, Planning, and the Failure of Urban Policy in Washington, D.C.* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), xi.

treatments to imposing harsher criminal sentences.[9] Politicians and D.C. residents questioned the role of police at a time when perceptions of rising crime, particularly homicides attributed to the growth of drug markets, propelled the city as the "murder capital" by 1989, surpassing Detroit.[10] City council officials and Mayor Barry's administration responded to concerned residents' demands and congressional pressures by enacting harsher drug sentencing laws.[11] According to legal scholar James Forman, Jr., local politicians and Black leaders were not immune to law-and-order rhetoric that had grown in strength since the Nixon administration. Initial progressive ideas of drug decriminalization, treatment, and changes to the sentencing structure gave way to more punitive law-and-order policies trending across the nation. With approval and funding from Congress, the city council implemented tougher criminal laws and policing tactics.[12] By centering the overbearing role of Congress to control local politics and the president's retention of emergency power over local police, historian Lauren Pearlman contextualizes the punitive turn by Black officials, such as Marion Barry, towards harsher crime policies in ways that Forman does not. Congress had always maintained jurisdictions over the city's criminal justice system and thus ultimately restrained more progressive reform attempts demanded by residents. The city council could not change the local criminal code without Congressional approval, the president maintained overriding power over the MPD, and all local judges were appointed by the president and approved by the Senate.[13] Federal oversight thus created and maintained the structural bones of the carceral state in the District.

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[9] Minutes: Summit of Elected Officials, Government of the District of Columbia, February 6, 1989, Folder 6, Box 48, Subseries 2, Series 2, Winter Papers, GWU.
[10] Debbie M. Price, "'Murder Capital' Label has Long Stalked D.C.," *The Washington Post*, April 4, 1989.
[11] Foreman Jr., *Locking Up Our Own*.
[12] Foreman Jr., *Locking Up Our Own*; Michael Javen Fortner emphasizes the role of working-class and middle-class Black communities in New York in supporting punitive policies that ushered mass incarceration. Michael Javen Fortner, *Black Silent Majority: The Rockefeller Drug Laws and the Politics of Punishment* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015).
[13] Pearlman, *Democracy's Capital*.

The federal government's solution to crime and drug problems in the District was to push more money for more police rather than providing funds to tackle root causes. President Lyndon B. Johnson recommended an addition of 1,000 police after the 1968 rebellion against Martin Luther King's assassination, increasing the force's total to 4,100. After President Richard Nixon nicknamed D.C. the nation's "Crime Capital" during his presidential campaign, he mandated an addition of 1,000 police in the MPD by 1970 even though the city already had more police per capita than other cities. This increase amounted to an addition of $20 million to the city's budget.[14] While the District experienced economic trouble and a budget crisis in the 1980s that resulted in the cutting of funding for social service and community programs, Congress continued to provide increase funding for the MPD. Beginning in 1982, Congress directed the city to employ and maintain a minimum of 3,880 police officers. Congress also imposed practices such as community policing and mandated police hiring waves to respond to perceived rising crime in the nation's capital. Congress's intervention into the operation of the MPD had deadly consequences as the rapid expansion of a rookie force with minimal training resulted in an unprecedented rise in police violence with 640 officer-involved shootings and 85 civilian killings between 1990 and 1998.[15]

Policing practices on the streets of Washington, D.C. followed national trends towards community-policing and "broken windows" theory. The broken windows theory of policing, popularized in the 1982 *Atlantic* article by George L. Kelling and James Q. Wilson, contended that small infractions and visual cues of disorder—such as a broken window—produced more violent crime. In these cases, residents tasked police with maintaining the ecosystem of the

[14] The new addition brought the total police force up to 5,100. Hechinger, Sr., "Black and Blue."
[15] Jeff Leen, Jo Craven, David Jackson and Sari Horwitz, "D.C. Police Lead Nation in Shootings," *The Washington Post*, November 15, 1998.

neighborhood by using their discretionary powers to control potentially disorderly people and behavior. This type of policing was less about the threat of crime itself, and more about responding to a group's anxieties about the potential for crime. In these cases, police had the power to determine what constituted disorderly conduct and to self-regulate their enforcement of the law.[16] These were issues across the city and in predominantly Black wards, and residents from all classes and demographics called on the city government to clean up the streets and stem the tide of crime and drugs in the city.

While homeowners and middle-class residents of Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant were concerned about the incursion of crime and drugs in these neighborhoods, undocumented groups, especially Salvadorans, had to balance safety concerns with worries of police brutality, fears of MDP's potential collaboration with Immigration and Naturalization Services, and the possibility of deportation.[17] In addition to Mayor Barry's 1984 memorandum and 1986 executive order directing city agencies and officials to refrain from inquiring about legal status for the purposes of establishing benefit services, the MPD issued its own directive for how to treat undocumented populations. MPD General Order 308.12, in place before the passage of IRCA in 1986, stated that "members shall not question persons about their residency status in this country." The exception to the order was if police were investigating a crime "and an element of that crime [was] the illegality of a person's presence in the United States" or if investigating a

[16] George L. Kelling and James Q. Wilson, "Broken Windows: The Police and Neighborhood Safety," *The Atlantic*, March 1982, https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1982/03/broken-windows/304465/. For histories that demonstrate the application of broken windows policing practices see: Bernard E. Harcourt, *Illusion of Order: The False Promise of Broken Windows Policing* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005); Alex S. Vitale, *City of Disorder: How the Quality of Life Campaign Transformed New York Politics* (New York: New York University Press, 2009); Mason B. Williams, "How the Rockefeller Laws Hit the Streets: Drug Policing and the Politics of State Competence in New York City, 1973–1989," *Modern American History* 4, no.1 (2021): 67-94; Themis Chronopoulos, "The Making of the Orderly City: New York since the 1980s," *Journal of Urban History* 46, no. 5 (2020): 1085–1116; Anne Gray Fischer, *The Streets Belong to Us: Sex, Race, and Police Power from Segregation to Gentrification* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2022).
[17] Scallen, "The Bombs," 197.

violation of Section 274 of the Immigration and Naturalization Act, the smuggling or harboring of an illegal alien.[18]

Even though Barry and MPD designed these policies to alleviate fear of immigration enforcement and potential deportation, the policies did not outright guarantee that the city or law enforcement would never work with INS officials. Because of the legal gray areas, community leaders and representatives of national and local refugee assistance organizations continued to push the administrations to further clarify their stance to not assist or work with INS in any capacity.[19] Central Americans and other undocumented migrants mistrusted law enforcement and maintained the perception that police officers could report them to INS. Some members of these groups reported to the Office on Latino Affairs that police officers were violating General Order 308.12, stopping residents on the street and asking for documentation and legal status. These rumors exacerbated migrants' heightened fears of deportation after the passage of IRCA in 1986.[20] Pedro Avilés connected fears of immigration enforcement and police brutality for contributing to the community's mistrust of police. "The Latino fear is legitimate given the many incidents of police brutality against Latinos and the threats to refer the Latino to the INS made by some members of the police."[21] As a result of these anxieties, many Salvadoran migrants avoided reporting their experiences with crime to law enforcement.[22]

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[18] The Mayor's Office on Latino Affairs, "Summary: Progress by District Government Agencies in Improving the Delivery of Services to Latino Residents of the District of Columbia," April 30, 1993, in United States House of Representatives, Committee on Appropriations, *Hearings before the Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations on the District of Columbia Appropriations for 1995*, 103rd Congress, 2nd Session (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1994), 2708-2709.
[19] Arlene F. Gillespie, "Issues Related to the Impact of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 on the District of Columbia," June 1987, Office of Latino Affairs 1979, Vertical Files, DCPL, 6; Task Force, *The Latino Blueprint*, 14-15; USCCR, *The Mount Pleasant Report*.
[20] Arlene F. Gillespie, "Issues Related to the Impact of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 on the District of Columbia," June 1987, Office of Latino Affairs 1979, Vertical Files, DCPL, 6.
[21] USCCR, *The Mount Pleasant Report*, 18.
[22] Scallen, "The Bombs," 197.

Broken windows policing went hand-in-hand with gentrification.[23] New residents who initially moved into neighborhoods for more affordable housing options or to be a part of a diverse community then asked for more police presence to enforce order. Gentrifiers and police both operated to tackle the broken windows of the neighborhood for crime prevention. As a result of increased police presence, interactions between Salvadoran and Dominican youth and police became more frequent as they responded to demands by anxious gentrifiers. This pattern of thinking and law enforcement was evident in the 1980s in Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant. These neighborhoods had been lauded by the media and residents as "melting pot" communities in the late 1960s and 1970s that gave individuals the opportunity to live in a racially and culturally mixed neighborhood. However, as the number of white families attracted by promising housing stocks increased by 1975, the racial composition of the neighborhoods changed.[24] Middle-class white, Black, and Latino residents pushed for the cleaning of streets and greater police presence to respond to concerns over rising crime and drugs. These groups saw Latino youth, and in particular males, as the source of disorder in the neighborhoods who had the potential of committing more crime. For them and police, Central Americans and migrants socializing in public spaces, with displays of public drinking and smoking, was a visible sign of disorder and deviant behavior.

Congress, responding to national trends and concerns, forced city officials to implement the practice of community policing in the District to make the city a showcase for these types of policies. Community policing expanded police power by embedding officers in already heavily

[23] In a contemporary analysis of Washington, D.C., scholars found that MPD officers engaged in broken windows policing practices in neighborhoods showing early signs of gentrification. Stop and frisk occurred more frequently and targeted Black residents at higher rates. Tanya Golash-Boza, Hyunsi Oh and Carmen Salazar, "Broken Windows and Order-Maintenance Policing in Gentrifying Washington, D.C.," *Policing and Society* 33, no. 2 (June 2022): 205-221.

[24] "Adams-Morgan/Mount Pleasant: A Neighborhood Analysis Based Upon Census Data," n.d. [1977], Folder 18, Box 131, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU, 3–5.

policed neighborhoods under the pretense of more community control and engagement with the police.[25] The MPD's application of community policing practices in the Latino neighborhoods of Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant, located in the Third and Fourth police districts, reveals the inherent problem with this type of policing. Who is the community that police are designed to serve? The increase of police activity and community-style policing in these neighborhoods did not alleviate criminal activity. Instead, it caused more Latino distrust and complaints against the police. White, Latino, and Black middle-class residents and city officials wanted to increase police presence on the streets to curb everyday criminal activities, from public drinking to open-air drug markets, and to enforce their ideas of respectable public behaviors.

For Puerto Rican leaders and middle-class Latino residents, increasing the number of bilingual and Latino police officers in the MPD was also an important step to solving some problems.[26] They hoped that more culturally aware and bilingual officers would know how to interact with Latinos and prevent instances of misunderstanding that could lead to harassment and brutality. These leaders believed that the visibility of police officers who also had direct connections to the community would prevent small level crimes and foster better police-community relations. In practice, however, these Spanish-speaking officers still harassed and arrested Latino youth and men, using their discretionary powers to maintain order on the streets. According to Lori Kaplan, director of LAYC, police were particularly hostile to Central

[25] For more on community policing see: Luis Daniel Gascón and Aaron Roussell, *The Limits of Community Policing: Civilian Power and Police Accountability in Black and Brown Los Angeles* (New York: New York University Press, 2019); Michael K. Brown, *Working the Street: Police Discretion and the Dilemmas of Reform*, revised edition (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1988). For a comprehensive account of the history of policing see: Simon Balto and Max Felker-Kantor, "Police and Crime in the American City, 1800-2020," *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of American History* May 18, 2022, accessed June 1, 2023, https://oxfordre.com/americanhistory/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780199329175.001.0001/acrefore-9780199329175-e-56.

[26] Forman also describes how the same logic applied for Black political and community leaders. See: Forman Jr., *Locking Up Our Own*.

Americans. “Latinos generally try to steer clear of the police,” state Kaplan. “The police also have a reputation for not really respecting the Central American community.”[27]

Community policing led to the surveillance and over-policing of Central Americans in Mount Pleasant and Adams-Morgan. The city and MPD responded to community demands for better police protection by establishing police community centers, the first in Mount Pleasant in the 1970s and a second in Adams-Morgan in the 1980s. These centers and the officers who served them held discretionary powers beyond traditional policing, often assisting in related social services and offering translation assistance. Their physical presence on foot patrols meant that they were directly interacting with the Latino migrants, which also meant that they were patrolling everyday activities and interactions in public spaces. Increased police presence indicated that recreational activities in parks that were usually acceptable were constantly under police surveillance. Once gentrification took hold of these neighborhoods in the 1980s, homeowners pressured police officers to enforce the law and their respectability standards. While bilingual officers could better serve the Latino community, they could also better police and arrest them.

4.1 Policing Latino Youth

As the Latino population grew in the District during the 1980s, their presence also impacted the physical and social spaces of the neighborhood. Latino businesses concentrated on Columbia Road and Mount Pleasant Street, attracted fellow customers and activities. The streets and green spaces in the neighborhoods—notably the parks on the corner of 17th and Lamont Street in Mount Pleasant and the corner of Columbia Road and Euclid Street in Adams-

[27] USCCR, *The Mount Pleasant Report*, 18.

Morgan— were populated with myriad Latino cultural expressions, mostly Salvadoran. Grocery stores, restaurants, and community organizations lines these main streets, creating an atmosphere that reflected the different nationalities of the social group. Historian A. K. Sandoval-Strausz labels this process as the "Latinization" of public spaces. Sandoval-Strausz argues that "plazas have long been vital aspects of Hispanic urbanism as the places where people have manifested themselves as solidary communities through fiestas and everyday sociability."[28] In a scene that was far too common, Dominican and Salvadoran youths would gather on the steps of the First Church of Christ, Scientist located at the corner of Columbia Road and Euclid Street (see Figure 4.1). These youth would gather there after school or after an unsuccessful day of job hunting to play cards, jam with their instruments, or drink alcohol and smoke marijuana.

[28] A.K. Sandoval-Strausz argues that historians should consider how increases in Latino populations contribute to the reversal of white flight trends and how Latino communities have led the way in revitalization of communities. See A. K. Sandoval-Strausz, *Barrio America: How Latino Immigrants Saved the American City* (New York: Basic Books, 2019); A.K. Sandoval-Strausz "Latino Landscapes: Postwar Cities and the Transnational Origins of a New Urban America," *The Journal of American History*, December 2014, 805, 816; Johana Londoño, *Abstract Barrios: The Crises of Latinx Visibility in Cities*.Durham: Duke University Press, 2020.

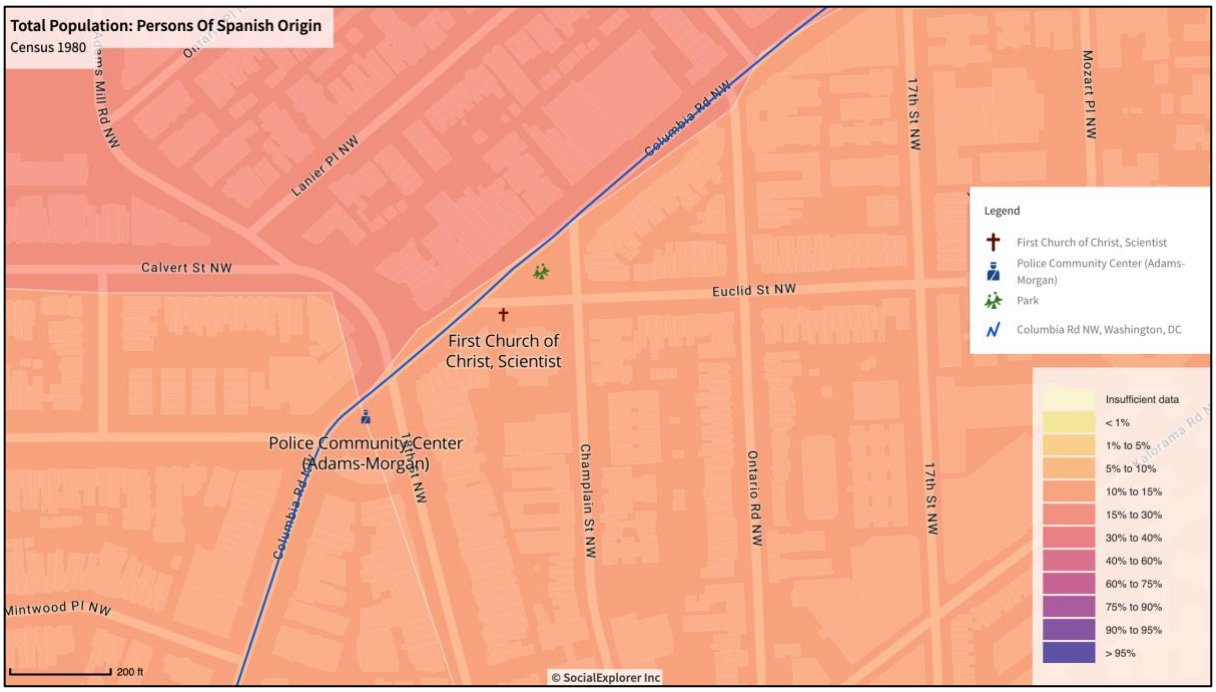


Figure 4.1 Map of Adam-Morgan (1980). The map highlights the close proximity along Columbia Road between the Police Community Center and the park and church steps where Latino youth would socialize. As a result of this proximity, the areas near the park and church became spaces where police criminalized Salvadoran and other Latino youth. The gradient shading corresponds to the percentage of persons of Spanish Origin. Source: Map created by author using Social Explorer.

The corner in Adams-Morgan was known by Latino locals as a "social hub" and as an alleged drug open-air drug market by police. White and Black residents in Mount Pleasant who focused on and complained about the activities, such as public drinking, of Central Americans, immigrant men, and day-laborers missed other recreational aspects of these gatherings such as socializing, playing checkers, and playing music. Additionally, they neglected that these groups of people were gathering on the streets of Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant because it was one of the few spaces they could find. Housing options for Central American migrants were limited, often crowded and dilapidated, while afterschool spaces for Latino youth were limited.[29] Recreational gatherings among Central American youth were surveilled by newer, white middle-

[29] Ad Hoc Coalition for a Latino Community Agenda, "Washington, D.C.'s Latino Community Agenda," June 7, 1985, Folder 17, Box 81, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU, 20-23.

class neighbors at early stages of gentrification who recruited police to enforce their views of appropriate behavior and safe streets. These calls by residents to enforce the law increased the number of police-youth interactions and resulted in the rise of discretionary arrests and the potential for police brutality. In sharp contrast, lower-income Latinos and other minorities of these neighborhoods maintained their right to be in the city and in public spaces.[30]

Central American and Dominican youth were determined to continue gathering in what they called "*el triángulo*" to assert their right to the public space and push back against police harassment.[31] These youth felt a sense of ownership for the neighborhood and their recreational activities were a sign of resistance against neighborhood change. For instance, a group of about twenty to twenty-five youth, mostly Dominican, gathered on the church steps and were undeterred by police, whom they often grew to know. Police officers would warn them to move and sometimes arrested them for disorderly conduct if they were ignored. Because of the consistency of harassment and arrests, these youth would come prepared with $10 to bail themselves out of jail. Some youths were even ready to defend their corner through force. "This is our neighborhood. We grew up here and now they want to kick us out. Well, they gonna have to kill us first," avowed an unnamed Dominican youth.[32] Police officers, who oftentimes were either Black or did not speak Spanish, enforced the law in the area and became part of these youths' daily activity. As a result, Latino youth grew to resent Black officers who antagonized them.

[30] Olivia Cadaval, "About *La Esquina*/ The Corner," *Washington History* 31, no. 1/2 (Fall 2019): 18-22; Gabriella Gahlia Modan, *Turf Wars: Discourse, Diversity, and the Politics of Place* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2007)
[31] Judith Valente, "Latin Beat: Tensions Rising on Columbia Road," *The Washington Post*, September 22, 1980.
[32] Valente, "Latin Beat."

Gatherings on street corners were cultural expressions as well as acts of resistance. Other Latino residents of Adams-Morgan sided with the youth and reflected their sentiments about the changing neighborhood. "Why the police didn't worry about the community three years ago? The [triangle] was exactly as it is today, people playing congas and drinking *cerveza* [beer] until 3 a.m.," argued an unidentified Latino leader. They added: "Nobody said anything then, I think the question is, who is behind this? Who wants to change our community?"[33] Latino residents believed white homeowners were responsible for shifting community dynamics as early as 1970. Class and racial differences underscored forces such as gentrification. In 1970, the areas had higher poverty rates, 17 percent, than the rate in the whole District, 13 percent.[34] A renter in Mount Pleasant, fearing potential urban renewal, stated: "Now that it had become desirable for whites to live in the city again after the civil disturbances, they're coming back in and taking over."[35] Some Latino residents sympathized with the youth and personally understood the compounding stress of unemployment. In 1980 the Latino unemployment rate was 16 percent, double the rate of unemployment across the city. A study conducted by the Office on Latino Affairs in 1980 found that Latinos in Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant had the highest rates of unemployment, poorer housing, and earned less than their Black and white counterparts.[36] By 1989, one in five Latinos lived in poverty (20.4 percent) compared to the city's 12.2 percent and the median household income for Latinos was $26,627 compared to the overall city median of $30,727.[37]

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[33] Valente, "Latin Beat."
[34] "Adams-Morgan/Mount Pleasant: A Neighborhood Analysis Based Upon Census Data," n.d. [1977], Folder 18, Box 131, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU, 11.
[35] Dorothy Gilliam, "Mount Pleasant: The Mix-and-Match Suburb," *The Washington Post,* September 18, 1976.
[36] Donnel Nunes, "Latinos Earn Least, Live in Worst Homes, Study Says," *The Washington Post*, April 22, 1980.
[37] Allan S. Noonan, "The Health of Hispanics in Washington, D.C.: Issues, Challenges and Opportunities," January 1998, Folder2, Box 27, Frank Smith, Jr. papers, Special Collections Research Center, Gelman Library, The George Washington University, Washington, D.C., 13 [hereinafter Smith Papers, GWU].

Central American community members both witnessed and experienced differing levels of police harassment and brutality in their neighborhoods, from verbal insults, intimidation, and threats to physical assault and shootings.[38] While the city worked alongside community organizations to address issues such as unemployment, housing, and juvenile delinquency, police-community relations wavered in the 1980s.[39] Jose "Jumbo" Sevilla, a community activist, argued: "If they [the police] just helped us instead of harassing us, (relations) would be a lot better… They think [the youths] are hardcore because they come here from downtown after looking for a job to have a beer, relax. You don't know what it's like to be unemployed."[40] Police perceived Latino youth as inherently suspicious in their recreational activities, such as acts of public drinking and drug use, arguing that they had the potential of spurring more crime. Restricting these behaviors was meant to protect and serve middle-class residents and homeowners and their opinions of respectable leisure activities.[41] Charlene Howard, a longtime resident and one of the few long-term African American homeowners in Mount Pleasant since the early 1960s, remembered repeated interactions between Latinos and police:

> I wouldn't say that they were hassling them about loitering and, well, some people had a problem with them hanging out in front of their businesses.…But a lot of people had a problem with that and the police would come out and, 'Get, move, get out. You can't

[38] USCCR, *The Mount Pleasant Report*,18 & 20-31.
[39] The need for job training programs and job placement assistance was identified as a top need of the Latino community in a report by United Way in 1987. The Social Planning Committee, District of Columbia United Way, *Needs Assessment of the Hispanic Community in the District of Columbia*, June 1987, Box 16, Part 2: Records of the Sharon Pratt Kelly Administration, Executive Office of the Mayor: Office of the Secretary of the District, DCA-05-0004, District of Columbia Archives, Washington, D.C. [hereinafter Kelly Administration, DC Archives].
[40] Valente, "Latin Beat."
[41] Elizabeth Hinton has shown how the formation and reinforcement of police and politicians' beliefs that Black youths were automatically "pre-delinquents." Urban schools, public housing, and social welfare programs with federal funding requiring police-community collaboration became places where Black youths were singled out and targeted as future criminals needing state intervention. In the case of Latino youth in the District, their activities also had the potential to not only lead to criminal activity, but to become the foundation for subversive activity. Elizabeth Hinton, "Creating Crime: The Rise and Impact of National Juvenile Delinquency Programs in Black Urban Neighborhoods," *Journal of Urban History,* 41, no. 5 (September 2015): 808-824; Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime: The Making of Mass Incarceration in America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2016).

> stand here, you can't stand there. No loitering and no making noise.' I just think that there was, in general, just…not a good relationship.[42]

Suann Hecht, who worked actively with Latino youths, also witnessed and herself experienced police harassment. "The police did not like me, because I was on the side of the youth. I did not have a good time with them in the streets, because I was in the streets a lot, mainly on Columbia Road and 14th and Park where a lot of the drugs and the kids were hanging out."[43] Hecht, a social worker and community activist, moved to Mount Pleasant from New York City in 1972 and joined the eclectic political activist community in the area. Hecht participated in anti-Vietnam and Women's Movement organizing. After briefly leaving D.C., Hecht returned to the city and eventually joined the Latin American Youth Center in 1988 as the social service director, gaining the nickname "Mama Suann."

In 1979, MPD opened a Police Community Center on 18th Street Northwest at the corner of Columbia Road in Adams-Morgan in response to Latino demands for more Spanish-speaking officers and to act in a public relations role to mend relations with the Latino community. The center was an early iteration of community policing. According to Officer Arturo Silvestre—who was first recruited to work with the Latino community in Mount Pleasant by the Chief of Police because he was a native-Spanish speaker—the Police Community Center operated differently than other police stations in the city. Officer Silvestre described the work of officers there as "undefined." The center's public relations focus allowed the officers who worked there to use discretionary power to operate in a variety of modes, from providing community assistance for everyday needs, referrals to community service agencies, and how they enforced the law.[44]

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[42] Charlene Howard Interview, Mount Pleasant Riot Oral History Project, October 31, 2017, http://hdl.handle.net/1961/dcplislandora:42737.
[43] Suann Hecht Interview, Mount Pleasant Oral History Project, January 26, 2018, http://hdl.handle.net/1961/dcplislandora:42907.
[44] "Policías Bilingües Cuidan la Comunidad," *El Latino*, February 5-12, 1979, from "El Latino 1977-1979," Periodicals, DCPL.

Originally from Panama, Officer Silvestre witnessed firsthand the tense environment between Latinos and police and helped open the Center with support of Latino leaders. *El Latino* newspaper profiled Silvestre as the community's police officer who was of the people and primarily served their interests. Officer Silvestre believed the drug problem was the most serious issue in the Latino community, and that it was exacerbated by youth unemployment.[45] "That's the underground that's harder to see. They don't look like derelicts, you don't see them panhandling. But what are they doing at 11:30 in the morning? They are not at school, they're not working. Some of them walk around all day long," stated Officer Silvestre.[46] Latino leaders justified the demand for more Spanish-speaking officers to overcome language and cultural differences. However, Latino youth who could communicate with Latino officers were not exempt from their harsh scrutiny.

Latino officers, such as Silvestre, also took part in the criminalization of Latino youth. Along with the freedom to work with the community in varied capacities, officers assigned to the Police Community Center also had expansive discretionary powers to administer the law as they saw fit. These officers took part in maintenance policing, an outgrowth of the implementation of community policing. In many cases, officers used disorderly conduct as the justification for arrests and citations. Police officers, mostly native or bilingual Spanish speakers, felt a responsibility to help the Latino community.[47] By 1980, MPD headquarters assigned fourteen Latino and Spanish-speaking officers to patrol the streets and respond to the disorderly conduct complaints made by residents. In turn, these youth, who had a general adversarial response to

[45] Norman Joslyn, "La Policía en la Comunidad," *El Latino*, No. 58, September 1982, from "El Latino 1977-1979," Periodicals, DCPL.
[46] Mary Jordan, "Many Roads Blocked for Salvadorans," *The Washington Post*, December 17, 1987.
[47] Luis Aguilar Jr., "On the Beat: Community Relations in Adams-Morgan Improved by Spanish-Speaking Officer," *The Washington Post*, June 7, 1984. Silvester Arturo Interview, Latino Youth Community History Project Oral History, April 6, 1982, http://hdl.handle.net/1961/dcplislandora:72211.

police, levied most of their complaints about Latino officers. As a result, Latino residents and youth felt unfairly targeted by police. "You wouldn't do that to the blacks or whites on 14th Street. I don't know why you comin' around here. We don't bother nobody. But you always botherin' us," claimed a Dominican youth.[48]

Rising tensions between Latino youth and police led to a meeting between the two parties to mediate the problem and to come up with some sort of resolution.[49] Police officers convened the meeting at the Police Community Center during the last week of September 1980. The meeting highlighted conflicts in the community between police and Latino residents and the effects of community policing that resulted in the over-policing of their activities. The police officers of the Third District stipulated that Latino youth needed to stop smoking marijuana and drinking along Columbia Road or face arrests. "Jumbo" Sevilla represented the youth, whose main demands were a recreation center in Adams-Morgan and more jobs. Moreover, Sevilla argued that the youth felt harassed and targeted by the police and thus resented the police. "What do we do on that corner? Do we snatch pocketbooks? No. We might bull—, drink a little. It's a relaxation thing," claimed Sevilla. Officer Ralph E. Harmon, originally from Panama, conceded with Sevilla that there were "no serious crime problems" beyond the drinking and drug use.[50] However, officers argued that the public displays of smoking and drinking, not the music playing and gatherings, were what attracted attention from residents and invited arrests. "You look at the 14th and T (streets NW) and you see all those guys out there drinking. But when they see the police coming, they take the beer can and hide it. They use discretion. But you guys will say, 'Hey, Barreto, hey man,' and hold the can up in front of me. That's kind of disrespecting to an

[48] Valente, "Latin Beat."
[49] Luis Daniel Gascón and Aaron Roussell, *The Limits of Community Policing: Civilian Power and Police Accountability in Black and Brown Los Angeles* (New York: New York University Press, 2019).
[50] Judith Valente, "Hispanic Youths and Police Seek Accord," *The Washington Post*, October 2, 1980.

officer," stated Officer Wilson Barreto, assigned to the Police Community Center.[51] Officer Barreto's statement brings to the surface the contradictions of community policing. Although the Latino youth recognized and personally knew the officers who patrolled the area, an intended goal of community policing, this personal relationship did not prevent their arrests. At the end of the day the same officers were there to enforce the law. Latino youth were not immune from the retaliatory arrests of Latino police officers.

At the root of the policing of Central American and Dominican youth was the demand by middle-class residents for acceptable use of public spaces. Police officers assigned to the area acknowledged that their patrolling of these youth was a result of residents demanding stricter enforcement of the law. Officer Rufino Fisher, also assigned to the community center, plainly stated: "If we get a complaint, when we get up there, we have to do something. If we don't, we're going to be challenged." Officers were concerned with white and homeowner pushback for not enforcing disorderly conduct or open-drug use. More significantly, police officers were concerned about the potential rising threat of youth activity. "If you have these guys drinking in public and breaking the law, you're creating an anti-Establishment group," stated Officer Barreto.[52] Officer Barreto's statement reveals an underlying anxiety about potential subversive actions of immigrant youth communities and the need for police to contain the threat.

Third District police officers ignored the complaints from Latino youth and doubled down on increasing the number of officers patrolling Adams-Morgan. Deputy Chief Rodwell Catoe of the Third District announced he planned to add two new officers in the community and possibly more Spanish-speaking officers. Instead of creating a community center as requested by Latino youth, Deputy Chief Catoe moved to expand the police center on 18th Street. Puerto Rican

[51] Valente, "Hispanic Youths."
[52] Valente, "Hispanic Youths."

and other community leaders supported the expansion, which included more Spanish-speaking officers, as it reinforced their bottom line of increasing language and cultural awareness in the city. These political managers supported targeted hirings of more Latinos into the MPD (discussed below). Attendees at the police-youth meeting in 1980 at the Police Community Center recommended a follow-up meeting that included representatives from the Department of Employment Services and Metro to explore a possible jobs program. However, Garry Garber, a Mexican American who was a well-recognized youth mentor and Recreation Department coordinator for the Adams-Morgan area, warned that recent budget cutbacks and the firing of the only Latino recreation staff in Adams-Morgan signaled that the youth's demands would be difficult to attain.[53] Citywide budget constraints in 1980 set the stage for funding cuts across city agencies, but hurt already struggling Latino programs and service organizations.

The city and federal government had a long tradition of attempts to create jobs programs geared at addressing juvenile unemployment and delinquency. The Latin American Youth Center (LAYC), the only local organization with a mission centered on Latino youth and families, focused on issues of unemployment and juvenile delinquency in their community.[54] In conjunction with the D.C. Department of Human Services, LAYC worked on establishing a model program in 1985 to support social service needs in partnership with the D.C. Department of Employment Services Innovative Programs.[55] LAYC played a central role in the community, especially supporting youth mentoring and providing a safe gathering space. In addition, the center provided counseling and mental health services to recent migrants and mediated turf wars

[53] Valente, "Hispanic Youth."
[54] Arturo Griffiths Interview, Mount Pleasant Riot Oral History Project, January 4, 2018, http://hdl.handle.net/1961/dcplislandora:42736.
[55] Cecile C. Harrigan, Centro de Juventud Latinoamericana, December 17, 1984, Folder 17, Box 81, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU; *The Latin American Youth Center* pamphlet, n.d., Folder 15, Box 81, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU.

in the surrounding neighborhoods.[56] During the 1980s, LAYC faced challenges as funding was dependent on city and federal grants, such as the National Endowment for the Humanities.[57] In 1989, the Department of Human Services (DHS) announced that they would end their $300,000 contract with LAYC. Director Lori Kaplan protested the move and argued that DHS had a responsibility to continue services since LAYC was their only Latino-focused program.[58] Kaplan pointed out the hypocrisy of the city administration for cutting funds to the very programs that are much needed.

> One of the best ways to prevent homicides in the District of Columbia is to develop youth recreation, education, entertainment, and employment programs that are well staffed and supervised. This is exactly what the LAYC has been successfully doing. Therefore it continues to be impossible to understand the logic behind the Mayor's decision to cut the Center's funding.[59]

LAYC provided a safe gathering space for youths in the community and worked to get them off the streets to prevent getting into trouble and negative influences. The organization served as a training ground out of which key Latino leaders emerged.[60]

4.2 Policing Gentrification

Gentrification by mostly white homeowners who demanded cleaner streets and greater intervention against public drinking associated with immigrants contributed to mounting police

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[56] Lori M. Kaplan to Honorable Frank Smith, Jr., June 23, 1987, Folder 15, Box 81, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU; Arturo Griffiths Interview, Mount Pleasant Riot Oral History Project, January 4, 2018, http://hdl.handle.net/1961/dcplislandora:42736.

[57] Lisa Wheaton to The Honorable David Clarke, November 21, 1983, Folder 17, Box 81, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU.

[58] Latin American Youth Center, "Press Release," January 20, 1989, Folder 38, Box 73, Subseries 1, Series 4, Winter Papers, GWU; Verónica Villafañe, "Centro Latino se Desmorona," *El Latino*, February 10, 1989, from "El Latino 1989-01-19789-06," Periodicals, DCPL.

[59] Lori M. Kaplan to The Honorable H.R. Crawford, March 6, 1989, Folder 15, Box 81, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU; Marlene V. Urbina to The Honorable H. R. Crawford, August 21, 1989, Folder 17, Box 43, Subseries 3, Series 2, Winter Papers, GWU.

[60] For example, Pedro Aviles, who became the director of the D.C. Latino Civil Rights Task Force after the Mount Pleasant Uprising in 1991 came out of LAYC.

presence in predominantly Latino areas and the increase in disorderly conduct charges.[61] Latinos, the majority of whom were Central American by 1985, were predominantly renters in Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant. Homeowners, a major factor in the gentrification of these neighborhoods, were mainly white and Black middle-class residents.[62] Although this pattern existed across the city and not just in the Latino neighborhoods, Puerto Rican leaders made the issue of language and cultural differences a focus of the divide between newcomer white and middle-class residents and Latinos. The application of community policing in these instances called into question who the community in these cases was. White homeowners and Latino renters had conflicting ideas over how police should operate in the city and who and what they should protect. In practice, police worked to tamp down deviant behavior by minority youth in order to prevent crime, thus defending the rights of middle-class property owners.

Public spaces, and in particular the park on the corner of 17th and Lamont Street, were a main site of concern for middle-class homeowners who witnessed the gathering of Latino men and recreational drinking. These residents were expressing what is known as broken windows policing.[63] The broken windows theory asserts that visual signs of disorder—in the Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant case public drinking, littering, and loitering on the streets—led to more serious crimes. Public "fear of crime" led residents to push for greater police action to maintain or restore a "sense of safety" and "eradicating the visual cues of disorder."[64] Homeowners demanded cleaner streets and extra interventions against public drinking associated

[61] Dina Lopez and Adelina Reyes-Gavilan, "Mount Pleasant: Get Rid of that 'Obnoxious' Behavior Too," *The Washington Post*, August 31, 1989; Gabriella Gahlia Modan, *Turf Wars: Discourse, Diversity, and the Politics of Place* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2007).
[62] Testimony of Leslye E. Orloff, on behalf of the Commission on Latino Community Development and AYUDA, Inc., District of Columbia Zoning Commission, May 11, 1989, Folder 38, Box 73, Subseries 1, Series 4, Winter Papers, GWU.
[63] Kelling and Wilson, "Broken Windows." Ansfield, "The Broken Windows of the Bronx."
[64] Paul Farhi, "Living on Edge in Mount Pleasant: D.C. Neighborhood's Delicate Racial Balance is Threatened," *The Washington Post*, October 7, 1990.

with Latino immigrants.[65] Additionally, these new homeowners were concerned that open-drug markets in the neighborhood and visible users would lead to "another neighborhood [going] down the drain," referencing the devastating effects of crack in other parts of the city.[66]

The arrival of crack cocaine in the District in the mid-1980s and the increase of drug-related violence ramped up residents' concerns and critique of local government responses. Reagan-era budget cuts and draconian drug policies exacerbated the crack epidemic in the city, influencing a rise of underground and open-air drug markets.[67] The Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1986, authored by Democrats in Congress, enshrined President Reagan's punitive stance on drugs. The new law increased federal funding for drug enforcement, established the 100-to-1 disparity for crack versus powder cocaine sentencing, and created new minimum sentencing guidelines for drug-related crimes. These new mandatory-minimum guidelines coupled with law enforcement's focus on low-level street crimes exacerbated mass incarceration in minority communities.[68] In the District, crack overtook heroine on the streets as the drug of choice in the 1980s and had devastating effects on minority and poor communities, particularly Black residents. Under pressure to address the growing drug problem in the city, Barry and Police Chief Maurice T. Turner, Jr. launched "Operation Clean Sweep" in 1986. The new police

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[65] Headlines such as the *Post*'s "For D.C.'s Hispanic Alcoholics, Treatment is a Foreign Concept," further reinforced cultural stereotypes. Farhi, "Living on Edge."

[66] Dina Lopez and Adelina Reyes-Gavilan, "Mount Pleasant: Get Rid of that 'Obnoxious' Behavior Too," *The Washington Post*, August 31, 1989.

[67] Asch and Musgrove, *Chocolate City*, 404-405; Foreman Jr., *Locking Up Our Own*; Jaffe and Sherwood, *Dream City*.

[68] Foreman Jr., *Locking Up Our Own*, 156-166. For more histories of the crack epidemic and punitive drug laws see: Donna Murch, "Crack in Los Angeles: Crisis, Militarization, and Black Response to the Late Twentieth-Century War on Drugs," *Journal of American History* 102, no. 1 (June 2015):162-173; Matthew D. Lassiter, "Impossible Criminals: The Suburban Imperatives of America's War on Drugs," *Journal of American History* 102, no.1 (June 2015): 126-140; Elizabeth Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime: The Making of Mass Incarceration in America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2016); David Helps, "'Neighborhood Nightmares': Drug Dens, Finance, and the Political Economy of the Crack Crisis," *Journal of Urban History* 00, 0 (October 7, 2022): 1-27; Donovan X. Ramsey, *When Crack Was King: A People's History of a Misunderstood Era* (New York: One World, 2023); David Faber, *Crack: Rock Cocaine, Street Capitalism, and the Decade of Greed* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2019).

program, the brainchild of Assistant Chief Isaac Fulwood, Jr., targeted open-air drug markets by using decoys and undercover squads to apprehend drug dealers and buyers. At the height of the operation between 1985 and 1987, police arrested one out of every four male residents of the city ages eighteen to twenty-nine for drug-related crimes.[69] MPD also claimed that the rise in homicides was drug-related, asserting in the 1990 annual report that 60 percent of 369 murders were connected to drugs.[70] The spread of the drug trade and related violence spurred a rise in youth gang activity, further criminalizing Black and Latino youths in the District.[71]

Across the District, gentrification in African American neighborhoods resulted in Black home owner displacement and a rise in police presence. For example, in the early 1980s gay men led changes to the Ridge Street area of Northwest D.C., a predominantly low-income African American neighborhood.[72] Ridge Street experienced rising criminal activity beginning in the late 1970s as a result of an open-air drug market. Tom Garrette was the first non-Black resident on Ridge Street and encouraged his gay friends to move to the area due to the more affordable housing options and proximity to gay nightclubs and the Downtown area. For Garrette, remaking Ridge Street and solving the drug problem became his "project." Although low-income longtime residents who lived on the street had pushed MPD to do something about the drug market on their streets, decisive action didn't take place until many of the new white residents demanded police action. Low-income residents were equally concerned about drugs and crime on their

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[69] Asch and Musgrove, *Chocolate City*, 404-405; Foreman Jr., *Locking Up Our Own*, 167-177.
[70] Metropolitan Police Department, "Public Safety and Justice in the District of Columbia: Annual Report 1989," (Washington, D.C: Metropolitan Police Department, 1990), https://mpdc.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/mpdc/publication/attachments/1989%20Annual%20Report.pdf, 1; Foreman Jr., *Locking Up Our Own*, 178.
[71] Pearlman, *Democracy's Capital*, 237; Lassiter, "Impossible Criminals"; Karlyn Barker, "NW Latino Residents Feel the Tightening Grip of Drug Crime," *The Washington Post*, May 1, 1989.
[72] For some LGBTQ histories of D.C. see: Brett Genny Beemyn, *A Queer Capital: A History of Gay Life in Washington, D.C.* (New York: Routledge, 2015); Jame Kirchick, *Secrete City: The Hidden History of Gay Washington* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2022).

street, but the news reports gave credit to the new gay residents for rescuing the community and solving problems.[73]

Although old and new residents of Ridge Street agreed that police needed to do something about the open-air drug market, they experienced the results of policing in different ways. Police and gay homeowners criminalized low-income Black residents' activities. Maintaining Ridge Street as a clean, crime-free zone required close surveillance of all individuals and activity on the street. Garrette kept notes and files of every house and person.[74] In this case, Garrette, representative of a new homeowner group, became the community whom the police chose to serve. Moreover, the policing of public spaces on Ridge Street resulted in increasing tension between older, established residents and new homeowners. Lawrence Osborne, a 55-year-old who had lived on Ridge Street for 35 years, experienced harassment from the police and from Garrette for socializing in public. Osborne and friends would gather on the corner of the street and drink beer. This incident reveals how lauded forms of community policing and broken windows theories enacted on the streets of Washington, D.C. prioritized the needs of privileged communities over minorities.[75] Garrette was not only using police and surveillance to eradicate drug activity, but he was also using these tools to remake Ridge Street.

Gentrification occurring in the neighborhoods of Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant by a wave of young, white homeowners contributed to the increase in policing of Latinos. Residents' push for police to control public drinking, which they connected to increasing criminal activity, drug dealing, street harassment, and deteriorating effects on living conditions,

[73] Lou Chibbaro, "Gentrification: Gay Influx Has Its Ups and Downs," *The Washington Blade*, September 14, 1984; Linda Wheeler, "Transforming of a Drug-Ridden Street," *The Washington Post*, November 26, 1983.
[74] Wheeler, "Transforming."
[75] Lou Chibbaro, "Gentrification: Gay Influx Has Its Ups and Downs," *The Washington Blade*, September 14, 1984.

led to frequent interactions between the police and low-income Latino residents.[76] Frustrated, newer, more affluent residents of Mount Pleasant and Adams-Morgan demanded greater police activity to address their concerns. In the summer of 1989, two drug-related homicides reinforced their anxieties. A crime survey conducted by West Mount Pleasant Neighborhood Committee showed that 70 percent of 225 respondents claimed they no longer felt safe and 50 percent would pay for private security. Fourth District Police Inspector William Riley recognized their concerns but also noted that most complaints were about less serious crimes: "The complaints I get are mostly drinking in public, urinating in public, drunks lying across people's front door." Notably, Inspector Riley categorized these crimes as "more obnoxious than illegal."[77] Homeowners, including middle-class Latinos, were infuriated by what they considered a brushoff by Inspector Riley and the MPD. They argued that police turned a "blind eye" to illegal activity happening in front of the 7-Eleven and Church's Fried Chicken at the corner of Mt Pleasant and Kenyon Street. In an op-ed in response to Inspector Riley, Dina Lopez and Adelina Reyes-Gavilan, a right-wing Cuban exile, wrote: "We were under the impression (misguided, obviously) that street drinking, indecent exposure, disorderly conduct and trespassing on private property were flagrant violations of D.C. laws." The op-ed further captures the broken windows concept: "It is precisely the fact that these drunks have always been allowed to behave obnoxiously with impunity that has precipitated the deterioration of living conditions in our neighborhood."[78]

These resident concerns, however, were racially, economically, and gender coded, often using "trash" or "trashy" as adjectives to describe the activities of Latino poor and working-class men. "When I got to the ANC, one of the things I wanted to do was make Mt. Pleasant Street

[76] Lopez and Reyes-Gavilan, "Mount Pleasant: Get Rid of that 'Obnoxious' Behavior Too."
[77] Stephen Buckley, "Mt. Pleasant Fight Back as Drug Crime Rises," *The Washington Post*, August 21, 1989.
[78] Lopez and Reyes-Gavilan, "Mount Pleasant: Get Rid of that 'Obnoxious' Behavior Too."

more of a comfortable welcoming place," recalled Alice Kelly, member of the Advisory Neighborhood Commission. Kelly and her husband, representative of white, young homeowners, moved into Mount Pleasant in 1983. "It [drinking problems] contributed to a sense of the neighborhood feeling trashy and unsafe." Kelly's claim represented a recurring concern by homeowners who equated public drinking with disorder and issues of safety. Questions about the correlation between excessive public drinking and issues such as harassment were legitimate; however, these residents were unable to see how their rhetoric and actions pushed the alienation of their Latino neighbors and contributed to their criminalization.[79] Ken Fealing, an African American Mount Pleasant ANC commissioner, recognized this issue: "They [the homeowners] raise public drinking and crime as the No. 1 issue in the neighborhood." However, Fealing stated, "low-income people see it as another attempt to drive them out of the neighborhood."[80] Latinos felt that they were scapegoats for crime problems in the neighborhoods.[81]

Latino social service agencies, on the other hand, viewed the rise in public drinking as part of a public health issue. These organizations developed programs to educate the youth and aid those struggling with addiction. Moreover, OLA was the lead agency in an interagency task force, which included the Department of Human Services, Public Works, Recreation, and the MPD, convened during the summer of 1985 working to address Ward 1 concerns over homelessness, unemployment, and alcoholism. The task force used police patrols alongside mental health and other community services to address problems posed by new Central American members of the community.[82] As part of the task force, OLA also collaborated with

[79] Alice Kelly Interview, Mount Pleasant Riot Oral History Project, January 1, 2018, https://digdc.dclibrary.org/islandora/object/dcplislandora%3A42745#page/11/mode/1up.
[80] Feldmann, "D.C. Activist."
[81] Stephen Buckley, "Mt. Pleasant Fight Back as Drug Crime Rises," *The Washington Post*, August 21, 1989.
[82] Mayor's Office on Latino Affairs, "Annual Report, Fiscal Year 1985," February 1, 1985, page 6, Folder 5, Box 48, Subseries 2, Series 2, Winter Papers, GWU.

the Department of Human Services to develop a bilingual outreach and treatment program for alcoholics.[83]

Instead of addressing concerns over public health and safety with the local community and recruiting Latinos' input, organizations led by white homeowners pushed for police intervention as the predominant solution. ANC groups in the Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant neighborhoods used collective pressure on the D.C. Alcoholic Beverage Control Board to push businesses to restrict alcohol sales. Organizations and groups of community and neighborhood watch-styled groups formed to police alcohol consumption, especially public drinking. The Mount Pleasant Civic Association, an interracial group made up of mostly white homeowners, formed in response to homeowners' concerns and made the cleaning up of the "alcohol problem" their top agenda item. Robert Tucker, an ANC commissioner, submitted a petition signed by 208 residents of Mount Pleasant demanding more visible police presence. The petition insisted on more community policing practices: "Put more policeman in the area & to get them out of their cars and walk thrugh (sic) their assignment area & to get to know their area & neighborhood." The group, which Tucker stressed were all registered voters, had also formed a citizen patrol group.[84]

Although these groups complained about MPD's lack of action, they were able to pressure MPD to implement a community policing program in Mount Pleasant. The Mount Pleasant Community Policing Program began on August 6, 1989, with the aim of providing a "special" service to the community to allay fears and target crime, particularly public

[83] Mayor's Office on Latino Affairs, "Annual Report, Fiscal Year 1985," February 1, 1985, page 15, Folder 5, Box 48, Subseries 2, Series 2, Winter Papers, GWU.
[84] Robert Tucker, Petition, n.d. [1989], Folder 19, Box 1, Smith Papers, GWU.

drunkenness, noise complaints, and "rowdy" behavior.[85] MPD deemed the 48-week program a success, purportedly reducing crime in the neighborhood by almost 60 percent. A report on the program claimed that assigned officers "bonded" with residents, increasing trust in police. Beyond the psychological changes in the community, the report claimed that the implementation of aggressive arrest policies, which included disorderly conduct arrests, helped decrease crime and the perception of criminal activity.

> Arrests with influence was sometimes accomplished by arresting whole groups of four or five persons for drinking in public and possession of an open container of alcohol, handcuffing them all together, and walking them down the street about a half a block to a transport vehicle, in plain view of all the other persons just hanging out on the street.[86]

Although the report never named Latinos, it is likely that they were the target of disorderly conduct arrests related to public drinking.

Resident complaints that contributed to mounting police presence in predominantly Latino areas resulted in frequent interactions between the police and the Latino community, and an escalation in disorderly conduct charges. For example, the Third District had the highest amount of disorderly conduct arrest, a total of 11,669, of all police districts and more than double the number than the second leading district between 1986 and 1990 (see Figure 4.2). Out of 510 disorderly conduct arrests of Latinos in 1991, charges were only brought in 331 of those cases. These types of arrests were often followed by police misconduct and brutality. Officers would harass and retaliate against individuals with the use of arrests. A complaint filed with the Civilian Complaint Review Board claimed that an MPD officer arrested the person for disorderly conduct after they were asked for their name and badge number. In other incidents, officers used

[85] Bonnie N. O'Neal, "Mount Pleasant Community Policing Program: Annual Report, 8/6/89 to 7/7/90," for Metropolitan Police Department, Fourth District, July 22, 1990, Folder 7, Box 93, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU, 1.
[86] Bonnie N. O'Neal, "Mount Pleasant Community Policing Program: Annual Report, 8/6/89 to 7/7/90," for Metropolitan Police Department, Fourth District, July 22, 1990, Folder 7, Box 93, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU, 1.

excessive force after arrests, breaking peoples' ribs, teeth, and causing head injuries.[87] Residents and groups such as the ANC that called for greater police intervention to curb public drunkenness often overlooked the detrimental side effects faced by minority communities. Although middle-class residents believed the MPD was not doing enough, Latinos experienced the real effects of their bodies and activities being criminalized by their neighbors and the police.

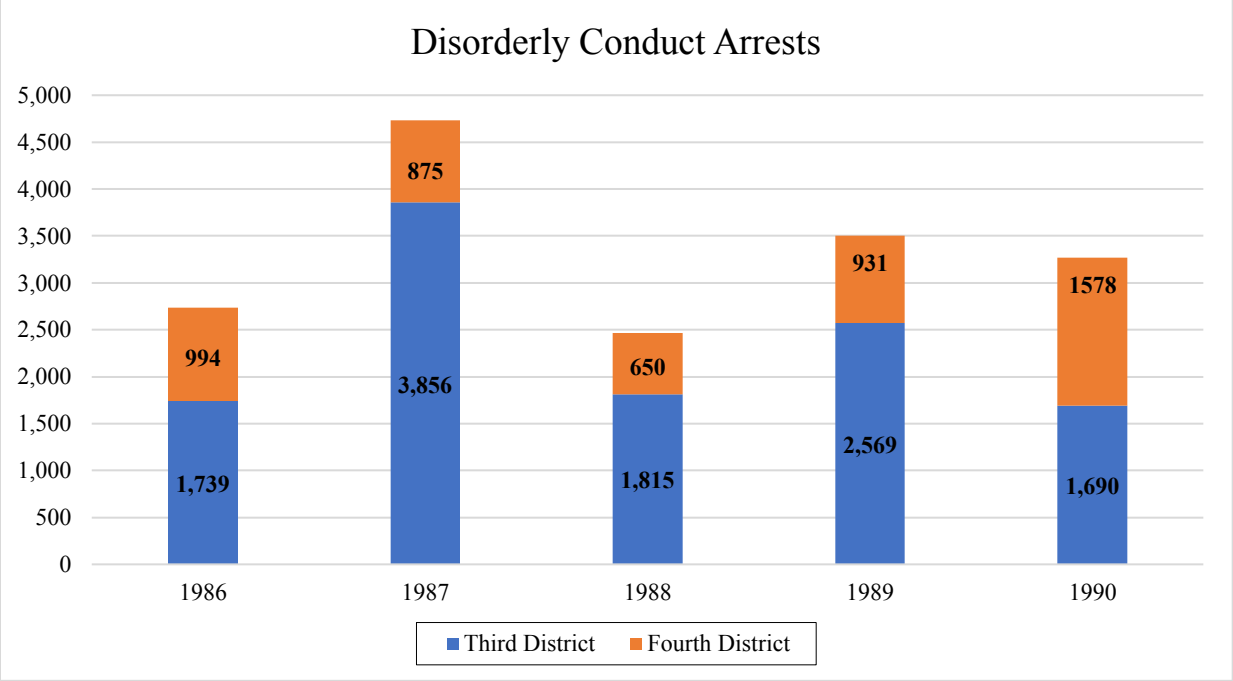


Figure 4.2 Total Number of Disorderly Conduct Arrests in the Third and Fourth Police Districts (1986–1990).[88] The Third Police District, which covered Adams-Morgan, and the Fourth Police District, which encompassed Mount Pleasant, had the highest concentration of Latinos in the district. The Third District had high rates of disorderly conduct arrest compared to other areas.

The number of Latino community complaints about police misconduct reached an all-time high in 1991, yet remained relatively low when compared against other communities, hinting at heightened tensions with police. Complaints filed by Latino residents about the MPD included verbal and physical abuse as well as rampant racism. Correspondingly, the highest

[87] USCCR, *The Mount Pleasant Report*, 22-23.
[88] Data from MPD in USCCR, *The Mount Pleasant Report*, 22.

number of complaints by Latinos were levied against the Third and Fourth Police District, straddling the Mount Pleasant and Adams-Morgan neighborhoods.[89] One third of "use of force" complaints received by the Civilian Complaint Review Board involved disorderly conduct charges.[90] The Civilian Complaint Review Board received a total of 2,560 complaints against the MPD from across the city between 1985 to 1991 and only 52 specifically filed by Latinos.[91] In the Mount Pleasant neighborhood, the CCRB identified that 3.8 percent of Latinos filed complaints between 1987 and 1991. The lower number of Latino complaint reports in comparison to other racial groups demonstrates a hesitancy to engage with police and, at minimum, possible fears of deportation.[92] José "Chico" Diaz, originally from El Salvador, remembered: "We didn't really interact with the police at all. I think one reason was we were coming from a war country, and interacting with military was not the norm. I don't think there was much interaction with the police, no matter what happened. I don't remember any calls to police from us at all."[93] Part of the problem also continued to be the lack of Spanish-speaking officers in the central MPD offices to receive calls and reports. According to Officer Silvestre, Spanish speakers would call to report crimes but were received by non-Spanish speaker officers. This language barrier deterred, in part, the reporting of crimes and resulted in slow police response.[94] "They discriminate against Latinos for nothing, they make life difficult.…I don't know where to go to complain. And when I do, they don't speak Spanish," reiterated Díaz.[95]

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[89] USCCR, *The Mount Pleasant Report*, 25.
[90] USCCR, *The Mount Pleasant Report*, 22-25.
[91] USCCR, *The Mount Pleasant Report*, 22-25.
[92] USCCR, *The Mount Pleasant Report*, 23. In 2001 the DOJ placed the MPD under a Memorandum of Agreement, which was resolved in 2008.
[93] José "Chico" Díaz Interview, Mount Pleasant Riot Oral History Project, December 15, 2017, https://digdc.dclibrary.org/islandora/object/dcplislandora%3A42739.
[94] Silvester Arturo Interview, http://hdl.handle.net/1961/dcplislandora:72211.
[95] José "Chico" Díaz Interview, Mount Pleasant Riot Oral History Project, December 15, 2017, https://digdc.dclibrary.org/islandora/object/dcplislandora%3A42739.

Latino residents felt invisible as the MPD over-policed their recreational activities while under-policing their crime reports and complaints. Structurally, the MPD's system of classifying crime victims was as either Black and White, thus contributing to the erasure of Latinos as victims of crimes themselves.[96] As early as 1976, community organizations identified how the racialization of Latinos in addition to language and cultural barriers hindered the MPD's responsiveness to their needs. Crime reports that excluded a "Latino" category erased them from records on crime statistics. In a letter to the chief of police, a Latino Task Force on Crime and Justice underscored this point:

> Apart from the linguistic problem, there is a unique situation regarding racial identification: most Latinos consider themselves neither black nor white, but Latinos. Racial hostilities and misconceptions have inevitably evolved from the co-existence of two disadvantaged groups, black and Latino, in the same neighborhoods. And when for recording purposes Latinos are asked to identify themselves as black or white, it is also inevitable that police statistics on crime reporting fail to reflect community reality.[97]

The group recommended at the time the addition of a Latino or Spanish speaking category to police statistics to better capture the on the ground realities of crime. They also hoped that through the addition of the racial category police officers would be more mindful of the existence of such a community and thus become more responsive to their needs.[98] However, MPD ignored such a recommendation and in 1991 community representatives once again implored the department to make changes on how they recorded crime statistics to include Latinos.[99]

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[96] Task Force, *The Latino Blueprint*, 20.
[97] Latino Task Force on Crime and Justice to D.C. Chief of Police, the Hon. Maurice J. Cullinane, March 19, 1976, Folder 1 Latino, Box 5, Series 1, Columbian Newspaper Research Files Collection (030), The People's Archive, MLK Library (hereinafter Columbian Newspaper Collection, MLK Library).
[98] Latino Task Force on Crime and Justice to D.C. Chief of Police, the Hon. Maurice J. Cullinane, March 19, 1976, Folder 1 Latino, Box 5, Series 1, Columbian Newspaper Collection, MLK Library.
[99] Task Force, *The Latino Blueprint*, 20.

Latino residents described their interactions with the police as officers having an attitude of indifference and unwillingness to interact beyond language and cultural barriers. Sites of over-policing and unprovoked police harassment spanned the street corners to the interior of buildings and homes. "We were just sitting outside our building, and the police came I don't know where. We didn't know why, but one of them put a gun to my brother's eye.…I didn't speak English, so we didn't know why he did that," recalled Díaz.[100] Díaz first arrived at the age of fifteen in East Los Angeles in 1983 and then moved about a month later to Mount Pleasant to be reunited with his mother. Shortly after his arrival in 1985 Díaz, like many Latino youth in Mount Pleasant, eventually became involved with and worked for the Latin American Youth Center. Latino residents noted how their reported incidents to the police would go unanswered while those of their neighbors would receive assistance.[101] Díaz remembers: "My uncle was shot in front of that building by an Afro-American, he never got a why. The guy was not arrested, and he just was sent to the hospital, and that was it. And the guy, we used to see him every day like nothing happened."[102]

4.3 Civilian Complaint Review Board & Police-Community Relations

Washington, D.C. has a long history of advisory complaint review boards that reveal a strong tradition of community activism on the issue of police brutality. From 1948 to 1973, Black activists considered the different iterations of the review board as largely weak in conducting police oversight. Still, the District's Black majority continued to pressure the federal government in control of the city's daily affairs to act on police misconduct. This issue was

[100] José "Chico" Díaz Interview, Mount Pleasant Riot Oral History Project, December 15, 2017, https://digdc.dclibrary.org/islandora/object/dcplislandora%3A42739.
[101] José "Chico" Díaz Interview, Mount Pleasant Riot Oral History Project, December 15, 2017, https://digdc.dclibrary.org/islandora/object/dcplislandora%3A42739.
[102] José "Chico" Díaz Interview.

central to the civil rights and Black Power movements in the District and represented concerns of Black and minority residents from all wards against a mostly white police force.

However, following passage of the Home Rule Act of 1973, the Metropolitan Police Department conducted all misconduct and complaints reviews internally between 1973 and 1980.[103] After an almost ten-year gap in the existence of police oversight, the city council unanimously voted for and established a seven-member Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB) in 1980. The CCRB originally consisted of a seven-member panel, of whom three were selected by the mayor, two by city council, one by the police chief, and one by the police officers' union. Each member served a three-year term. City council tasked the Board with investigative oversight of police conduct, granted them subpoena powers, and a $150,000 annual budget.[104] The CCRB was able to conduct investigations and recommend disciplinary action to the police chief and to refer criminal cases to the U.S. Attorney's Office. Moreover, if the recommendations were rejected or punishments were reduced by the chief of police, the CCRB had the power to appeal to the mayor to overrule the chief's final decision. The city's police union vehemently objected to the expansion of oversight and disciplining power beyond MPD's control and condemned Mayor Barry for supporting its creation.

The establishment of the D.C. Civilian Complaint Review Board in 1980 contributed to the deteriorating relationship between Barry and the police force. The mayor and the police union had a difficult history. Barry had been initially endorsed by the then bargaining police unit, the International Brotherhood of Police Officers (IBPO), during his campaign for mayor in 1978.

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[103] Edward D. Sargent, "Five Sworn in to New Police Review Board," *The Washington Post*, December 6, 1981. For more on the history of D.C.'s police review boards see: Cheryl Beattie and Ronald Weitzer, "Race, Democracy and Law: Civilian Review of Police in Washington, DC," in *Civilian Oversight of Policing: Governance, Democracy and Human Rights*, eds. Andrew Goldsmith and Colleen Lewis (Oxford: Hart Publishing, 2000), 41–61; Hechinger, Sr., "Black and Blue."

[104] *District of Columbia Civilian Complaint Review Board Act of 1980*, D.C. Law 3-158, < https://code.dccouncil.gov/us/dc/council/laws/docs/3-158.pdf>.

As mayor, Barry drew on his activist roots to attempt and to diversify the MPD and to curtail its patterns of misconduct by supporting community control and oversight.[105] In response, officers voted out the IBPO and replaced the union with the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP). The FOP, and the police force more generally, disagreed with Barry's goals of reducing the size of the force and its budget. When Barry took office in 1979, there were 4,073 sworn officers in the MPD. By 1981, the number had dropped to 3,612 officers.[106] In fact, the size of officers on the force had been steadily declining since 1974, after the passage of home rule. Reflecting tensions between the police and Barry, Gary Hankins, chairman of FOP's labor committee, claimed: "I think it's fair to say that there have been problems between Barry and policemen. As for police-protection in the city, police morale is not very good under Barry. I don't think the crime rate has gone down under him, has it?"[107]

From its early years, the Civilian Complaint Review Board was plagued with a backlog of cases. In turn, civilian complaints about police misconduct and the city's inability to act against corrupt police increased. The CCRB began holding hearings in 1982, delayed by a year because of a missing budget. The first chair of the CCRB was Goler Butcher, a law professor at Howard University.[108] A year into the CCRB's tenure, the FOP union threatened to boycott hearings and ignore subpoenas, claiming that they were subjected to unfair treatment due to the

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[105] Marion Barry was a member of D.C.'s Pilot District Project. The PDP was a project funded by the Office of Economic Opportunity in 1968 shortly after the summer uprising. Barry was part of a group that ousted the PDP's original director, Dr. Robert Shellow, and would become the chairman of the Citizens' Advisory Board, part of the pilot project located in the Third District. The OEO quickly disbanded the PDP and shelved the project. See *Developing Community Control* (381-P-3), Office of Economic Opportunity, Office of Public Affairs, 1964-1981, Series: Motion Picture Films from the "Police" Program Series, ca. 1971, Record Group 381: Record of the Community Services Administration, 1963-1981, https://youtu.be/7K28J7ptNsk.

[106] Fraternal Order of Police, "Reported Number of Sworn Personnel by Fiscal Year," n.d. [1989], United States Senate, Committee on Government Affairs, *Hearing before the Subcommittee on General Services, Federalism, and the District of Columbia on Federal-State-Local Solutions to Crime and Drug Abuse*, 101st Congress, 1st Session (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1989), 110.

[107] Juan Williams, "Gains, Losses Will be Tallied in the Fall," *The Washington Post*, May 13, 1982.

[108] Beattie, "Race, Democracy and Law."

board's unclear standards, such as the vague definitions of harassment and abuse.[109] The boycott succeeded in stalling the hearing process and contributed to the creation of a substantial backlog of cases for the CCRB. However, the board eventually began to hold hearings in absentia of accused officers, thus forcing the FOP to break their boycott. Instead, the union used procedural and appeals processes to stall the CCRB's progress.[110] MPD Police Chief Maurice T. Turner Jr. also deflected blame and accused the CCRB of increasing use of force violations and civilian deaths at the hands of police. Chief Turner argued he was constrained by the CCRB when the city council removed direct control and oversight of misconduct from the MPD. In the span of two months, between mid-December 1983 and February 1984, police had killed five civilians.[111]

Latinos were keenly aware of the patterns of police misconduct and violence, facing over-policing and surveillance on the streets of Mount Pleasant and Adams-Morgan, and used their collective power to demand accountability and action.[112] Latino youth acutely experienced police harassment and pushed community representatives to advocate for a shift away from police and toward more resources, such as jobs programs and recreation centers. On the other hand, established political and agency leaders advocated for more bilingual and bicultural training for police. These leaders sympathized with white and middle-class homeowners' concerns about crime and disorder and supported community policing practices. Although some Latino residents reported their complaints of officers to the CCRB, non-English speaking individuals did not have equitable access to the process. The 1985 Latino Community Agenda, proposed by the eighteen local organizations who formed the Ad Hoc Coalition for a Latino

[109] Peter Perl, "Police Union to Shun Review Board Hearings," *The Washington Post*, August 3, 1983.
[110] Beattie, "Race, Democracy and Law," 55.
[111] Michel Marriot, "D.C. Police Chief to Examine Use of Deadly Force," *The Washington Post*, February 24, 1984.
[112] Edward J. Escobar, "The United Consequences of the Carceral State: Chicana/o Political Mobilization in Post-World War II America," *The Journal of American History* 102, no. 1, (June 2015): 174-184.

Community Agenda, highlighted how complaint forms were not available in Spanish, preventing reporting of police abuse by Spanish-speaking groups. The Agenda recommended that the CCRB, in addition to the MPD, should receive training about the District's Latino community to better understand and address their unique needs.[113]

The case of Officer Wayne Walker, which involved the Latino community, drew media attention to the backlogs of complaints and highlighted CCRB's inaction and organizational failure. Walker, an officer in the Third District for about two years, represented the type of police residents of Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant complained about harassment and brutality. On November 13, 1987, Fernando Luna, a 20-year-old part-time student from Silver Spring, was in Adams-Morgan when a fight broke out. Luna approached Officer Walker and asked him to assist. Instead, Walker punched and then arrested Luna and Linwood Bentley, a 33-year-old teacher's aide who was also intervening in the incident and tried to stop Walker from assaulting Luna. The Latino community was incensed by yet another incident of police brutality and demanded the MPD's response. Their calls for action brought focus and media attention on Officer Walker. *Washington Post* investigations revealed Officer Walker had five pending complaints at the CCRB form as early as August 1986.[114] All of the complaints revealed a similar pattern: Walker, unprovoked, physically assaulted civilians and arrested them. Walker sometimes committed these assaults with another unidentified officer.[115] Latino community leaders, along with other members of the neighborhood and the media, reiterated their apprehensions about Officer Walker and the patterns of police brutality more generally in

[113] Ad Hoc Coalition for a Latino Community Agenda, "Washington, D.C.'s Latino Community Agenda," June 7, 1985, Folder 17, Box 81, Subseries 1, Series 1, Clarke Papers, GWU, 32.
[114] Carlos Sanchez, "Hispanics, D.C. Police Set Meeting," *The Washington Post*, November 19, 1987.
[115] Carlos Sanchez, "D.C. Officer Subject of 5 Complaints," *The Washington Post*, November 20, 1987.

meetings with Third District officials.[116] Walker's case was representative of a larger pattern of police harassment and brutality and indicated continued failures by the CCRB in remedying these systemic issues.

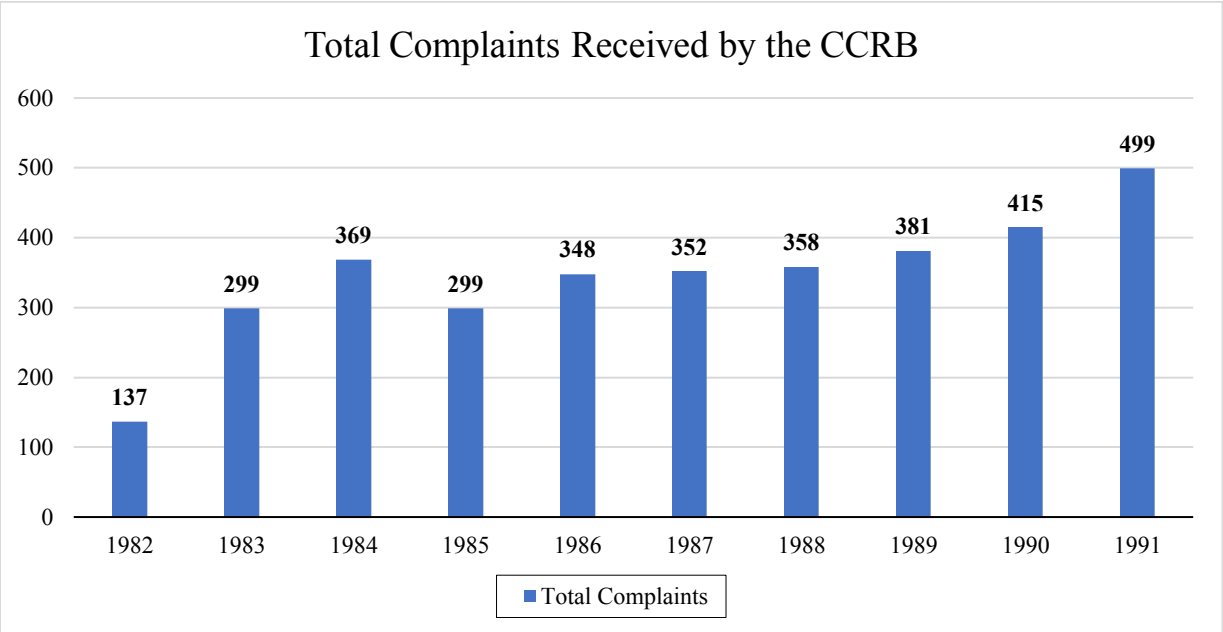


Figure 4.3 Total Number of Complaints Received by the Civilian Complaint Review Board (1982–1991).[117]

The CCRB's backlog of complaints and the lack of accountability for police misconduct became a growing issue in the District and a problem for the city council and Mayor Barry. In part due to Latino mobilization in the Walker case, the CCRB released a report of their operations and pending cases in 1987. A review of the report revealed a total of 1,450 cases amassed since June 1982 with an average of 350 cases per year (see Figure 4.3).[118] In the first eight months of existence, the CCRB received around 200 complaints and had found only four cases of police misconduct.[119] Under second chairwoman Jane Dolkart a backlog of 1,500 cases

[116] Carlos Sanchez, "Complaints on Officers Stacking Up," *The Washington Post*, November 21, 1987.
[117] *Cox v. District of Columbia, 821 F. Supp. 1 (1993)*.
[118] Victoria Churchville, "Police Board Concedes It's a Failure," *The Washington Post*, December 18, 1987.
[119] Perl, "Police Union."

grew.[120] Since 1982, more than 300 officers had received two or more complaints.[121] Dolkart acknowledged the issue: "The numbers don't work. The present system cannot handle the volume of complaints. The truth is, on average, if you've filed a case you can probably expect to wait well over a year and perhaps several years."

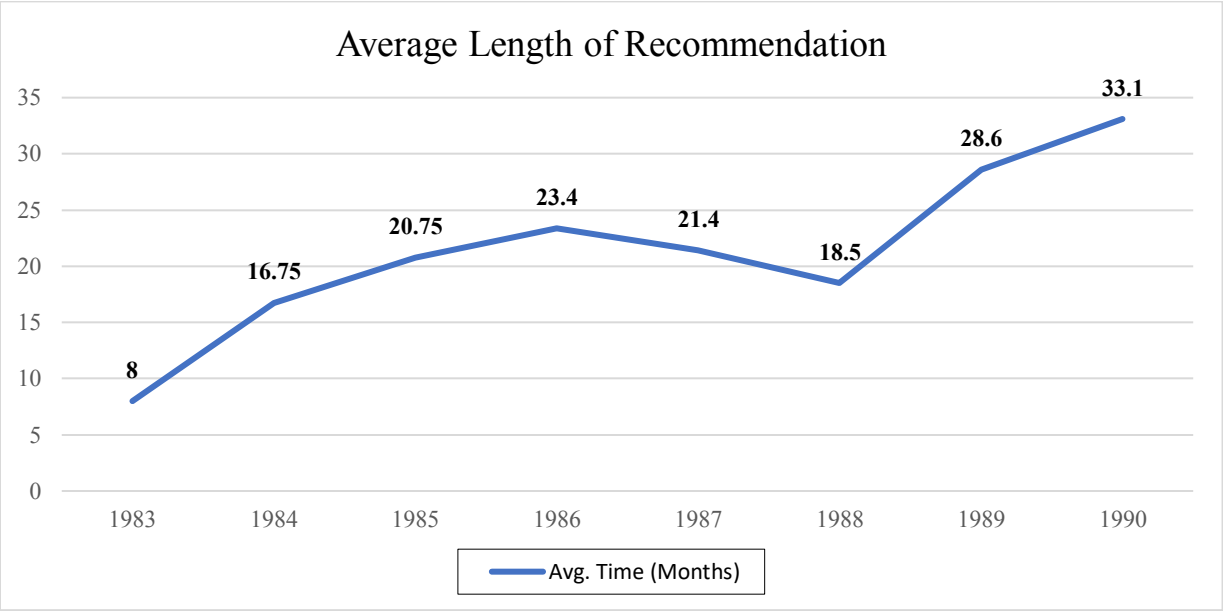


Figure 4.4 Average Length of Time Between the Date Complaint Filed with Civilian Complaint Review Board and Date of Recommendation (1983-1990).[122]

The case backlog also affected the average length of time for when the CCRB heard cases and handed down recommendations. Under the city's statue, the CCRB had thirty days to schedule hearings and ninety days to complete investigations.[123] As the number of complaints filed with CCRB grew, so did the length of time to reach hold a hearing and reach a recommendation (see Figure 4.4). The city council attempted to assist with the backlog of cases by increasing the CCRB's budget, first in 1988 to $433,000 and again in 1990 to $805,000. They

[120] Kemi Morten, "Letters to the Editor," *The Washington Post*, August 23, 1989.
[121] Churchville, "Police Board Concedes It's a Failure."
[122] *Cox v. District of Columbia, 821 F. Supp. 1 (1993)*.
[123] D.C. Code § 4-905(a), *Cox v. District of Columbia, 821 F. Supp. 1 (1993)*.

also nearly doubled the number of staff in 1990.[124] However, the number of cases filed to the CCRB continued to grow between 1988 and 1991, reaching an all-time high in 1991 with 499 cases (see Figure 4.3). The number of excessive force cases also increase at the same time as the length of time to make recommendations grew. Only a small fraction of the cases were heard by the CCRB and the majority were dismissed, partially because of the time constrains set by the statute and people losing interest in their complaints (see Figure 4.5).[125] All of these factors highlighted the severity of the backlog of cases and had implications on the ground as police officers who had multiple complaints remained on the streets.

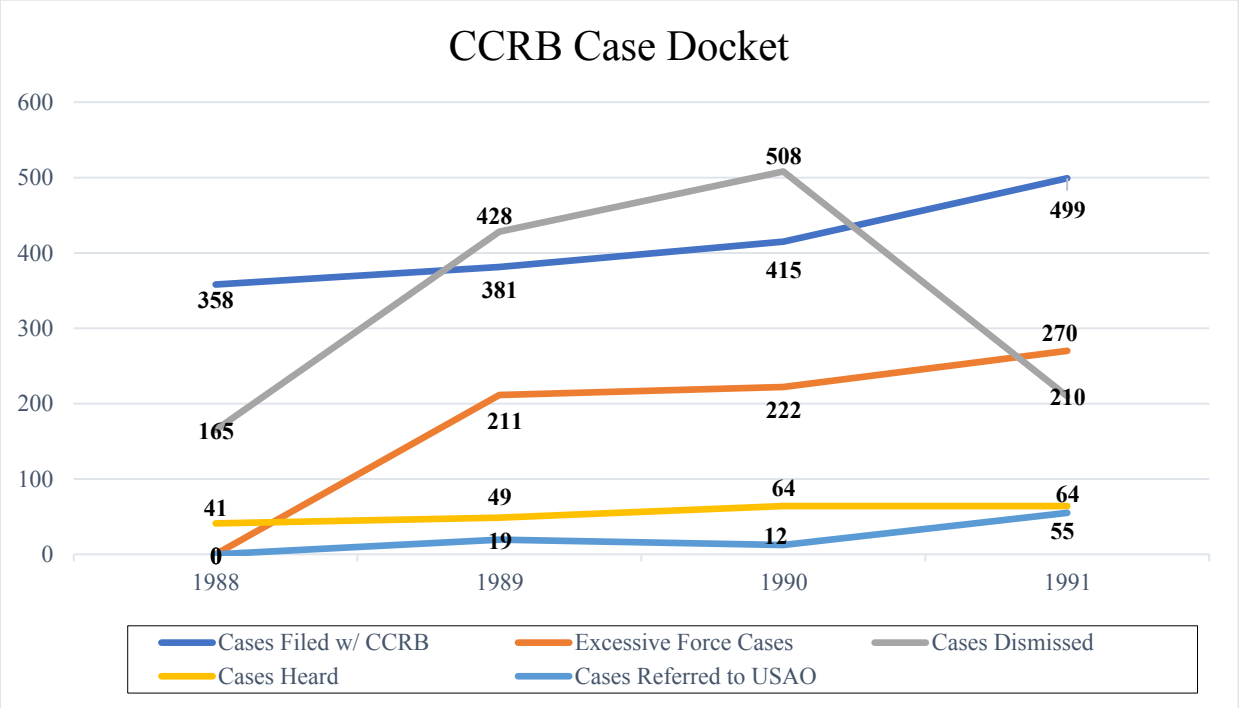


Figure 4.5 Civilian Complaint Review Board Case Docket (1988–1991).[126]

Latinos were once again mobilized to action when a police officer used excessive force during the annual Latino Festival on July 31, 1988. Witnesses at the festival saw and recorded

[124] *Cox v. District of Columbia, 821 F. Supp. 1 (1993)*.
[125] Sanchez, "Hispanics."
[126] United States Attorney's Office (USAO). *Cox v. District of Columbia, 821 F. Supp. 1 (1993)*.

police officers struggling with and using excessive force on Marcos Quintero, 25, in Adams-Morgan. Video of the incident was later aired by the local station WJLA-TV Channel 7, which helped bring attention to the case and reinforced general community complaints about the MPD and the CCRB. Quintero, as many other Latinos had experienced, was charged with disorderly conduct and had to pay a $25 fine. Because of the footage and level of community complaints, the MPD investigated the incident, sidestepping the CCRB's role.[127] Quintero, however, did not file a police brutality complaint.[128] By 1989 the volume of complaints against police grew resulting in a greater backlog in the CCRB that contributed to community mistrust of its services. Officers with repeat offenses and multiple complaints continued to be on the streets while the board worked through the complaints.

The timing of heightened criticism of the CCRB also reveals patterns of racial bias. Although the FOP had consistently opposed the CCRB, they seemed to increase the level of demonstrations against the agency under the two Black chairs of the CCRB, Goler Butcher, the inaugural chair, and the fourth chair, Kemi Morten, who took on the role in April 1988. Under Butcher's tenure, the FOP boycotted CCRB proceedings and ignored subpoenas. Mayor Barry nominated Morten for the role for her commitment to civil rights and victims' advocacy. Dismissing her as "arbitrary and capricious," the FOP first opposed her confirmation and launched a campaign to get her removed as board chair. The FOP focused on the continued backlog of cases to push a narrative that the CCRB was a dysfunctional entity, and that Morten

[127] At the same time, the MPD was investigating a brutality incident from August 25th of that year. The incident began when officers approached a group of Nation of Islam members who were distributing their newspaper on 14th and L Street NW. Officers assaulted the individuals while attempting to enforce a jaywalking citation. Eight of the members were arrested and charged with disorderly conduct and assault. Linda Wheeler, "D.C. Police Union Asks Chief Turner to Halt 2 Brutality Investigations," *The Washington Post*, September 2, 1988.
[128] "Complaints of D.C. Police Misconduct," *The Washington Post*, August 1988.

was especially at fault even though she had inherited the backlog of cases when she took on the role of chair.[129]

As chair of the CCRB, Morten had a more activist style and took a more adversarial stance towards the police union. In a letter to the editor in response to the *Washington Post* editorial "The CCRB is a Joke" and general criticism of her leaderships style, Morten claimed that the FOP was calculating in their actions and that race played a part in their harsher stance and media criticisms towards her and Butcher, the other only Black chairpersons. Jane Dolkart and Alice L. Bodley, who served as chairwomen in between the two, were both white women.[130] Dolkart and Bodley were both fiercely critical of Morten's tenure and cast blame on her for the CCRB's dysfunction. The CCRB members argued that they were not equipped with enough support to move through the large volume of complaints and that Morten's efforts to implement reform further hindered their progress. Morten was censured on June 17, 1989, and then, give months into her tenure, ousted by a 4-to-3 vote of board members who claimed she was an ineffective leader, held biased hearings, and disregarded the majority's opinions.[131] Civil rights organizations, including the local NAACP, supported Morten and argued the CCRB's dysfunctionality was an inherited problem. In defense of Morten, Timothy E. Pratt, Prison Coordinator for the NAACP, wrote: "She tripled the number of hearings, strengthened the board's contempt powers, instituted training for board members, fought for representation for complaints and put teeth into the board's subpoena power."[132] Although Barry initially supported

[129] Kemi Morten interview, *Over the River and Through the Woods, Longtime Residential and Parklands of Ward 9*, August 19, 2020, The People's Archive, DC Public Library, http://hdl.handle.net/1961/dcplislandora:297105.
[130] Kemi Morten, "Letters to the Editor," *The Washington Post*, August 23, 1989.
[131] Sari Horwitz, "D.C. Complaint Board Censures Chairwoman," *The Washington Post*, September 1, 1988. Victoria Churchville, "Police Brutality Board Ousts Chairman Morten," *The Washington Post*, October 8, 1988.
[132] Timothy E. Pratt, "Letters to the Editor," *The Washington Post*, August 3, 1989.

Morten and reinstated her to the chair position, under pressure he eventually fired her in August 1989.[133]

4.4 Recruiting Spanish-Speaking Police

A mismatch existed between Puerto Rican leaders' request for more bilingual police officers and Latino youth and activists who mistrusted the police and wanted police to put a stop to police harassment. The MPD and city authorities ignored demands levied by Latino youth, and by 1985 Latino residents demanded more Spanish-speaking officers among a long list of grievances for the city. In the 1980s and 90s Latino residents and organization leaders documented linguistic and cultural barriers to police-community relations. Efforts to recruit bilingual police officers became a hallmark issue with growing repercussions for the District.

The existence of bilingual police in the Metropolitan Police Department was an important gauge used by Puerto Rican leaders to measure the status of the Latino community in the District. The number of Spanish-speaking officers on the force reflected whether community needs were being met or ignored by the city. In response to pressure from Puerto Rican leaders and officials, the MPD accelerated in 1985 a project that had first been articulated as early as 1969 to focus on increasing the diversity of their officers and demonstrate their commitment to addressing Latino concerns. In the early 1970s, politicians such as Senator Joseph M. Montoya originally applauded the MPD as the only city department taking steps towards addressing the needs of a growing Latino population. Echoing Senator Montoya, a letter from the Adams Morgan Federation, Inc., an organization representing some Latino leaders in Adams-Morgan, stated: "It is astounding that only the Metropolitan Police Department is taking steps to meet the

[133] Sari Horwitz, "Barry Fires His Appointee to Police Complaint Panel," *The Washington Post*, August 10, 1989.

problems of the District's Spanish-speaking citizens."[134] In 1969, the MPD had plans underway to provide Spanish classes for police officers, especially those serving predominantly Latino and immigrant neighborhoods—such as the Third and Fourth District that included the Mount Pleasant and Adams-Morgan neighborhoods. But the plan never took off, and by 1978 there were only twenty-two Latino officers in a police force of about 4,000.[135]

By 1985, under new pressure from community organizations and Latino employees, the MPD launched a recruitment effort to increase its bilingual police force. The drive targeted San Juan, Puerto Rico, as the main location for recruitment. The MPD argued that the citizenship requirement made it difficult to recruit from within the city's Latino community, which it maintained was made up mostly of recent immigrants, undocumented migrants, and refugees from Central America's civil wars. Assistant Police Chief Carl V. Profater claimed: "When you are looking for a certain pool of individuals, you have to go where that pool is."[136] The "certain pool" Chief Profater referenced were Spanish-speaking U.S. citizens.[137] The choice to recruit from Puerto Rico emphasized limited knowledge about Latinos in city administrations. Non-Latino city officials used Puerto Ricans as a frame of reference when engaging with the diverse Latino community. The MPD later expanded their geographic scope to include Miami, Hartford,

[134] Adams Morgan Federation, Inc., "Open Letter," December 6, 1969, Folder Spanish Speaking Community, Box 60, Subseries 4, Series 9, Shackleton Papers, GWU.
[135] Christopher Dickey, "Police-Latino Relations Suffer in Language, Culture Clash," *The Washington Post*, June 4, 1978. Silvester Arturo Interview, Latino Youth Community History Project Oral History, April 6, 1982, http://hdl.handle.net/1961/dcplislandora:72211.
[136] Lyle V. Harris, "Police Seek Hispanic Recruits: 2 D.C. Officers Leave for Puerto Rico," *The Washington Post*, May 3, 1985.
[137] The MPD's recruitment tactic also drew on a long tradition of labor recruitment from Puerto Rico. For more see: Eileen J. Suárez Findlay, *We are Left without a Father Here: Masculinity, Domesticity, and Migration in Postwar Puerto Rico* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014); Carmen Teresa Whalen, *From Puerto Rico to Philadelphia: Puerto Rican Workers and Postwar Economies* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2001). For the history of policing in Puerto Rico see Marisol LeBrón, *Policing Life and Death: Race, Violence, and Resistance in Puerto Rico* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2019).

and New York.[138] Ultimately, the MPD's recruitment effort was ineffective, resulting in only 25 hires who either eventually returned to Puerto Rico or relocated to suburban police departments because of D.C.'s prohibitively high cost of living.[139] The city, like many other city police departments, maintained a residency requirement for their officers. The police union argued the starting salary left existing officers and new recruits unable to afford housing in the city's expensive housing market.

MPD's recruitment drives from beyond the local community and the privileging of Puerto Ricans in their efforts elevated Central American ire and contributed to deteriorating police-community relations. In October of 1988, the MPD conducted another recruitment drive for Spanish-speaking officers in Puerto Rico.[140] Central Americans and other D.C. residents criticized the recruitment efforts in Puerto Rico because of its costliness and inefficiency. Moreover, according to current and former members of the MPD "the Puerto Rico recruitment drives had also been criticized for yielding some officers, formerly employed with Puerto Rico police departments, who generated a number of citizen complaints and were abusive to Latinos."[141] Latino youth had consistently spoken against abusive Latino officers in the community but were ignored by MPD and other Latino leaders. The strategy to recruit from beyond the existing and established population raised uproars from the growing Central American community and exacerbated feelings of underrepresentation and disenfranchisement.[142] The MPD's continuous attempts to address the requests of the Latino

[138] These cities, respectively, were targeted because of the substantial size of Latinos who were also able to meet the citizenship requirement.
[139] John Ward Anderson, "Puerto Rican Police Recruits Disillusioned: D.C. Officers Unhappy Over Living Costs, Residency Rule," *The Washington Post*, June 11, 1986; "Police from Puerto Rico?" *The Washington Post*, December 13, 1985.
[140] USCCR, *The Mount Pleasant Report*, 43.
[141] USCCR, *The Mount Pleasant Report*, 44.
[142] Harris, "Police;" "Police from Puerto Rico?" *The Washington Post*, December 13, 1985.

community by recruiting beyond the city dismissed the immediate needs of their constituents and drew attention to questions of citizenship and the continued underrepresentation of the Central American refugee community.

The escalation of incidents of police brutality in the community stoked Latino leadership's desire to have bilingual officers in the community, especially in high-level positions. When the new Third District commander was announced in 1988, Latino leaders were angry that a non-Spanish-speaking individual, Edward J. Spurlock, was selected for the post by Chief Turner. Leaders wanted Mayor Barry to overturn the appointment in light of increasing cases of police brutality in the community. They had hoped Inspector Daniel Flores would be selected for the position. Inspector Flores was the department's Latino community liaison and one of the highest-ranking Latino members of the MPD. They alleged that Chief Turner had promised a Latino commander for the district during an October meeting in 1987. "We expected a qualified Hispanic who is bilingual and bicultural and who is familiar with the streets, businesses, schools, and agencies in the 3rd District," stated Rev. Jose Somoza, Cuban pastor of Our Lady Queen of the Americas Catholic Church.[143] By 1991, only 121 Latino-identifying and 126 bilingual officers were in the MPD out of a total of 4,790 officers.[144] In particular, officials and community members cited an inherent mistrust of police authority—based largely on home country experiences at the hands of repressive political and military forces—as a cultural barrier that also contributed to low police recruitment numbers. Recruitment drives, often geared at diversifying the police force, contributed to the rise in police misconduct. Patterns of mismanagement of the Metropolitan Police Department and the politicization of the oversight process resulted in a deterioration of police-community relations in the late 1980s. The MPD

[143] Carlos Sanchez, "3rd District Police Choice Angers Some Hispanics," *The Washington Post*, July 22, 1988.
[144] Task Force, *The Latino Blueprint*, 22.

ceased performance reviews of officers in 1985, seemingly in retaliation for Mayor Barry's manner of operating and promotion of all officers with the rank of captain and above.[145]

4.5 Police Hiring Wave & Deadly Force 1985-1995

The issue of federalism and Congress's continued power over the District's administration, specifically through budget oversight, affected MPD hiring practices and resulted in police violence and misconduct in the city. Congress became reinterested and focused on MPD's operation as early as 1982 as their concerns about rising crime, specifically the city's homicide rate, and the rapid spread of crack cocaine grew between 1985 and 1986. Barry initially opposed Congress and believed the police force was too bloated. MDP officials pushed back against Barry and petitioned Congress for more funds and officers. From 1982 onward, Congress tacked on language in all D.C. appropriation bills requiring the maintenance of a minimum 3,880 officers in the MPD:

> That none of these funds shall be made available to the District of Columbia until the number of full-time uniformed officers in permanent positions in the Metropolitan Police Department is at least 3,880 excluding any such officers appointed after August 19, 1982, under qualification standards other than those in effect on such date.[146]

Congress inextricably linked the release of federal funds for the city with their notions of suitable policing standards. In 1985 crime in the city was at an eighteen year low.[147] However, Congress and then the D.C. city Council continued to increase the MPD's budget over the span of five years. Between 1985 and 1989, the budget increased by 65 percent from $151 million to $250 million.

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[145] Michael Powell, Sari Horwitz, and Cheryl W. Thompson, "Problems in D.C. Police Dept. Festered for Decades," *The Washington Post*, October 12, 1997.
[146] *District of Columbia Appropriation Act, 1983*, Pub. L. No. 97-378, 96 Stat. 1925 (1982).
[147] Metropolitan Police Department, *Annual Report, Fiscal Year 1985* (Washington, D.C.: Metropolitan Police Department, 1986) https://mpdc.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/mpdc/publication/attachments/1985%20Annual%20Report.pdf.

In 1989 during the height of the crack epidemic in D.C., Congress and District officials decided to implement a hiring wave for the MPD. A series of congressional hearings on the problem of crime and drugs in the city led to the introduction of the District of Columbia Police Authorization and Expansion Act of 1989.[148] At these hearings, witnesses stressed the need for more law enforcement to curtail the drug crisis.[149] D.C.'s congressional representative Walter E. Fauntroy sponsored the bill, which provided federal funding for the hiring of 700 more MPD officers.[150] Moreover, the new bill required the creation of a community-oriented policing system "modeled after, but not limited to, such a system in Houston, Texas."[151] Congress bypassed Mayor Barry's power to direct the new funds for training and equipment and insisted funds were only for the recruitment and hiring of new officers within two years. Barry opposed the need for more officers, believing that the MPD already had more officers than it needed in comparison to other major cities. Congress, in turn, threatened to withhold the $430 million federal payment for the city from 1989 and 1990 until new officers were hired.[152] During this time period, the District continued to have more officers per capita than any other city in the country. Congress also ignored the recommendations of the Police Executive Research Forum, a law enforcement

[148] These sessions included: "Oversight of the District of Columbia Drug Problem," on June 8, 1989; "Crime, Violence, and Drugs in D.C.," on May 3 and June 2, 1989; "1989 Omnibus Drug Program," on March 9, April 13, 27, and May 11, 1989; and "National Capital Area: Drug Trafficking," on April 20, 1989.
[149] U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Governmental Affairs, *District of Columbia Police Authorization and Expansion Act of 1989*: *Report* (*to Accompany H.R. 1502*), 101st Cong., 1st sess., 1989, S. Rep. 101-123, https://congressional-proquest-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/congressional/docview/t49.d48.13925_s.rp.123?accountid=14667.
[150] Walter Fauntroy was born in Washington, D.C. and served as D.C.'s delegate to Congress, the non-voting representative in the House of Representatives, for ten terms. Fauntroy was a civil rights activist and former vice chairman of the D.C. City Council (before home rule). See Pearlman, *Democracy's Capital*; Asch and Musgrove, *Chocolate City*.
[151] *District of Columbia Police Authorization and Expansion Act of 1989*, Pub. L. No. 101-223, 103 Stat. 1901 (1989). Houston was seen by policy advocates as a successful case study of the application of community policing. See: Lee P. Brown, "Community Policing: A Practical Guide for Police Officials," *Perspectives on Policing*, no. 12, September 1989, (National Institute of Justice) https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/118001.pdf.
[152] Keith A. Harriston and Mary Pat Flaherty, "D.C. Police Paying for Hiring Binge," *The Washington Pos*t, August 28, 1994.

research and policy organization. In a 1988 report, the Forum found that the MPD had an excess of officers and was not equipped to manage the large size of the force. The report recommended that 1,000 officers be cut from the force.[153] Police chiefs, on the other hand, had previously pushed for more police recruitments to deal with rising crime and outpace projected retirements.

The hiring wave prompted by Congress' budget increase and 20-month deadline had devastating effects on the city.[154] A Pulitzer Prize-winning investigative report series by the *Washington Post* discovered that the upsurge in use of force cases across the city was correlated to the 1989-1990 hiring wave.[155] Officers hired during those two years made up one-third of the police force.[156] The 1,471 new recruits had been hastily hired by the MPD forced to comply with Congress's short window of implementation. MPD officials shortened background checks and provided minimal training before rookie officers were put on the streets. According to the *Post*'s investigation, this group accounted for more than half of the officers subjected to disciplinary action by the MPD.[157] Moreover, more than 100 of those officers were arrested between 1989 and 1994 for various crimes, including rape, drug trafficking, and murder.[158] This sped-up

[153] Michael Powell, Sari Horwitz, and Cheryl W. Thompson, "Problems in D.C. Police Dept. Festered for Decades," *The Washington Post*, October 12, 1997.
[154] Lauren Pearlman similarly argues that Congress's power over the city and the police department set it up for failure during the 1968 MLK Uprising. Pearlman, *Democracy's Capital*.
[155] On March 21, 2003, then Chief of Police Charles H. Ramsey acknowledged that MDP's internal records were lacking in comparison to the *Washington Post*'s account of misconduct cases. Charles H. Ramsey, "Statement from the Metropolitan Police Department," March 21, 2003, Hearing on Civil Rights Issues Affecting DC's Latino Communities, United States Commission on Civil Rights, https://mpdc.dc.gov/release/hearing-civil-rights-issues-affecting-dcs-latino-communities.
[156] It is possible that Officer Angela Jewell, who was the officer who shot Daniel Enrique Gomez on May 5, 1991, was hired during this time frame. She was only six months into her job when the incident took place.
[157] Disciplinary action was related to charges ranging from neglecting duty, failing to obey orders, and making false statements. For instance, in 1993 79 MPD officers were arrested out of a 4,220-member force. In New York that same year, 90 arrests occurred out of a 30,000-member force and 69 arrests out of 4,000 officers in Detroit. Harriston and Flaherty, "D.C. Police."
[158] At the height of complaints about police misconduct and criminal activity, the FBI conducted Operation Broken Faith in 1992. This resulted in the arrest of the 'Dirty Dozen' in December of 1993 for bribery and drug conspiracy. Eleven of those officers were hiring during the hiring wave in 1989 and 1990. Harriston and Flaherty, "D.C. Police."

process set up rookies, oftentimes underqualified, to patrol the D.C. streets with minimal training and to interact with a public that was already suspicious of, and resistant, to the police.[159]

All parties involved blamed each other for the hiring wave failures. The MPD, through its police chiefs, blamed Mayor Barry and the city council for mismanagement and setting them up for failure by not hiring more officers sooner. In turn, Mayor Barry blamed Police Chief Isaac Fulwood Jr. and the MPD for their direct role in the recruitment, hiring, and firing of officers. The city council and its judiciary committee, Fulwood argued, had the responsibility of oversight. The city council and Barry faulted Fulwood for resisting the enforcement of national accreditation guidelines for the MPD's training academy. Somehow, none of these parties publicly blamed Congress.[160]

Police hiring waves are, at best, ineffective at stemming rising crime and, at worst, deadly. MPD's lack of proper training and instructions on outdated policies and procedures had violent consequences on the streets. After the police hiring wave, the CCRB received an increase in police misconduct complaints, especially of excessive force. For instance, high-speed pursuits resulted in nine civilian deaths from 1990 to 1991 and reflected a decrease in the required hours of driving instruction from the original 40 hours to 24. Some recruits in the academy reflected on their training: "There was nothing but how to use lethal force. We go from zero to 60 just because we weren't given proper tools," recalled Julian Caballero, who started in the academy in May 1990 and left shortly after. MPD's cutbacks in training affected initiatives to increase the

[159] Former police chief Jerry V. Wilson, who led the MPD from 1969 through 1974, believed that the problem was cyclical as hiring waves were always tied to a lack of proper screening and training. Harriston and Flaherty, "D.C. Police."
[160] Harriston and Flaherty, "D.C. Police."

number of Spanish-speaking officers on the force. After six weeks of operation, city officials canceled an English as a second language class offered to Puerto Rican recruits.[161]

Although the congressionally mandated hiring wave was a major issue, it was also a symptom of a larger policing problem in the city. The recruits and rookies from the class of 1989-1990 were overrepresented in the share of misconduct and violence for on patrol and off-duty officers. However, another 100 officers from across ranks were arrested for crimes between 1989 and 1994. There was a culture of misconduct and negligence in the MPD that emboldened officers to believe that their crimes during off-hours would not result in losing their jobs. Officers came to know this as "the Bacon rule," which created a threshold for the "acceptable" level of criminal activity before real consequences and loss of job. Misconduct was widely common among top-ranking police officers in the MPD.[162]

4.6 Conclusion

Federal power and local dynamics contributed to the contentious atmosphere between Latinos and police in Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant. The CCRB's backlog of citizen complaints was compounded by MPD's politicized officer review process and a system that lacked accountability for police misconduct. The federal government and Barry's administration also contributed to the flourishing of police brutality in the District. Congressional budget increases and hiring waves exacerbated the problem, which resulted in strained relationships between the police and residents. Latinos' difficult experiences with police were not unique, as

[161] Keith A. Harriston and Mary Pat Flaherty, "Standards Eased in Rush to Expand Force," *The Washington Post*, August 29, 1994.
[162] The rule got its name from Deputy Chief Charles R. Bacon, who in 1981 was charged with assault with the intention to commit murder. Bacon had fired four shots at another detective he was having an affair with. The case was dropped by prosecutors in Prince George's County. Bacon faced disciplinary action by the department but successfully appealed and eventually received a series of promotions, becoming commander of the Sixth District in 1992. Mary Pat Flaherty, "Some Supervisors Not Affected by Missteps," *The Washington Post*, August 31, 1994.

police brutality was widespread across the city and predominantly targeted Black residents. However, recent Salvadoran migrants and Dominican youth felt harassed and brutalized as fellow residents and law enforcement scrutinized their daily activities and socializing on the streets. Moralizing forces converged with tough-on-crime ideals, resulting in local police's rampant use of disorderly conduct arrests on Latino men and youth. Contentious police-community relations, changing neighborhood dynamics, Congress's fast-tracked police expansions, and negligent police oversight made up the undercurrents beneath the events on May 5, 1991, and the subsequent uprising in the Latino community of Mount Pleasant.

Chapter 5 "A Manifestation Of Frustration": The Mount Pleasant Uprising of 1991

In December 1967, Carlos Rosario warned the city and federal government that Latinos in the District could resort to violence if their demands continued to be overlooked. "While many of the benefits achieved by the disadvantaged Negro population have come through violence, or threats of violence, the needy Spanish-speaking D.C. residents are reluctant to resort to such acts," claimed Rosario. "It is their hope that they can ultimately—preferably soon—achieve their objectives without recourse to similar strategy."[1] Rosario's warning, which alluded to the series of urban uprisings in the summer of 1967, did not become a reality for the District until 1991.[2] In Washington, D.C., the deferral of resources and recognition heightened tensions among Latino residents, the Black majority, and the Black-led city government. Rosario's Latino community in 1967 was markedly different from the Latino community in the 1990s, which was made up of a Salvadoran majority. While the demands for representation and more social services persisted in the Latino community, the Salvadoran community's' level of need outstripped that of previous generations. The federal government's implementation of IRCA in 1986, which foreclosed citizenship paths for Salvadorans who arrived after the 1982 cut-off date and restricted employment opportunities, extended Salvadoran reliance on Latino-serving agencies in Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant. Moreover, tensions between this group of migrants, their white and

[1] Paul Delaney, "D.C. Poverty Aid Asked for Spanish-Speaking," *The Evening Star*, December 20, 1967.
[2] Urban uprisings occurred in places such as Detroit, Newark, and Los Angeles. For some of these histories see: Thomas J. Sugrue, "Long Hot Summers," in *Sweet Land of Liberty: The Forgotten Struggle for Civil Rights in the North* (New York: Random House, 2008), 313-355; Heather Ann Thompson, *Whose Detroit? Politics, Labor, and Race in a Modern American City* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001); Kevin Mumford, *Newark: A History of Race, Rights, and Riots in America* (New York: New York University Press, 2008).

Black neighbors, and law enforcement exacerbated general mistrusts. Latino agencies and their leaders had continuously petitioned the city government to intervene and do more for the community. However, the city's failure to provide sufficient assistance, compounded by political marginalization and tenuous interracial dynamics, contributed to the 1991 Mount Pleasant Uprising. The police shooting of a Salvadoran man on the night of May 5 ignited the Latino community into protest and rebellion.

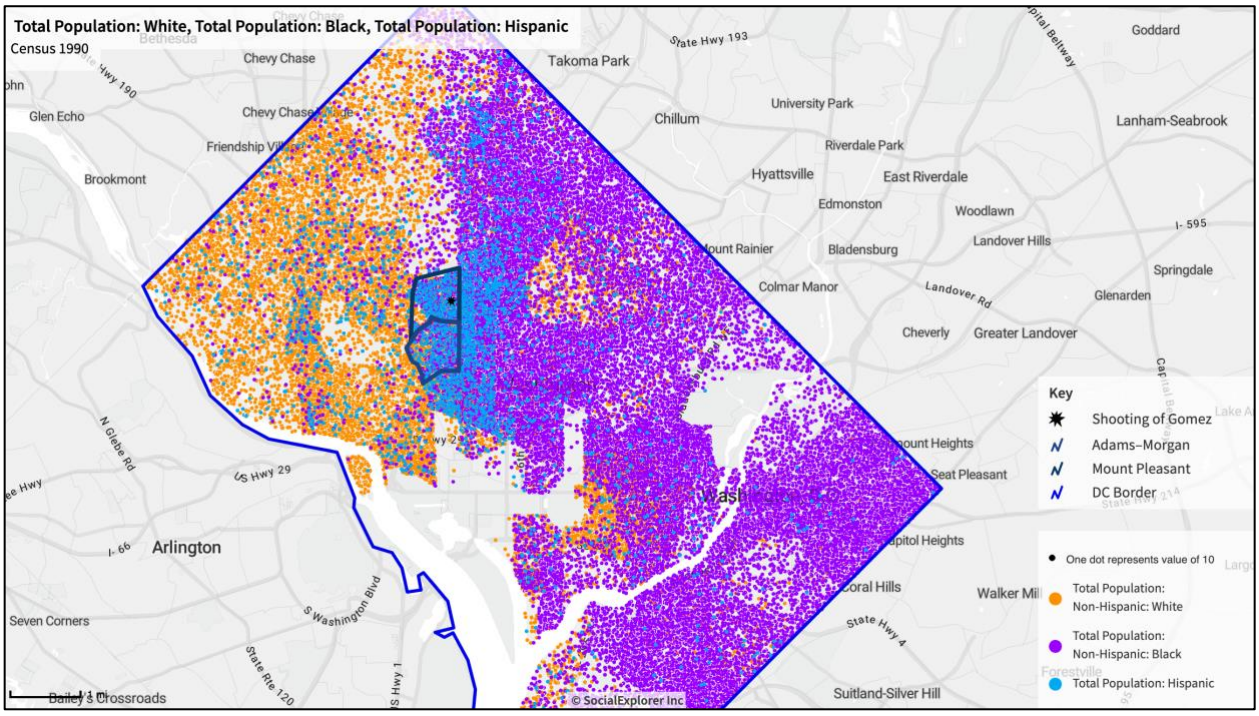


Figure 5.1 Map of Total Population, Washington, D.C. (1990). This map uses dot density to represent the total population racial breakdown of the District. Each dot represents ten people. The total white (Non-Hispanic) population is in orange, Black (Non-Hispanic) is in purple, and Hispanic is in blue. The outlines within the District denote the boundaries of Mount Pleasant (to the north) and Adams-Morgan (to the south). The black start in Mount Pleasant represents the location at Lamont Park of the police shooting of Daniel Gomez which sparked three nights of protest in 1991. Source: Map created by author using Social Explorer.

The precedent and structures for community organizing set by Puerto Rican leaders in the 1970s no longer served the majority-Central American Latino community of the 1990s. Puerto Rican leaders did not adjust their approach to account for the existence of a Salvadoran majority and how their unique immigration situation shaped their interactions with the city and federal

government. In the aftermath of the uprising, Puerto Rican leaders participated in the formation of the D.C. Latino Civil Rights Task Force and knew that a Salvadoran needed to be the new public face of the group. Sonia Gutiérrez nominated Pedro Avilés, an active community member and leader for a new generation, and by unanimous vote he was elected the Task Force's chairman.[3] Avilés was born in El Salvador and moved to D.C. in 1974 to join his mother who was already living and working in the city. In 1986, at 28 years old, he moved into Mount Pleasant.[4] Avilés led the Task Force in negotiations with the city and its new mayor, Sharon Pratt.[5] Sharon Pratt had succeeded Marion Barry 1990, after Mayor Barry dropped out of the mayoral election following a series of high-profile.[6]

After ten years of Marion Barry's administration, Sharon Pratts's tenure ushered in a major shift for the District's governance. Sharon Pratt was sworn into office four months before the Mount Pleasant disturbance, becoming the first African American woman to lead a major American city. Pratt was a native Washingtonian and was part of the city's Black upper class. A vocal critic of Barry, Pratt argued that he had overstayed as mayor and was responsible for the city's economic troubles. Her election was also a shift in the male-dominated political trend in the District.[7] Along with Pratt's victory, Eleanor Holmes Norton was elected the new Congressional Representative for the District, replacing Walter Fauntroy who had held the

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[3] Arturo Griffiths Interview, Mount Pleasant Riot Oral History Project, January 4, 2018, http://hdl.handle.net/1961/dcplislandora:42736; Pedro Avilés Interview, Mount Pleasant Riot Oral History Project, November 15, 2017, https://digdc.dclibrary.org/islandora/object/dcplislandora%3A42728.
[4] Pedro Avilés Interview, Mount Pleasant Riot Oral History Project, November 15, 2017, https://digdc.dclibrary.org/islandora/object/dcplislandora%3A42728.
[5] During the 1990s, Sharon Pratt's last name changed. While she was sworn in as mayor as Sharon Pratt Dixon, she divorced and remarried, changing her name to Pratt Kelly. For ease and consistency, I refer to her as Sharon Pratt, which is her current preferred name.
[6] Chris Myers Asch and George Derek Musgrove, *Chocolate City: A History of Race and Democracy in the Nation's Capital* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2017); Harry Jaffe and Tom Sherwood, *Dream City: Race, Power, and the Decline of Washington* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994).
[7] For more on gender politics in D.C. see Lauren Pearlman, *Democracy's Capital: Black Political Power in Washington, D.C. 1960s-1970s* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2019), 239.

position since its creation in 1971. Mayor Pratt took office amidst the background of a growing local and national crime wave and an economic recession. In her inaugural address, Pratt pledged to "clean house" in the District's government by doing away with a decade of "excess," re-focusing on service and shared values.[8] Using the refrain "Yes We Can and Yes We Will," what she referred to as an ethic, Pratt vowed to "move our city beyond the troubles of drugs and crimes, racial polarization, and mounting financial problems."[9] Pratt's new agenda aimed to downsize local government in an effort to tackle the inherited budget deficit. The administration's goal was to balance the books, and in doing so, invest in the future of a growing and modern metropolitan city.[10]

Mayor Pratt's inaugural address hinted at the philosophy she would use to engage with the disgruntled Latino community in the wake of the uprising. In the inaugural address, Mayor Pratt lauded D.C.'s multicultural and multiracial community, paralleling the symbolism of Adams-Morgan and Mount Pleasant as the city's melting pot. Her ideas of multiculturalism shaped her approach to the Task Force. Pratt believed, as had older generations of Black city politicians, that Latino issues were part of a larger tapestry of city problems. Avilés, the Task Force, and Latino residents disagreed. Moreover, Pratt's agenda distinctly had the goal of pushing Congress into aiding in the rebuilding of the nation's capital and promoting full equity

[8] C-SPAN, "Washington, DC Mayor Inaugural Address," January 2, 1991, https://www.c-span.org/video/?15589-1/washington-dc-mayor-inaugural-address. On November 26, 1991, Mayor Pratt unveiled her new crime and violence control plan titled "War of Values." The plan echoed the themes in her inaugural address and focused on saving at-risk youth and reform of community policing and the criminal justice system. See: Mayor Sharon Pratt Dixon, "A New Start, A War of Values to Save our Children," November 26, 1991, Folder 1 Press Releases 1/2 1991-1992, Box 15, Sharon Pratt Kelly Papers, Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, Howard University [hereinafter Kelly Papers, Howard University].
[9] C-SPAN, "Washington, DC Mayor Inaugural Address," January 2, 1991, https://www.c-span.org/video/?15589-1/washington-dc-mayor-inaugural-address
[10] Asch and Musgrove, *Chocolate City*, 416.

by renegotiating the federal payment and pushing for the passage of statehood.[11] In response to Latino demands outlined in numerous high-profile reports, including one by the United States Commission on Civil Rights (USCCR), Pratt punted city responsibility to remedy the historic neglect of Latinos to the federal government. Although Pratt was right about the federal government's role and partial responsibility for the Latino problem, her insistence on the federal government's obligation left Task Force leaders unsatisfied about the city's willingness to be a partner in addressing their demands.

Similarly, the Latino community also had a new wave of leadership. Avilés, echoing a younger generation, had a more adversarial relationship with Pratt and the city government. Salvadorans made the issue of police brutality a central focus of their demands. Avilés and his supporters wanted to steer the Task Force in a newer, more progressive direction away from tactics used by previous Puerto Rican leaders and to challenge the city by using federal discrimination lawsuits. Eventually, a more moderate wing of the group won out and the Task Force resorted to previously relied on tactics of working in collaboration with the city, foreclosing substantive progress on the issues facing the city's Latino communities.[12]

5.1 Mount Pleasant Uprising

Tensions among the MPD, Latinos, and the African American majority symbolically and physically came to a head on May 5, 1991 in Mount Pleasant. The incident began that evening when Officer Angela Jewell, a Black rookie policewoman just six months on the Fourth District force, was on foot patrol with Officer Girsel Del Valle when they responded to complaints of public disorder and drinking in the area. The officers approached Daniel Enrique Gomez, a 30-

[11] C-SPAN, "Washington, DC Mayor Inaugural Address," January 2, 1991, https://www.c-span.org/video/?15589-1/washington-dc-mayor-inaugural-address
[12] Asch and Musgrove, *Chocolate City*, 415.

year-old immigrant from El Salvador, and two other Latino men for public drinking in the local park at 17th and Lamont Street (see Figure 5.2). Gomez was typical of working-class Salvadoran men in the District. He had emigrated to D.C. in 1989 and worked a service industry job washing dishes. As was part of the rituals of most Salvadoran service workers in the city, Gomez met up with friends to drink in the park.[13] A series of miscommunications due to language differences transpired between Officer Jewell and Gomez. Officer Jewell and her partner cited the men for public intoxication and the situation escalated, resulting in Gomez's arrest. Officer Jewell was in the process of handcuffing Gomez when they began to scuffle. The incident then escalated when Officer Jewell shot Gomez in the chest. Conflicting accounts of the shooting were colored by the racial tensions long present in the neighborhood and across the city. Some witnesses claimed that Jewell had shot Gomez in the back while he was in handcuffs and that he had died as a result. Others claimed to have seen Gomez pull out a knife on Officer Jewell before she shot him.[14] As members of the community watched the incident unfold and Gomez was taken away by ambulance, crowds gathered in the area. Long stemming frustrations manifested into action.[15] Protesters organized in the Mount Pleasant neighborhood that Sunday night as news and retellings of the shooting quickly spread through the Latino community. By nightfall, Latino youth, men, and women broke out chants for "*Justicia!*" on the streets, expressing their collective anger towards the MPD and the city. Gomez spent a month in the hospital and was

[13] Asch and Musgrove, *Chocolate City*, 414.
[14] Officer Jewell later testified in court that "even though I realized what had happened, I was angry at the defendant for making me shoot him." Linda Wheeler, "Officer Testifies About Shooting in Mt. Pleasant," *The Washington Post*, November 10, 1992; Ruben Castaneda, "The Man in the Eye of the Storm," *The Washington Post*, May 13, 1991.
[15] Gabriel Escobar and Nancy Lewis, "For Every Witness, Yet Another Account of the 'Real' Story," *The Washington Post*, May 7, 1991.

ultimately paralyzed by the shooting. Traumatized by the incident, Gomez never returned to Mount Pleasant again.[16]

City officials and Latino leaders struggled to contain the contentious atmosphere in Mount Pleasant. After the first night of tensions, Mayor Sharon Pratt made it a point to be visible around the community. On the second day of disturbances, Mayor Pratt along with Latino religious and community leaders and Jesse Jackson marched along Mount Pleasant Street.[17] However, the peaceful display was not enough to contain the resurgence and intensity of protests. Cathy Lanier, a rookie police officer at the time, remembers "trying to protect my head as we stood on line and rocks and bottles coming at you." "I've never seen anything like Mount Pleasant Street on the second night after the police shooting occurred. It was like a war zone," claimed Lanier.[18] Still, police violence directed at Latino youth continued during the uprising. Latino community leaders witnessed a police car jump the curb and speed towards a group of about twenty Latino youth who were walking away from the street protests. The Deputy Police Chief witnessed the potentially deadly incident and acknowledged to community leaders that it was fortunate no one was injured.[19] Latino youth and other protesters actively defended themselves against moments of police escalation.

[16] Task Force, *The Latino Blueprint*, 3.
[17] Jesse J. Jackson was active in D.C. politics and a proponent of statehood. On November 6, 1990, he was elected to a six-year term as one of the District's shadow senators. Emily Friedman, "Mount Pleasant Riots: May 5 Woven into Neighborhood's History," WAMU, May 5, 2011, https://wamu.org/story/11/05/05/mount_pleasant_riots_may_5_woven_into_neighborhoods_history/.
[18] Cathy Lanier would become MPD's Police Chief in 2007 until 2016; Friedman, "Mount Pleasant."
[19] Task Force, *The Latino Blueprint*, 17.

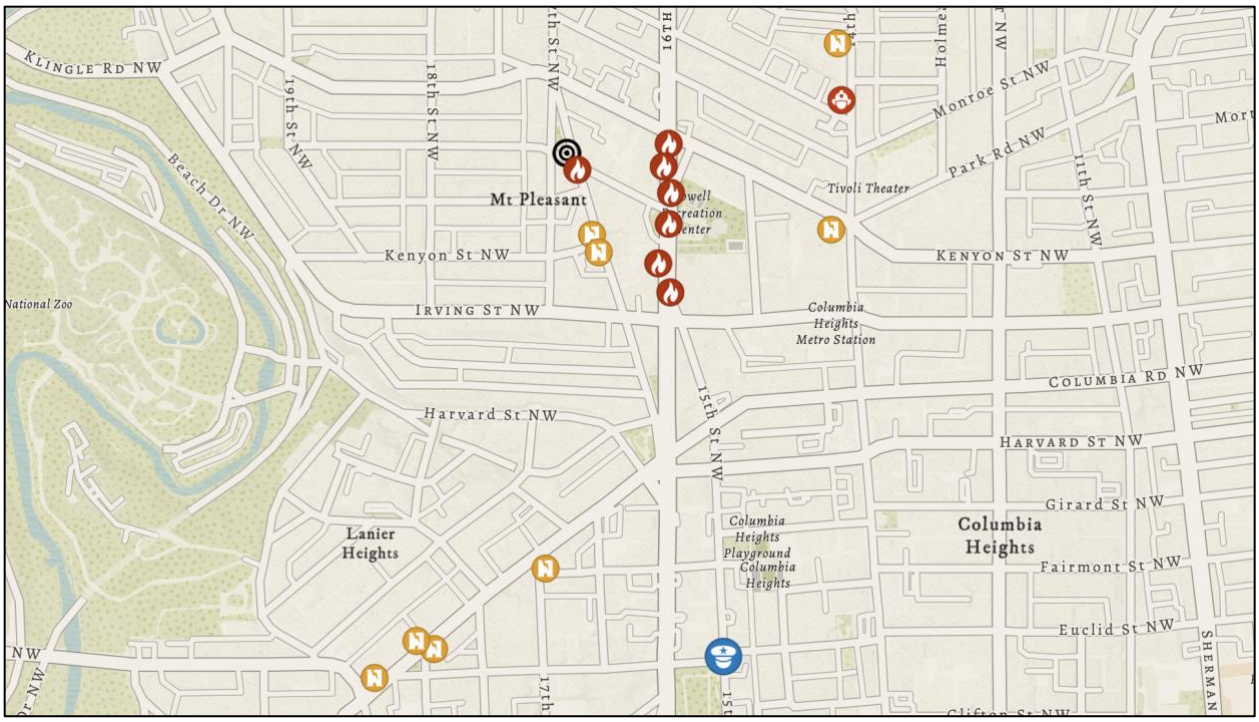


Figure 5.2 Map of Mount Pleasant Uprising, May 5-7, 1991. The points on the map each represent different incidents that occurred over the span of three nights. The black target point represents the initial location of the police shooting at Lamont Park in Mount Pleasant. The blue police figure represents the location of a police command post. The fire figures in red represent locations of vehicles burned during the protests. The red fireman figure represents a firehouse damaged by protesters. The yellow figures represent the location of looted businesses. Map recreated by author using ArcGIS Online.[20]

The uprising lasted for three nights, starting in the Mount Pleasant neighborhood and then spreading to parts of the surrounding areas of Adams-Morgan and Columbia Heights. Protesters set on fire, vandalized, and looted around thirty local businesses, including the Church's Fried Chicken on Mount Pleasant Avenue (see Figure 5.2). They threw rocks and bricks at police cordons and damaged or burned twenty police vehicles and twenty-one Metro buses. Graffiti across the neighborhood continued to urged "*Fuera Policías, Justicia.*"[21] Members from the community, including the Capuchin friar from Sacred Heart Church Rev. Mark Poletunow, believed the actual looters, especially on the last day May 7, were outsiders who seized on the

[20] This map recreates a map from *The Washington Post*, May 7, 1991.
[21] Translation: "Police Get Out, Justice."

moment of unrest as an opportunity.[22] Alejandro Compagnet, community activist, president of Council of Hispanic Agencies, and head of the Salud, a Latino civil rights group and community clinic, stated: "This thing started as a Latino issue, but now many young people–poor people–are coming in just for the action."[23] Frank Smith, Jr., City Council representative for Ward 1, acknowledged: "I want to note [that] a lot of the looters we saw Monday night were young black teenagers. I heard they were coming all the way from Southeast for a chance to loot. The budget cuts we felt have been especially hard by black folks."[24] A survey of arrest records show that 9 percent of people arrested lived in Maryland or Virginia.[25] It is unclear why these protesters were in the area and if they were deviating from supporting protesters. The figure may also discount the possibility that outsiders were part of the larger metropolitan Latino communities that existed in both of those areas.

Mayor Pratt eventually declared a state of emergency and a curfew on Tuesday night that lasting from 7 p.m. to 5 a.m. and covered a four square-mile area.[26] The mayor claimed the decision to institute a curfew was aimed at restoring the peace. "We are now prepared to go to massive arrests. We're going to restore law and order, and we're going to do it tonight," argued Pratt. "People's nerves are frayed; people have grown weary.... Some of them can't even enjoy their homes."[27] Curfews have been justified by elected officials and law enforcement to curtail movement and encourage public safety in the midst of disturbances. However, curfews also act as surveillance tools that tamp down political confrontations, particularly by non-white minority

[22] Mark Poletunow Interview, Mount Pleasant Riot Oral History Project, November 18, 2017, https://digdc.dclibrary.org/islandora/object/dcplislandora%3A42858#page/7/mode/1up.
[23] Peter Honey and Tom Bowman, "Police Enforce Curfew in D.C. for 2nd Night," *The Baltimore Sun*, May 8, 1991.
[24] Christine Spolar, "The Painful Lessons of Mount Pleasant," *The Washington Post*, May 12, 1991.
[25] Rene Sanchez and Debbi Wilgoren, "D.C. Police Consulted INS During Disturbance," *The Washington Post*, May 11, 1991.
[26] The area was bounded by Piney Branch Parkway, Spring Road, 11th Street, New Hampshire Avenue, Rock Creek Parkway, and S Street. Honey and Bowman, "Police Enforce."
[27] Peter Honey, "Riots Hit D.C. for Second Night," *The Baltimore Sun*, May 7, 1991.

communities, and assert dominance over the streets. As a law enforcement tool, this tactic further criminalizes protesting groups and prioritizes the protection of property and property-owners.[28] Along with the curfew, the mayor and MPD Chief Isaac Fulwood Jr. authorized the deployment of 1,000 police officers in riot gear to maintain a cordon of the area to prevent the spread of protests. Police claimed "we won tonight" as they were able to contain the perimeter by using tear gas to disperse protesters and issued thirty-three arrests of mostly youths.[29]

The city's implementation of a curfew on Tuesday night caught some residents by surprise. According to the MPD, arrests were only to be made for individuals who did not have identification or were not heading home or to work after the curfew's start. One police captain categorized curfew violators as "arrogant and defiant, or else curiosity seekers."[30] However, Amilcar Blanco, a 22-year-old resident of Irving Street NW in the area, was wrongfully arrested and charged with a curfew violation. Police approached Blanco, who had just parked his car and was walking home. "I said, 'What's the charge?' and they said, 'Throwing rocks and bottles,'" recounted Blanco, "then they searched me and found nothing, but they said, 'You're going in anyways." Blanco claimed he was driving a friend home who was afraid to walk during the curfew.[31] In addition to the police's wide use of discretion with the pretense of enforcing the state of emergency, arrests for curfew violations also seemingly doubled as drug arrests. For instance, on Tuesday night, two men charged with curfew violations were also charged with possession of marijuana; a third person was arrested and charged with cocaine possession.[32]

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[28] Chrispher Petrella, "How Curfews have Historically Been Used to Restrict the Physical and Political Movements of Black People in the U.S.," *The Washington Post,* June 3, 2020. Sidney Fine, *Violence in the Model City: The Cavanagh Administration, Race Relations, and the Detroit Riot of 1967* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1989)
[29] "Mayor Dixon and Mount Pleasant," *The Washington Post*, May 9, 1991; Rene Sanchez, "Curfew Leaves Mount Pleasant Area Quieter," *The Washington Post*, May 8, 1991.
[30] Sanchez and Wilgoren, "D.C. Police."
[31] Sanchez and Wilgoren, "D.C. Police."
[32] Sanchez and Wilgoren, "D.C. Police."

Around 230 people were arrested by the MPD over the three nights. The *Washington Post* conducted a survey of the publicly available arrest records after the uprising. After the first night of disturbances on Sunday, the number of Latino individuals arrested by the MPD dropped by half. MPD arrested twenty-one Latinos on Sunday and arrested only eleven by the end of Tuesday night.[33] Of the reported 105 adults arrested, 70 percent were for curfew violation. The majority of people arrested for curfew violations were not Latinos: 63 percent were Black (non-Hispanic), 22 percent Latino, and 11 percent white (non-Hispanic). Individuals arrested for non-curfew related charges were booked for assaulting a police officer, throwing objects, and looting. Most of the people arrested by police were also under the age of thirty. Of the selection of 105 arrests, 49 percent were 18 to 22 year old, 33 percent were between 23 and 30, and 18 percent were older than 30.[34] Arrest records supported politicians' claims that although protest was initiated by Latinos in Mount Pleasant, members of other racial groups joined in. Although some may have been "taking advantage" of the chaos, an atmosphere of shared frustration over police misconduct, growing economic disadvantage, and poor living conditions drew Black youth to the area and to protest.

MPD also requested INS support during the protests, contradicting their 1980s policy to not voluntarily collaborate with INS. Marion Barry's administration and the police department had worked hard to distance themselves from INS in order to foster trust among the undocumented Latino community and to encourage the groups use of city services and the reporting of crimes.[35] MDP asked INS officials to provide information about some arrested

[33] The breakdown of total arrest per day are as follows: Sunday-Monday morning: 25 arrests and 21 Latinos; Monday night-Tuesday morning: 17 arrests, 5 Latinos, 13 arrests for curfew violations; Tuesday night-Wednesday morning: 36 arrests, 11 Latinos, 33 for curfew violations; Wednesday night-Tuesday morning: 27 arrests, 3 Latino, 27 for curfew violations. Sanchez and Wilgoren, "D.C. Police."
[34] Sanchez and Wilgoren, "D.C. Police."
[35] See Chapter 4 for a discussion of these policies.

protesters. According to Lt. Reginald Smith, spokesman for the MPD, of the 230 people arrested during the protests, 25 percent were Latinos and 16 percent were juveniles. However, the *Washington Post* survey found that out of 105 of the discovered adult arrests, 53 percent were non-Hispanic Black, 8 percent were non-Hispanic white, 1 percent Asian, and 38 percent were Hispanic mostly from El Salvador.[36] Following Latino leaders' objections, MPD removed the four INS agents present at the police's mobile command. "We played a minor role there," stated Duke Austin, the INS spokesman, "given the situation, there was a recognition that the INS could have inflamed the situation. We did not want to hear it."[37] Austin also claimed MPD requested background checks on less than a dozen arrested individuals. City officials also tried to clarify that MPD asked INS for assistance to trace individuals' community ties and information about potential tactics used to spread violence. Mayor Pratt met with Latino representatives and attempted to ease concerns about the city's stance towards INS cooperation. "Under no circumstances has the government brought in the immigration bureau at all," stated the mayor.

Nevertheless, INS's presence did not go unnoticed by the community and raised uncertainty among Central American and undocumented migrants. "It was very offensive that they were there," stated Cecilia Munoz, senior policy analyst at the National Council for La Raza. "It didn't help the community calm down, and it didn't help dispel myths about the community."[38] Vada Manager, Mayor Pratts's spokesperson, claimed "there's no contradiction" between the city government policy and INS presence during the disturbance. "What the mayor has been addressing is that we had not asked anyone to come in and make arrests or be on the

[36] Rene Sanchez and Debbi Wilgoren, "D.C. Police Consulted INS During Disturbance," *The Washington Post*, May 11, 1991.
[37] Christine Spolar, "Mount Pleasant Anger Stirred by Distrust of INS: Hispanics' Wariness, Fear Seem Out of Proportion to Activities of Immigration Agency," *The Washington Post*, May 18, 1991.
[38] Spolar, "Mount Pleasant Anger."

streets of Mount Pleasant," reiterated Manager. "We just needed to have intelligence for information on certain incidents, to see what kind of tactics we were dealing with. It was for that purpose only—not to cart people across the border on the stop." However, this stance ignored the Latino community's underlying concerns about the INS regardless of the nature of their presence in the neighborhood. Suzanne Cepeda, executive director of the Council of Hispanic Agencies, agreed with Munoz's frustration: "The presence of the INS always makes people very concerned. People will be afraid and frustrated to hear that."[39]

Residents' reactions to the police response to the uprising were mixed. While some praised their restraint in preventing further escalations and loss of life, others believed swifter action would have prevented the prolonging of unrest and, most importantly, property damage. City Council Chairman John Wilson (Ward 2), who continued to be in the Mount Pleasant area along with the mayor during the three nights, argued that the curfew was "a reasonable response to an unreasonable situation."[40] Chief Fulwood instructed officers to remain in staging areas and not to shoot or beat protesters. Business owners and white residents, on the other hand, were exasperated by the police's perceived inaction. Russell Smith, a resident of the area, claimed: "It is beyond comprehension that Monday was allowed to unfold the way it did. Rather than enforcing, the police retreated." Some police officers also expressed their frustration at Chief Fulwood's commands and, as a result, their inability to retaliate against protesters' antagonizations.[41] Chief Fulwood believed he made the right call and blamed racial undertones for criticism by some residents who complained of police inaction, in particular preventing looting and property damage. "If I were a white chief of police, you would have written on the

[39] Sanchez and Wilgoren, "D.C. Police."
[40] Sanchez, "Curfew."
[41] Spolar, "The Painful Lessons"; Letter to the Editor, *The Washington Post*, May 16, 1991.

front page how great we were," lamented Chief Fulwood. "Because I'm black, we didn't get any credit. I believe that. We handled that situation in a textbook way. We chose life over property. No one was seriously injured."[42]

5.1.1 Reactions to the Uprising

The uprising in the nation's capital brought local and national attention to the Mount Pleasant neighborhood. It also spotlighted the plight of Latinos, especially Salvadorans, throughout the District with a warning to surrounding suburbs and other cities in the country. Latino and agency leaders were unsurprised by the outbreak of frustration and violence on May 5. Pedro Avilés and other Salvadorans who had consistently voiced concerns over police-community relations and the District government's general underestimation, claimed the situation was "predictable and predicated."[43] Armando Maya, a spokesman for the Central American Refugee Committee, noted that the protests symbolized a Latino community at its limits. "We can't tolerate this situation no more," stated Maya. "We have to make people know we are human and we have rights too." Maya, who himself had escaped from El Salvador and its civil wars, particularly noted the inhumanity faced by Latinos when interacting with local police. "Many, many times, people are beat up while they are arrested. We are treated like we are not humans. We don't get to exercise our rights."[44] National Latino-focused organizations saw the events in Mount Pleasant as a harbinger for the future of Latino communities, recalling Senator Montoya's approach to the capital's Latinos. "The root cause of what's going on," noted Lisa

[42] Sara Horwitz, "Rating the Chief," *The Washington Post*, June 30, 1991.
[43] Testimony of Pedro Avilés, Chairman of DC Latino Rights Task Force, United States House of Representatives, Committee on Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs, *Effectiveness of Federal Assistance Programs in Meeting Fiscal Distress, Part II*, 102nd Congress, 1st Session (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1991).
[44] Bob Dart, "Hispanic Anger, Frustration Boil Over in Nation's Capital: Leaders Decry Bias, Lack of Opportunity," *The Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, May 8, 1991.

Navarrete, National Council of La Raza spokeswoman, "is the frustration of a community that has been neglected by the city government for a long time."[45]

Beyond poor police-community-relations, activists also blamed poor housing conditions, discriminatory employment practices, and a general lack of economic services available to the community. The city and federal government had imposed financial cutbacks in Latino-serving agencies since the mid-1980s. Community frustration was already high as a result of the reduction of programs, such as the bilingual education program at Gordon Center. While news coverage focused on the looted businesses on fire, Latinos remembered, in stark contrast, the fire that killed nine people in an overcrowded building on Irving Street in 1986.[46] Latinos were already facing death and destruction due to poor living conditions and predatory landlords. As Pedro Avilés noted, the events were "a manifestation of frustration coming from harassment, from resentment, and rejection, and particularly lack of respect that the community feels that we are being victims from the city."[47]

Other residents and activists in Mount Pleasant supported complaints voiced by their Latino neighbors and acknowledged their plight for recognition in the city. "The Mt. Pleasant riots, I think, were an expression – a collective expression – of a community that had at least, if somebody hadn't experienced that [police brutality] personally, somebody in their family had," explained Rev. Poletunow, "and it was common knowledge, common experience."[48] Lawrence Guyot, an African American former civil rights organizer who moved to the city to campaign for Marion Barry in 1978, believed "white racism, the powerlessness of Hispanics and the tensions

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[45] Dart, "Hispanic Anger."
[46] Margaret Engel, "Mt. Pleasant House Fire Kills 9," *The Washington Post*, January 27, 1986.
[47] Testimony of Pedro Avilés, Chairman, DC Latino Rights Task Force, United States House of Representatives, Committee on Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs, *Effectiveness of Federal Assistance Programs in Meeting Fiscal Distress, Part II*, 102nd Congress, 1st Session (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1991).
[48] Mark Poletunow Interview, Mount Pleasant Riot Oral History Project, November 18, 2017, https://digdc.dclibrary.org/islandora/object/dcplislandora%3A42858#page/7/mode/1up

between Hispanics and blacks" contributed to the violence. "We can't deal in this city with race," Guyot claimed.[49] Suann Hecht worked alongside Latino youth in the area and witnessed how their frustrations at constant police harassment, brutality, and arrests stoked their activism during the uprising. "They wanted changes. They wanted something more to happen, and they wanted more services," claimed Hecht, "and they wanted to stop being harassed by the police."[50] Charlene Howard, an African American homeowner, sympathized with protesters and community activists pushing for recognition and change. "If you want something, you got to make some noise, you got to act like you want it," argued Howard, "and you got to be aggressive. This is America, that's the way they operate."[51] As a result of this "noise," Howard believes the events surrounding the disturbance forced other Mount Pleasant residents to finally recognize their Latino neighbors. "It woke them up to pay attention, to say 'Okay, there's a new population in the neighborhood now, so you either accept or move out,'" states Howard.

On the other hand, more conservative residents and business owners were frustrated by the violence and the negative portrayals of Mount Pleasant. Letters to the editor captured the mixed feelings and opinions of the May events and attempted to make distinctions between the violent protesters and the rest of the community. Robert D. Bell resented the media coverage that sensationalized violence and looting. "This impugns the good citizenship of the majority of the neighborhood residents, who are the unfortunate victims of this violence," maintained Bell. "This tarnishes the Mount Pleasant and Adams-Morgan neighborhoods' reputation in the eye of those from other parts of the metropolitan area whose continued patronage is so important to the

[49] Nell Henderson, "Power at Ballot Box Eludes D.C. Hispanics," *The Washington Post*, May 5, 1992.
[50] Suann Hecht Interview, Mount Pleasant Oral History Project, January 26, 2018, http://hdl.handle.net/1961/dcplislandora:42907.
[51] Charlene Howard Interview, Mount Pleasant Riot Oral History Project, October 31, 2017, http://hdl.handle.net/1961/dcplislandora:42737

survival of our small businesses." Bell's comments echoed the original wave of white gentrifiers who were concerned with optics in the neighborhood. Although they were drawn to the area's charm from its diversity, they also imposed their ideals of respectability in monitoring Latino behavior. Fran Hoyle claimed to speak on behalf of Central American friends by distinguishing between hard-working immigrants and those she associated with protesting. "Many rioting were trash who hang out drinking all day, go from job to job and participate in illegal activities," stated Hoyle. "Trash is trash no matter what the ethnic background."[52] Hoyle reiterated judgment-based interpretations of who were the deserving and undeserving members of the community. Immigrants who worked hard and did not complain were respected. Day laborers who struggled to find work or chose to congregate and socialize in parks drinking were unacceptable. The recent enforcement of IRCA had made it harder for Salvadorans to find and maintain work.[53] Moreover, Hoyle's characterization of rioters further perpetuated stereotypes and criminalization of Latino youth, who were the main protesters.

Mayor Pratt, city council officials, and the MPD struggled to make sense of the uprising and meaningfully address the long-term demands of the Latino community. Although Latino leaders immediately demanded an independent investigation into the shooting incident, Mayor Pratt declined. Additionally, Officer Jewell was not reassigned from her post.[54] Competition over resources, especially during extensive budget cuts, and questions of rightlessness shaped the contours of debates over the Mount Pleasant uprising, who bore responsibility, and responses. Mayor Pratt acknowledged that African Americans and Latinos in the city were "scrambling for

[52] Letters to the Editor, "Riot, Outrage and Individual Accountability," *The Washington Post*, May 10, 1991.
[53] IRCA's employment sanctions allowed employers to reject and discriminate against Salvadoran migrants. Discussed more below.
[54] Sanchez, "Curfew."

the same crumbs" as a result of the national recession.[55] In response to the Latino leaders' call for equitable allocation of resources and political representation, Councilman for Ward 7 H. R. Crawford, a prominent African American real estate developer and businessman, exclaimed: "If they [Latinos] don't appreciate our country, get out." Fellow Councilman William Lightfoot (At-Large) took a more moderate stance. "I believe the Latino Community is entitled to their fair share of city contracts and services," claimed Lightfoot, "but I won't allow that to happen at the expense of the African American community."[56] Lightfoot's comment evoked debates over the designation of minority in affirmative action contracts between Black politicians and Latino activists. Black politicians echoed the "us versus them" idea of deservedness that permeated city politics when it came to discussions of Latino's standing in the city.

City council leaders, themselves members of Black Power and civil rights groups that had pushed D.C.'s white establishment for greater autonomy, related to the Latino community's predicament and reflected on their own previous struggles for representation.[57] However, these Black politicians also justified previous neglect by either claiming that the Latino problem was part of a larger economic and class issue or that the federal government, due to its discriminatory immigration policies, bore ultimate responsibility. Chairman Wilson claimed to "understand what it feels like to be invisible more than anyone can imagine."[58] "We don't have a Hispanic problem in this city," believed Wilson, "we have a poor people's problem in the city."[59] Councilman Smith empathized with his Ward 1 Latino constituents' struggle and drew comparisons to his own experiences as a civil rights activist. "The Hispanics see the police

[55] "Cassette--Mayor Sharon P. Kelly testifies before U.S. Comm. Re: Latino Task Force, 1992," Box 8, Kelly Papers, Howard University.
[56] Juan Williams, "Black Power's New Dilemma: The D.C. Establishment that Fought for Civil Rights Faces a Latino Demand for Justice," *The Washington Post*, May 12, 1991.
[57] Asch and Musgrove, *Chocolate City.*
[58] Williams, "Black Power's."
[59] Nell Henderson, "Power at Ballot Box Eludes D.C. Hispanics," *The Washington Post*, May 5, 1992.

department as an occupying force the same way black people saw the police department as an occupying force in '68," contended Smith. "We have a black police chief now and a mostly black department, and they want Hispanics on the force, in positions of authority, and I understand that."[60] While acknowledging the need for local change, Councilman Smith also invoked the federal government's responsibility in tackling immigration issues and its rippling effects leading to the Mount Pleasant unrest. In congressional testimony, Austin Penny, Deputy Mayor for Economic Development, agreed that "a national policy of neglect that places the full burden of helping millions of new immigrants on the backs of already struggling municipalities is a national policy that is at best questionable."[61]

The schism between African American politicians and the Latino community was not easily bridged despite shared civil rights sentiments. This point of irony was not lost on some members of the Latino community. "The community is abused and rejected, and it is because of racism. It is so ironic, it's absurd," vented Ramon Acosta, a lawyer and Latino community activist. "The leaders of this city are black people who came out of the civil rights movement. If anybody should have an understanding of what it is like to be dispossessed, it is them. But it seems they've forgotten."[62] As Latino people called for justice, their accusations of racism by the African American community were unavoidable. Residents perceived the city as "owned, run, and operated by an African American community that was not going to yield any space and place

[60] Williams, "Black Power's."
[61] Testimony of Hon. Frank Smith, Jr., Councilmember for Ward 1, United States House of Representatives, Committee on Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs, *Effectiveness of Federal Assistance Programs in Meeting Fiscal Distress, Part II*, 102nd Congress, 1st Session (Washington, D.C.:GPO, 1991); Testimony of Hon. Austin Penny, Deputy Mayor for Economic Development, District of Columbia, United States House of Representatives, Committee on Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs, *Effectiveness of Federal Assistance Programs in Meeting Fiscal Distress, Part II*, 102nd Congress, 1st Session (Washington, D.C.:GPO, 1991), 49.
[62] Roger E. Hernandez, "Washington Riot Reveals Hispanics' Plight in City," *St. Petersburg Times*, May 15, 1991.

to others."[63] Some Latino leaders, such as acting director of the Office on Latino Affairs Rita Soler Ossolinski, repeated the long-held idea that Latinos wanted "acknowledgment." However, leaderships' assertion that recognition was the key to solving problems disregarded the myriad issues that Salvadoran migrants and other disempowered members of the Latino community protested over.

5.2 D.C. Latino Civil Rights Task Force

José Gutiérrez and other high-profile Puerto Rican leaders knew that they needed to act quickly to capitalize on media attention and community outrage. The Office of Latino Affairs and the chief of police originally targeted and summoned recognized community leaders to a meeting on Monday morning, May 6 to provide information on the previous day's events and strategize on how best to quell unrest. Following the meeting, the group of Latino attendees spearheaded by Gutiérrez agreed to form the D.C. Latino Civil Rights Task Force (Task Force). The original task force was comprised of twenty-five Latino members "including private, public and religious organizations and individuals."[64] The uprising made it evident to Puerto Rican leaders, including Sonia and José Gutiérrez, that Salvadorans finally needed to be recognized within leadership and send a message to the Latino community.[65] Sonia Gutiérrez also understood that the Task Force needed a voice and representative to mediate among the group, the city, and the media. In a symbolic reflection of the new direction of Latino leadership, one

[63] Mark Poletunow Interview, Mount Pleasant Riot Oral History Project, November 18, 2017, https://digdc.dclibrary.org/islandora/object/dcplislandora%3A42858#page/7/mode/1up

[64] According to Avilés, the name was suggested by José Gutierrez, a Puerto Rican who was once the highest-ranking Latino in Mayor Barry's administration. Testimony of Pedro Avilés, Chairman, DC Latino Rights Task Force, United States House of Representatives, Committee on Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs, *Effectiveness of Federal Assistance Programs in Meeting Fiscal Distress, Part II*, 102nd Congress, 1st Session (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1991), 108.

[65] Arturo Griffiths Interview, Mount Pleasant Riot Oral History Project, January 4, 2018, http://hdl.handle.net/1961/dcplislandora:42736.

which was younger and illustrative of the Salvadoran majority, Sonia Gutiérrez nominated Pedro Avilés as the spokesperson and chair of the Task Force. The group accepted Avilés by unanimous consent. Pedro Avilés was a young Salvadoran well-known activist and community organizer previously involved with the Sacred Heart Church Theater Group, El Centro de Arte, and the Latin American Youth Center. Most importantly, Avilés spoke English. As chairman of the Task Force, Avilés became the de-facto spokesperson for the whole Latino community.[66]

The Task Force's mission was to study race relations in the city, to understand why the Mount Pleasant disturbance occurred, and to present grievances to the local government.[67] According to Avilés, the organization also sought to "promote the economic well-being and political empowerment of Latinos in the Washington metropolitan area." Avilés's inclusion of Latino in the suburbs of the District highlighted the Task Force understood that what occurred in the city had ripple effects on the metropolitan community. Beyond its immediate interest in consolidating a response to the disturbance, the Task Force grew to become the main body for articulating and advocating for the Latino community, especially pushing for proportional representation in District governance.[68] "The D.C. Latino Civil Rights Task Force fills this void by providing an institutional entity which the government can interact in collaborative effort to both serve the needs and coordinate the many resources of the D.C. Latino community."[69] While Puerto Rican leaders had established the Council of Hispanic Agencies in 1977 to consolidate fundraising efforts and advocate on behalf of the community through service organizations, the newly formed Task Force sought to create a new form of engagement with the city.

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[66] Arturo Griffiths Interview, Mount Pleasant Riot Oral History Project, January 4, 2018, http://hdl.handle.net/1961/dcplislandora:42736.
[67] USCCR, *The Mount Pleasant Report*, 8.
[68] Testimony of Pedro Avilés, Chairman, DC Latino Rights Task Force, United States House of Representatives, Committee on Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs, *Effectiveness of Federal Assistance Programs in Meeting Fiscal Distress, Part II*, 102nd Congress, 1st Session (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1991), 108.
[69] Task Force, *The Latino Blueprint*, 9.

The first point of action for the Task Force was asserting its legitimacy to represent the community and engage directly with Mayor Pratt. Mayor Pratt had announced the creation of the Mayor's Multicultural Task Force on May 7 to begin working on identifying issues in the Latino community that would be tackled by the city government. The Multicultural Task Force was set up to be the mayor's designated agency in charge of conferring about the aftermath of the uprising and finding ways forward. Unlike the previous Barry administration, Pratt and her administration signaled that they intended to force conversations with Latino representatives to fall under the "multicultural" umbrella, which subsumed distinct Latino issues under all minority groups that included Asian Americans and the gay community. From the outset, the Task Force group was skeptical of the new mayor and her commitment to Latinos. Pedro Avilés, on behalf of the Task Force, wrote to the mayor on May 10 introducing the group and asserting that they were the lead representatives of the community. The Task Force notified the mayor that it was created to be the main body for negotiations with the city:

> We have been designated by our community's refusal to bow to the ravages of racism under which we have suffered and have come together because of the desperate cries of our people for equality and fairness.
>
> Our activist role, as in the past, will continue. Our responsibility is to seek out ways to address the civil rights issues of our community with what so far has appeared to be an administration which has lacked Latino participation and expertise....
>
> The actions of the Latino community in the last few days is a clear indication of the collective rage of a people who have had enough.[70]

Tensions were still high three days after the last night of the uprising, and the Task Force wanted to remind the mayor of the high stakes. The newly formed Task Force approached the meetings with the mayor as negotiations, initially setting up a more adversarial posture. The mayor's staff

[70] Pedro Avilés to Sharon Pratt Dixon, May 10, 1991, Folder Latino Affairs, Box 8, Kelly Administration, DC Archives.

pressed Pratt to encourage the Task Force to move away from use of this type of language and the public perception that the city was unwilling to participate in good faith.[71]

Internally, the Task Force members were negotiating among themselves which strategy was best suited for approaching the city and securing the most advantages. More activist members of the Task Force, supported by local law firms, wanted to file formal federal charges against the city government alleging civil rights and discrimination violations. This group were advocates of court-protected civil and human rights. The group enlisted a mediator from the U.S. Department of Justice to attend the first meeting with the mayor on May 30.[72] On the other hand, some Task Force members continued to advocate for political bloc building. Individuals sympathetic to the mayor infiltrated a Task Force meeting where such issues were discussed by members and reported back to Patricia Worthy, the mayor's chief of staff. The internal memo framed factionalism within the group as community versus personal agendas. Attendees of the meeting raised concerns about persistent intragroup dynamics. "Traditional tensions between central american and puerto rican groups rising, as well as tensions between social service providers and self-sufficiency/economic development advocates [sic]."[73] Even though Pedro Avilés was the chair of the Task Force, lingering distrust between Central Americans and Puerto Ricans remained. Moreover, the Task Force strategized about how to quell rumors spreading through the community. Suspicion persisted that a group of Latinos were working on "cutting deals" with the government and that mayor disregarded the Task Force and was unwilling to

[71] Adam M. Dennis to Patricia Worthy, "Multi-Cultural Task Force," May 29, 1991, Folder Latino Affairs, Box 8, Kelly Administration, DC Archives.
[72] Adam M. Dennis to Patricia Worthy, "Multi-Cultural Task Force," May 29, 1991, Folder Latino Affairs, Box 8, Kelly Administration, DC Archives; Pedro Avilés Interview, Mount Pleasant Riot Oral History Project, November 15, 2017, https://digdc.dclibrary.org/islandora/object/dcplislandora%3A42728.
[73] Adam M. Dennis to Patricia Worthy, "Multi-Cultural Task Force," May 29, 1991, Folder Latino Affairs, Box 8, Kelly Administration, DC Archives.

work with them.[74] Overall, supporters of the mayor, including some members of the Latino community, urged Pratt to acknowledge the Task Force and Avilés as its lead in order to prevent a potential lawsuit.

The Task Force's agenda for the May 30 meeting with the mayor reflected a middle path between internal factions. Avilés maintained that the Task Force's goal was to negotiate a memorandum of agreement with the city. Additionally, they identified three critical issue areas in need of urgent consideration: police, summer youth employment, and recreation.[75] These three issues directly addressed Latino youth and the men who faced the most surveillance by property owners and criminalization by police. The highlighted groups signaled a shift in who leaders recognized as in need of assistance within the Latino community. Latino youth continued to feel unheard after the uprising and want to hold their own rallies. By centering them in the agenda, the Task Force worked to quell the escalation of their demands. After the meeting, the Task Force presented the mayor with a memorandum outlining their hopes and terms for negotiations. First, they asked to be recognized by the mayor as the main body speaking for the Latino community. The memorandum outlined:

> The Latino community began the decade of the 80's with some viability, a hope for change, a level of commitment and limited resources from the District Government. We end the decade of the 80's still facing limited opportunities and resources. Unfortunately we begin the decade of the 90's facing sever and unequal service cuts. Our access to services in economic development, set-a-side contracts, health, education, housing and municipal social services continues to be relegated to low priority.
>
> We do not relish having to begin again, nor is our community willing to wait until sometime in the future, before we stop being treated as second class citizens. What we seek is access to services and jobs.[76]

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[74] Adam M. Dennis to Patricia Worthy, "Multi-Cultural Task Force," May 29, 1991, Folder Latino Affairs, Box 8, Kelly Administration, DC Archives.
[75] D.C. Civil Rights Latino Community Task Force, "Agenda," May 30, 1991, Folder Latino Affairs, Box 8, Kelly Administration, DC Archives.
[76] D.C. Latino Civil Rights Task Force, "Memorandum," May 30, 1991, Folder Latino Affairs, Box 8, Kelly Administration, DC Archives.

Although the Mount Pleasant uprising appeared to be a collective act by a Latino community and the immediate formation of the Task Force was a move to capitalize on that unity, the following months and years proved to be a test of that unity. As the latest group negotiating on behalf of Latino interest, the Task Force aimed to use town hall meetings, the Latino media, and church meetings to report back to the community.[77] The diversity within the Task Force required repeated compromise. "We have learned to be united, and that, of course, was difficult," stated Alejandro Compagnet. Originally from Chile, Compagnet was the director of Salud Inc., an AIDS awareness organization, and a member of the Task Force. Compagnet noted tensions both within and outside the confines of the group. "There is a lot of distrust. Each person has their own agenda. We are all different. We are not for the same things," explained Compagnet, "Some of us are more socialists, some more capitalist there are priests, there are communists, there are anarchists and there are social democrats."[78] In the Latino community, status impacted community standing. These factors were determined by how many years the person had lived in the community, English proficiency, and immigration status. These were all elements that had facilitated Puerto Ricans' leadership monopoly. Jorge Gomez, a sixteen-year-old Bolivian, succinctly put it: "They think that all Hispanic people get along, but we are different people from different countries."[79]

The transition from Puerto Rican to Salvadoran leadership was not without challenges. A year after its establishment, the Task Force had ballooned to 150 members that reflected the diversity of its constituency. Some members grew to resent the power of Salvadorans on the

[77] D.C. Latino Civil Rights Task Force, "Proposed Process for Negotiations," n.d. [May 30, 1991], Folder Latino Affairs, Box 8, Kelly Administration, DC Archives.
[78] Gabriel Escobar, "A Year After Unrest, D.C. Hispanics Remain United Despite Diversity," *The Washington Post*, May 3, 1992.
[79] Escobar, "A Year."

Task Force. Moreover, Task Force members viewed those in the group who were representatives of social service and community agencies with suspicion, contending that those members were more interested in garnering city funds for their groups through their visibility on the Task Force. Pedro Luján, a veteran leader who helped develop the "Latino Community Agenda of 1985," was also on the Task Force. He argued, "the problem is not that the mayor didn't do anything, the problem is the task force doesn't do anything."[80]

The Task Force's strategy for change remained contested. The Task Force debated internally whether to work alongside the mayor and the city bureaucracy or to take a more adversarial role through lawsuits and sustained protests. Ultimately, the majority opted to work within the system to issue recommendations to the city, following the same path set by previous generations of leaders. The group consulted lawyers and raised funds from corporations to sponsor a comprehensive report about the uprising. According to Avilés, the final report presented to the city in October 1991 "came shrouded in language that spoke in terms of unequal treatment, disparities. So it made it more like an equal rights issue. A civil rights issue."[81] The constant energy devoted to keeping the Task Force unified and organized came at the expense of other forms of coalition building and organization, foreclosing more radical avenues for community change.

5.2.1 Latino Blueprint for Action

After five months of investigations, the Task Force presented its analysis and recommendations, *The Latino Blueprint for Action*, to Mayor Pratt and the city council in

[80] Nell Henderson, "Power at Ballot Box Eludes D.C. Hispanics," *The Washington Post*, May 5, 1992.
[81] Pedro Avilés Interview, Mount Pleasant Riot Oral History Project, November 15, 2017, https://digdc.dclibrary.org/islandora/object/dcplislandora%3A42728.

October 1991.[82] The recommendations focused on the key areas of police-community relations, housing, human rights, economic development, employment services, education, recreation, and human services. Committees, grouped by issue areas, researched and drafted the recommendations and wrote the report in collaboration with pro-bono law firms.[83] Moreover, the National Council of La Raza provided financial and technical support to the Task Force. All identified areas were consistent with previous agenda papers, reinforcing the lack of progress in the city despite consistent appeals for action. In many ways, this updated version of the 1985 "Latino Community Agenda" emphasized longstanding community concerns and updated areas for local agency improvement.[84]

Avilés claimed that at the core of the recommendations were the two concepts of equity and justice. "Equity in regards to access to our fair share of economic opportunity and political participation," explained Avilés, "we also want simple justice, which means equal access to whatever benefits the government has to give."[85] The recommendations focused on equitable access by demanding all government service publications to be printed in both English and Spanish, thus lifting the burden of translation services from the Office on Latino Affairs.[86] Finally, the Task Force requested the creation of an implementation plan by the District within thirty days, quarterly progress meetings with agencies, and biannual meetings with the mayor.[87]

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[82] For a list of all participant members of the Task Force see Appendix A in Task Force, *The Latino Blueprint*, 72.
[83] Pro-bono legal firms included the Washington Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law; Arent, Fox, Kinter, Plotkin and Kahn; and Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom. Task Force, *The Latino Blueprint*, i.
[84] Testimony of Pedro Avilés, Chairman, DC Latino Rights Task Force, United States House of Representatives, Committee on Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs, *Effectiveness of Federal Assistance Programs in Meeting Fiscal Distress, Part II*, 102nd Congress, 1st Session (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1991).
[85] Testimony of Pedro Avilés, Chairman, DC Latino Rights Task Force, United States House of Representatives, Committee on Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs, *Effectiveness of Federal Assistance Programs in Meeting Fiscal Distress, Part II*, 102nd Congress, 1st Session (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1991),112.
[86] Task Force, *The Latino Blueprint*, 13.
[87] Task Force*, The Latino Blueprint*, 71.

In order to figure out the causes and remedies for the uprising, the Task Force knew that they needed to address the full context for Latino grievances and document the discriminatory treatment of undocumented populations. The Latino Task Force not only focused on the policing issue that prompted the uprising but also explained how immigrant and refugee status disadvantages made Latinos in the District a vulnerable population. The report estimated that between 65,000 to 85,000 Latinos lived in the city. Of those numbers, only 32,710 were individuals with documentation. The vast majority of the population consisted of undocumented immigrants, the largest component being Salvadorans. The report outlined how employers and landlords in the city took advantage of immigrants without documentation, adding to the frustration in the community.[88] Poverty rates were also key for understanding the Latino community's predicaments. In 1988, the Latino poverty rate was an estimated 35 percent.[89] The report maintained that "the entire community is harmed by the existence of a large and growing population of economically, socially and politically disadvantaged people."[90]

National immigration policies and local issues were inextricably linked, creating an atmosphere of uncertainty and mistrust. The *Latino Blueprint* explained how the "Employer Sanctions" section in the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA) created a two prong system of discrimination where Latinos (and other immigrant groups) were discriminated against based on appearance while also expanding the exploitation of labor.[91] The report also pushed for the expansion of the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) program, established by the

[88] Testimony of Pedro Avilés, Chairman, DC Latino Rights Task Force, United States House of Representatives, Committee on Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs, *Effectiveness of Federal Assistance Programs in Meeting Fiscal Distress, Part II*, 102nd Congress, 1st Session (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1991), 110-111.
[89] Task Force, *The Latino Blueprint*, 5.
[90] Task Force, *The Latino Blueprint*, 6.
[91] Task Force, *The Latino Blueprint*, 7.

1990 Immigration Reform Act, to prevent mass deportations after the June 1992 expiration. According to INS reports, the D.C. area had the largest national number of TPS registrations.[92]

City officials and Latino leaders agreed that cultural barriers intensified police-community relations and generated a general mistrustful attitude towards law enforcement authority. Central Americans' experiences of military authoritarianism in their home countries and police corruption and violence molded a weariness toward D.C. police.[93] "There is a real or perceived pattern of widespread, endemic racism and physical and verbal abuse by the Metropolitan Police Department against the Latino community."[94] The report stipulated various markers that MPD needed to hit in order to satisfy community-relations. These included short- and long-term targets for Latino and bilingual proficient hires. However, the Task Force acknowledged that mistrust of the police was so high that it was difficult to find individuals or groups willing to negotiate with the MPD.

> There is no official group of individuals designated to be available as liaisons between the Police and the Latino community on a continuous basis to encourage dialogue. In spite of efforts by the Hispanic Liaison Unit to improve relations between the MPD and the D.C. Latino community, dialogue has deteriorated immensely in the last ten years. There has been no continuous interaction between the MPD and Latino community-based or religious organizations. This lack of dialogue undoubtedly contributed to the May 5, 1991 disturbances.[95]

While these experiences shaped their perceptions, the vulnerable immigrant and refugee community also feared deportations and backlash as INS intrusions into the community persisted. The Task Force recommended that the Chief of Police should implement a policy prohibiting all cooperation with INS unless mandated by federal law.[96] Despite MPD's

[92] TPS status was originally granted from January 1991–June 1992. Task Force, *The Latino Blueprint*, 8.
[93] Williams, "Black Power's."
[94] Task Force, *The Latino Blueprint*, 17.
[95] Task Force, *The Latino Blueprint*, 25.
[96] Task Force, *The Latino Blueprint*, 15.

established policy to not volunteer information to INS, the Task Force renewed demands for a stronger noncooperation standard due to MPD's invitation to INS during the uprising.

It took Mayor Pratt a full year after the uprising to address recommendations in *The Latino Blueprint* and to fill important Latino leadership positions, including the director of OLA.[97] Mayor Pratt asked for understanding and more time to respond to Latino concerns as she faced multiple challenging issues. "Whatever you do, you're so overwhelmed by so many problems that sometimes things seem a lot slower than they ought to be, or certainly a lot slower than I would like."[98] In response to the Task Force's report, Mayor Pratt pushed back on claims that Latinos were not acknowledged in the District. She argued that Latinos had not shown up to Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) or town hall meetings to voice their concerns. However, this claim disregarded the much mentioned and acknowledged cultural and linguistic barriers experienced by Latinos, and the previous history of activism and grievances during the 1980s in the Barry administration.

Mayor Pratt, sidestepping direct communication with the Task Force, prioritized working with the Multicultural Task Force. According to Avilés, Mayor Pratt felt she was not the central focus in the initial meetings with the Latino Task Force and thus continued to subsume their activities under the purview of the Multicultural Task Force.[99] Early on, the Task Force opted to function as an independent body rather than serving "at the pleasure of the mayor."[100] Although the Latino Task Force endorsed the creation of the separate Multicultural Task Force in the *Blueprint*, the group warned that it was not a substitute for direct communication between the

[97] USCCR, *The Mount Pleasant Report*, 8.
[98] Nell Henderson, "Power at Ballot Box Eludes D.C. Hispanics," *The Washington Post*, May5, 1992.
[99] Pedro Avilés Interview, Mount Pleasant Riot Oral History Project, November 15, 2017, https://digdc.dclibrary.org/islandora/object/dcplislandora%3A42728.
[100] Henderson, "Power at Ballot Box."

District government and Latinos.[101] Ultimately, response to the Task Force's recommendations were "piecemeal."[102] Mayor Pratt pushed for more funding for and reliance on already established community organizations as an actionable area of expansion. The mayor claimed that existing community agencies already had a strong rapport with the community and were targeting issues, such as housing and the youth, highlighted in the report. Reflecting her inaugural agenda, Mayor Pratt also argued that the federal government had abandoned District Latinos on two fronts: shirking responsibility for contributing to rising immigration trends through its foreign policy and financially abandoning metropolitan areas, thus preventing the creation of new service programs. These two factors, in the administration's opinion, created a crisis moment leading to "overcrowding, rising ethnic tension, and competing for jobs."[103] Pratt's move to recenter the federal government as a key institution directly responsible for the 1991 uprising and the disarray of the D.C. Latino community, while precise, evaded local government's responsibility.

On the one-year anniversary of the uprising, Avilés believed that converting community pressure into political power was key. "I think we failed to understand that elected officials are political animals or individuals and respond to political pressure."[104] Politics structured Latino's articulation of community and also constrained how they could be heard by the city. Maria Rivers, a Salvadoran immigrant and program coordinator for Adelante, a city-funded housing counseling agency, agreed with Avilés' assessment of the state of the community. "[Voting] is

[101] Task Force, *The Latino Blueprint*, 9.
[102] Pedro Avilés Interview, Mount Pleasant Riot Oral History Project, November 15, 2017, https://digdc.dclibrary.org/islandora/object/dcplislandora%3A42728.
[103] Testimony of Hon. Austin Penny, Deputy Mayor for Economic Development, District of Columbia, United States House of Representatives, Committee on Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs, *Effectiveness of Federal Assistance Programs in Meeting Fiscal Distress, Part II*, 102nd Congress, 1st Session (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1991), 49.
[104] Henderson, "Power at Ballot Box."

the only way [city officials] are going to give us attention," stated Rivers. "You can do riots or marches, but they don't care."[105] Some local leaders, such as Council member Frank Smith, Jr., drafted legislation to help bolster Latinos' political power by giving local voting rights to legal permanent residents who were in the process of applying for citizenship. "We owe the Hispanic community some kind of signal that this city is opening to them," Smith argued. Mayor Pratt, however, opposed the legislation: "When an individual puts a stake down in this country as a citizen, it is at that juncture that the right to vote should be extended."[106]

5.3 The Mount Pleasant Report

Although the Task Force moved away from the option to sue the city for civil rights violation, they approached the United States Commission on Civil Rights to assist with their predicament. The Task Force members wanted the USCCR to hold hearings and bring in witnesses to testify on the claims that the government was systemically discriminating against the Latino community.[107] The USCCR had been working in collaboration with the Task Force since 1991 to better understand the experiences of Latino in the city. Galvanized by the initial reports of police discrimination and parallels to the Rodney King L.A. beating on March 3, 1991, the USCCR announced the launch of its own investigation on the Mount Pleasant Uprising on May 29, 1992. The USCCR was particularly interested in understanding increasing tensions between the police and growing Latino populations across the nation.[108] Specifically, the

[105] Henderson, "Power at Ballot Box."
[106] Henderson, "Power at Ballot Box"; "Cassette--Mayor Sharon P. Kelly testifies before U.S. Comm. Re: Latino Task Force, 1992," Box 8, Kelly Papers, Howard University.
[107] Opening Statement of Pedro Avilés, Executive Director of Latino Civil Rights Task Force, United States House of Representatives, Committee on Appropriations, *Hearings before the Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations on the District of Columbia Appropriations for 1995*, 103rd Congress, 2nd Session (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1994), 2645.
[108] Beyond the USCCR's recognition of rising racial tensions across the country, media reports also began to chronicle how contentious divides between African American and Latino communities in places such as Los

USCCR was concerned about Latino experiences with the D.C. government, the MPD, and INS.[109]

The USCCR published the results of their investigation into the roots of the rebellion in *The Mount Pleasant Report*, released in January 1993. The report focused on the Latino community's experience in the District and ultimately reaffirmed their demands that had persisted for decades and were outlined in the *Latino Blueprint* report. *The Mount Pleasant Report* was the first volume in a series published by the USCCR titled *Racial and Ethnic Tensions in American Communities: Poverty, Inequality, and Discrimination*. Subsequent investigations studied Chicago, Miami, Los Angeles, and New York City. The USCCR concluded that the District government's continuous failures to recognize community requests for representation, provide bilingual services, and address the MPD's abusive practices towards Latinos were at the root of the disturbance.[110] Juan Melinez, an attorney for the Task Force, testified on the numerous police complaints the group had received. "It seem to be a routine, everyday sort of occurrence. Officers always going up to individuals and saying, 'Do this,' 'Do that,' 'Move it,' 'Leave here,' 'Go away,' or–and always couch it with, 'I'll call the INS.' Or 'I'll take you down to–to the jail, lock you up, call INS and have you deported'."[111] While these issues were endemic of the Latino experience in D.C., the USCCR and politicians recognized in Mount Pleasant harbingers of a growing national problem. As Arthur A. Fletcher, chairman of the USCCR, stated: "The problems here—poor housing, poor education and poor police relations—are affecting the whole country."[112] Rev. Jesse L. Jackson also testified in front of the

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Angeles had the potential to insight riots. See Jack Miles, "Blacks vs. Browns: The Struggle for the Bottom Rung," *The Atlantic Monthly*, October 1992.

[109] Task Force, *The Latino Blueprint*, 1.

[110] The report also focused on the issues Latinos faced in the criminal justice system, housing, employment, education, and health care.

[111] "Mount Pleasant, DC & Civil Unrest Causes," All Things Considered, NPR, February 2, 1992.

[112] Christine Spolar, "U.S. Panel Reviewing Complaints of D.C. Hispanics," *The Washington Post*, May 16, 1991.

congressional panel for the USCCR that "this is a local manifestation of a national crisis," echoing Senator Montoya's philosophy of Latinos in the District.[113] In choosing Washington, D.C. to launch a series of studies into rising racial and ethnic tension, the USCCR strategically relied on the capital's symbolism to speak to the need for greater recognition of Latinos in the nation.

The findings in *The Mount Pleasant Report* drew meaningful parallels between the situation in the District of Columbia and growing national trends. The D.C. government's inability to make headway on the Latino "problem" and the resulting uprising mapped onto concerns that similar events would occur and spread to other cities. Arthur A. Fletcher wrote: "The inability or unwillingness of urban governments to meet the needs of these immigrants has resulted in new unmet needs piling on top of needs unmet for decades."[114] Although the USCCR placed much of the blame at the local level, they also asserted that the federal government was not irreproachable. The report described the federal government as a "partner" in D.C.'s governance and attributed shared responsibility (mostly financial) for the inability to "meet the needs of its new, immigrant population."[115]

The fundamental divide between Mayor Pratt and Pedro Avilés, on behalf of the Task Force, about the root causes of Latino frustration and about who bore responsibility for addressing those concerns persisted and curtailed meaningful progress. In testimony before the committee, Mayor Pratt reminded the members that home rule limitations ultimately disadvantaged all residents of Washington, D.C. and not just Latinos. Mayor Pratt focused on how the restrictions placed by the structure of home rule governance coupled with a troubled

[113] Arch Parsons, "Hispanics Link D.C. Riot to Rights Issues," *The Washington Post*, May 16, 1991.
[114] Arthur A. Fletcher, "Letter of Transmittal," January 1993, USCCR, *The Mount Pleasant Report*, 5.
[115] USCCR, *The Mount Pleasant Report*, ii.

economic climate of recession and a budget deficit created a structural barrier for the city's improvement on the Latino Task Force's recommendations. "A measure of civil rights has been denied to all the people of the District of Columbia in terms of not having political powers," argued Mayor Pratt.[116] "Because of federal policy that forced immigration into this area with no programs to accommodate the new thrust and no dollars for education or jobs or social services, we have become a repository," explained Pratt, "but no beneficiary of any federal dollars."[117] Pedro Avilés agreed in part that the federal government shared some responsibility, but he noted the issue was not just about "scrambling for the same crumbs," as Mayor Pratt stated. "That should not be used as an excuse for the many years of disparate treatment by the city," argued Avilés, "it's also an issue of the attitude of the D.C. government, and that will not change if Congress gives it extra money."[118]

5.4 Conclusion

The Mount Pleasant Uprising surfaced the long-term frustrations of the Central American and undocumented members of a forgotten Latino community. While Puerto Rican leaders believed that Mayor Barry was attentive and receptive to the growing population's needs, they recognized in the aftermath of the 1991 uprising how a narrowed path for representation precluded full Salvadoran inclusion. Under the new mayoral administration of Sharon Pratt, the accumulation of neglect finally gave way to violence. Decades of police brutality coupled with punitive immigration systems heightened Latinos' feelings of exclusion and confusion. The mismatch between a city that claimed to see Latinos and address their concerns and opposing accounts from multiple Latino groups revealed persistent structural failures. The Salvadoran

[116] USCCR, *The Mount Pleasant Report*, 7.
[117] Carlos Sanchez, "Kelly Cites U.S. for Plight of D.C. Hispanics," *The Washington Post*, January 30, 1992.
[118] Sanchez, "Kelly Cites U.S."

community hoped the Mount Pleasant Uprising would provide a "moment of opportunity," one that sparked community formation around their majority.[119] In retrospect, Mayor Pratt viewed the 1991 disturbance as a "distraction–an anguished prelude to the rollout of Latino-focused policies and programs already in the works."[120]

Avilés testified in Congress that even three years after the uprising the city government had not comprehensively responded to their recommendations and that the Task Force had received only promises. As a result, Avilés turned to Congress to request federal intervention on the matter and to ask that the 1995 fiscal year budget reflect the Task Force's demands. The city had failed to answer proposals in both the *Latino Blueprint* and the USCCR's 1993 report. Avilés requested that the Congress authorize the General Accounting Office to evaluate services rendered by the city for the Latino community, hiring and recruitment practices and provide $5 million for the development and implementation of the report's recommendations. "We believe that Federal attention is critical to solving the problems of the Latino population."[121] Representative Julian C. Dixon (D–CA), chair of the District of Columbia Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee, was reluctant to intervene and argued that Avilés's complaints should be directed to the local government.[122]

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[119] Pedro Avilés Interview, Mount Pleasant Riot Oral History Project, November 15, 2017, 14 https://digdc.dclibrary.org/islandora/object/dcplislandora%3A42728.

[120] Sharon Pratt, "Lessons from a D.C. Riot," *The Washington Post*, August 12, 2011.

[121] Opening Statement of Pedro Avilés, Executive Director of Latino Civil Rights Task Force, United States House of Representatives, Committee on Appropriations, *Hearings before the Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations on the District of Columbia Appropriations for 1995*, 103rd Congress, 2nd Session (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1994), 2646.

[122] Opening Statement of Pedro Avilés, Executive Director of Latino Civil Rights Task Force, United States House of Representatives, Committee on Appropriations, *Hearings before the Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations on the District of Columbia Appropriations for 1995*, 103rd Congress, 2nd Session (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1994). Congressman Dixon was originally born in Washington, D.C. and held the position as chair of the District of Columbia Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee. While initially he was a strong advocate for the District, by 1995 he became disillusioned with the state of affairs and was a proponent of the privatization of city services. "Dixon, Julian Carey," https://history.house.gov/People/Listing/D/DIXON,-Julian-Carey-(D000373)/.

The Pratt administrations eventually granted local Latino organizations some additional funding to expand their services. However, Pratt's tenure as mayor was short-lived and ended in January 1995. As Marion Barry once again took the office of the mayor, the persistence of the city's financial crisis led Congress to impose the Financial Control Board in 1995.[123] Whatever little progress was made by the city to address the recommendations in the *Latino Blueprint* were interrupted with the introduction of the Control Board. The Control Board era marked a moment where city officials, hand-picked by Congress, prioritized the District's financial health over the needs of the most disadvantaged communities. For the Latino community this resulted in the gutting of the gains made in the last three years, such as funding for the MPD's cultural sensitivity training programs.[124]

[123] Asch and Musgrove, *Chocolate City*, 429–434.
[124] Pedro Avilés Interview, Mount Pleasant Riot Oral History Project, November 15, 2017, https://digdc.dclibrary.org/islandora/object/dcplislandora%3A42728.

Epilogue

The cycles of disregard, underfunding, and police violence towards Latinos persisted in Washington, D.C. over the decade following the Mount Pleasant Uprising of 1991. Almost exactly ten years after the May 5, 1991 police shooting and uprising in Mount Pleasant, an African American off-duty officer fatally shot a Salvadoran man and injured another in Columbia Heights. On a Friday night, May 18, 2001, Fifth District Officer Stacey Davis pulled up to and warned three men in a car not to drink and drive. An altercation between the men and Davis ensued. Witnesses accounts differed from that of the police over whether Davis, who was off duty at the time, identified himself as an officer and whether the three men were throwing metal objects at Davis. Davis fatally shot Tomas Flamenco, a 34-year-old Salvadoran man, in the chest and shot Fredys Lopez, 33-year-old, in the back. Lopez would survive the shooting. The police chief at the time, Charles H. Ramsey, claimed the shooting was justifiable based on police evidence. This time, however, protests were replaced by a community vigil.[1]

As in 1991, a newly formed Civil Rights Review Panel collaborated with the Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights & Urban Affairs and nine area law firms to analyze the status of Latinos in the District and evaluate the progress made on recommendations made by the previous Task Force. The result of their study was unsurprising: "Many of the same problems

[1] Clarence Williams and Sylvia Moreno, "Chief Says Shooting Appears Justified," *The Washington Post*, May 20, 2001; "The District: Vigil Planned at Site of Police Shooting," *The Washington Post*, May 21, 2001; Civil Rights Review Panel, "A Place at the Table: Latino Civil Rights Ten Years After the Mount Pleasant Disturbances," n.d. [2002], http://www.washlaw.org/pdf/A_Place_At_The_Table.pdf.

identified after the 1991 disturbance continue to plague the Latino community."[2] In the areas of police-community relations, access to justice, education, health services, employment discrimination, housing, and immigration policy the 2002 study highlighted the persistence of gaps in services and reoccurring demands by Latino communities, as had studies in the 1970s and 1980s. Despite a growing population through the 1990s consisting of more citizens and immigrants with legal status, Latinos in the District did not gain proportional political power.[3] The 1991 uprising seemingly succeeded in forcing the city to acknowledge the existence of a Latino community without the means of implementing substantive change.

The Metropolitan Police Department under Chief Charles H. Ramsey continued to acknowledge the need for improvement of community relations with Latino residents while repeating the some of the same mistakes of a previous generations. In 1997, the consulting firm of Booz-Allen & Hamilton reviewed the MPD's operation and found that the department was facing "chronic" problems and their function was "obsolete."[4] In 1998, a five-part series of investigative pieces published by the *Washington Post*, known as the "Deadly Force" series, outlined the persistent pattern of use of force by the MPD and the secretive way the MPD investigated officer-involved shootings. The MPD led in the number of police shootings and homicides per-capita of major cities in the country.[5] In the 1990s, officer-involved shootings and fatalities rapidly rose; at the same time, the homicide rate in the city was falling. During the span of 1990 through 1998, MPD officers shot and killed 85 people. Within the period between 1993

[2] Civil Rights Review Panel, "A Place at the Table: Latino Civil Rights Ten Years After the Mount Pleasant Disturbances," n.d. [2002], http://www.washlaw.org/pdf/A_Place_At_The_Table.pdf, 3.
[3] Civil Rights Review Panel, "A Place at the Table: Latino Civil Rights Ten Years After the Mount Pleasant Disturbances," n.d. [2002], http://www.washlaw.org/pdf/A_Place_At_The_Table.pdf, 4-6.
[4] Cheryl W. Thompson, "Detailing Failings of D.C. Police Department," *The Washington Post*, April 9, 1997.
[5] The investigation compared D.C. to New York City, Chicago, Los Angeles and Miami. Jeff Leen, Jo Craven, David Jackson and Sari Horwitz, "D.C. Police Lead Nation in Shootings," *The Washington Post*, November 15, 1998.

and 1998, there were a total of 640 officer involved shootings and 57 civilians killed by police.[6] The *Post*'s investigation linked the rise in police shootings to the 1989-1990 congressional imposed hiring wave and the introduction of the Glock 9mm. In most of these cases, the department and the courts ruled the shootings were justified. The series was widely read in the District and prompted the newly hired Police Chief Charles H. Ramsey to address the department's use of force problem.[7]

Police Chief Ramsey asked the Department of Justice to intervene and review the department's use of force practices in 1999. As a result of the request for intervention, a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was created between the MPD, the DOJ, and the District on June 13, 2001.[8] An Independent Monitor (Michael R. Bromwich of Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson) was selected by the MPD and DOJ on April 9, 2002, to review the MPD's compliance of the MOA and report the implementation or lack thereof.[9] The Independent Monitor recommended that the MOA be terminated early by the DOJ when the MPD reached 80 percent compliance. The DOJ ended the MOA and their oversight on April 7, 2008.

Under the MOA, the MPD once again initiated recruitment drives for Latino police officers in Puerto Rico in 2002. As a result of the drive and in collaboration with the Puerto Rican labor authorities, 26 officers were sworn into the MPD in 2003 with more recruits undergoing training. Chief Ramsey, testifying on a hearing for the United States Commission on Civil Rights on March 21, 2003, claimed that the drive targeted Puerto Rico as "a fertile area for

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[6] Leen, Craven, Jackson and Horwitz, "D.C. Police Lead Nation in Shootings."
[7] Jeff Leen, Jo Craven, David Jackson and Sari Horwitz, "Deadly Force Special Report," *The Washington Post*, November 15-19, 1998.
[8] Department of Justice, *Memorandum of Agreement Between the United States Department of Justice and the District of Columbia and the District of Columbia Metropolitan Police Department*, June 13, 2001, < https://www.justice.gov/crt/memorandum-agreement-united-states-department-justice-and-district-columbia-and-dc-metropolitan>.
[9] Michael R. Bromwhich, *Special Report of the Independent Monitor for the Metropolitan Police Department*, June 12, 2002 < http://www.policemonitor.org/MPD/reports/specialreportjune12.pdf>.

highly qualified, well-educated, bilingual officers."[10] Only 5 percent of MPD officers were Latinos in 2002. As was the case during previous recruitment drives, Puerto Ricans were a small minority within the District's Latino population. "I recognize that much of the District's Latino population has roots in Central and South America, not Puerto Rico," stated Ramsey, "still, the expeditious hiring of officers from Puerto Rico is helping to increase the number of Latino officers in the MPD – and helping us immediately bridge important language barriers."[11] The MPD's efforts to diversify the department demonstrated continuous misalignments with the local Latino population. The MPD had also closed the Mount Pleasant police station and Hispanic Liaison Unit by 2002 to then reinstitute the program in 2003.[12] The new Unit was located on the same street as the Police Community Center in the 1980s—on Columbia Road and 18th Street in Adams-Morgan. However, general distrust of the MPD persisted within the Latino community.[13]

The Latino struggle for recognition and a right to the city continues through the present day underscoring almost four decades of frustration. Political power in the form of representation within the city council remains elusive for Latino politicians. In 2005, an offshoot group of the D.C. Democratic Party established the D.C. Latino Caucus. The caucus's mission was to help represent Latino political activism by creating a lobbying organization and endorsing candidates.[14] As of today, no Latino has ever been elected to city council. "It is an open wound

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[10] Charles H. Ramsey, "Statement from the Metropolitan Police Department," March 21, 2003, Hearing on Civil Rights Issues Affecting DC's Latino Communities, United States Commission on Civil Rights, https://mpdc.dc.gov/release/hearing-civil-rights-issues-affecting-dcs-latino-communities.
[11] Charles H. Ramsey, "Statement from the Metropolitan Police Department," March 21, 2003, Hearing on Civil Rights Issues Affecting DC's Latino Communities, United States Commission on Civil Rights, https://mpdc.dc.gov/release/hearing-civil-rights-issues-affecting-dcs-latino-communities.
[12] Civil Rights Review Panel, "A Place at the Table: Latino Civil Rights Ten Years After the Mount Pleasant Disturbances," n.d. [2002], http://www.washlaw.org/pdf/A_Place_At_The_Table.pdf, 9; Charles H. Ramsey, "Statement from the Metropolitan Police Department," March 21, 2003, Hearing on Civil Rights Issues Affecting DC's Latino Communities, United States Commission on Civil Rights, https://mpdc.dc.gov/release/hearing-civil-rights-issues-affecting-dcs-latino-communities.
[13] Sylvia Moreno, "Prejudice Persists Against D.C. Latinos," *The Washington Post*, May 5, 2002; Sylvia Moreno, "Casa by Casa, Police Work to Build Language of Trust," *The Washington Post, February 27, 2003.*
[14] DC Latino Caucus, "What We Do," < https://www.dclatinocaucus.org/what-we-do>.

for our community that there has never been an elected DC Council member," lamented Joe Barrios, president of the DC Latino Caucus, in 2021. "The Latino community is a sleeping giant that is just starting to awaken."[15] Although still present in the Mount Pleasant area, Latinos are more spread out across the District, which dilutes their collective voter power. According to the 2020 Census, Latinos in the District made up 11.3 percent of the total population. Salvadorans were still the largest group at 25.6 percent, followed by Mexicans who were 18 percent of the total Latino population in 2020.[16] Moreover, Latinos have been politically more successful in the Maryland and Virginia suburbs where the vote was more concentrated (see Figure 6.1).

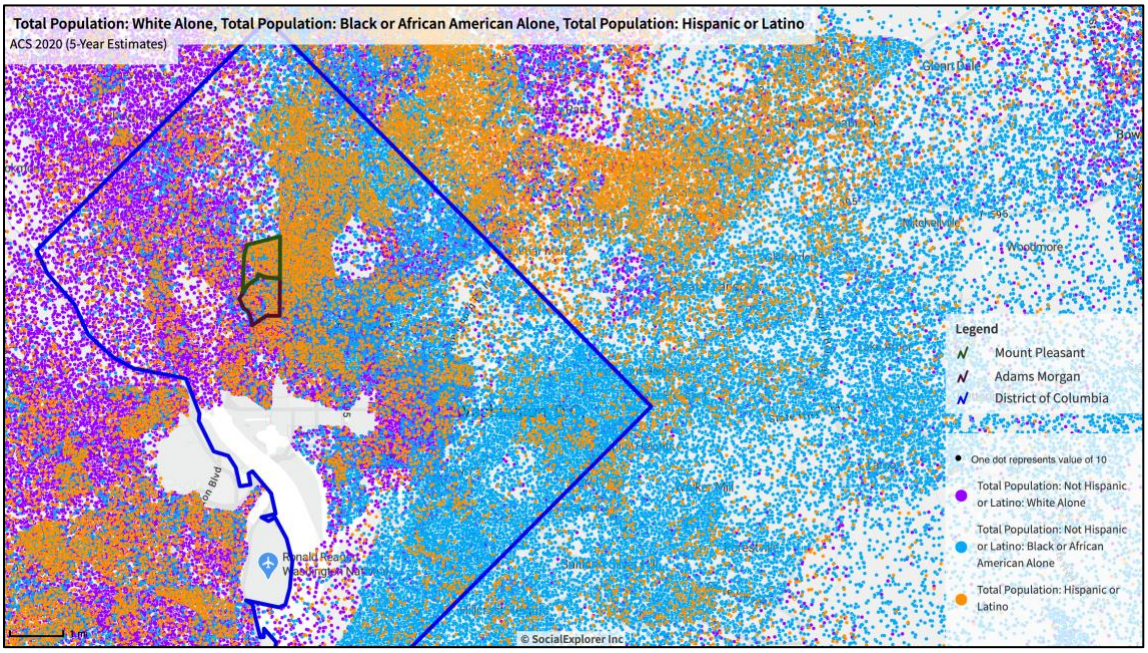


Figure 6.1 Map of Total Population, Washington, D.C. (2020). This map uses dot density to represent the total population racial breakdown of the District, with each dot representing ten people. The total white (Non-Hispanic) population is in purple, Black (Non-Hispanic) is in blue, and Hispanic is in orange. The outlines within the District denote the boundaries of Mount Pleasant (to the north) and Adams-Morgan (to the south). Source: Map created by author using Social Explorer.

[15] B. Debusmann, "Is Washington DC's Latino population a 'sleeping giant'?," *La Política Online*, July 20, 2021, <https://www.lapoliticaonline.com/nota/135458-is-washington-dcs-latino-population-a-sleeping-giant/>.
[16] U.S. Bureau of the Census, American Community Survey, B03001, Hispanic or Latino Origin by Specific Origin, 2020, <https://data.census.gov/table?q=B03001:+HISPANIC+OR+LATINO+ORIGIN+BY+SPECIFIC+ORIGIN&g=040XX00US11&tid=ACSDT5Y2020.B03001>.

As Washington, D.C. continues a path of rapid gentrification and displacement of low-income and minority populations over the last decade, what will happen to the repeated demands of Latino communities? Between 2000 and 2013, the District was identified by a 2019 study of the National Community Reinvestment Coalition as the most gentrifying city by percentage of eligible neighborhoods in the United States.[17] In 2011, the African American population in the District dropped below 50 percent for the first time since the 1970s. However, the capital city is still seen by many residents, the local media, and politicians in Black-and-white. Efforts are being made by local archives, such as at the Kiplinger Research Library at the DC History Center, to recognize and incorporate Latinx voices and histories. Through the course of my research, I've often heard the remark that there aren't Latinos in D.C. in conversation about this dissertation with taxi drivers and on the streets. While this is—of course—not the reality, these sentiments reinforce the notion that Latinos in the District remain an overlooked community.

[17] Jason Richardson, Bruce Mitchell, and Juan Franco, "Shifting Neighborhoods: Gentrification and Cultural Displacement in American Cities," National Community Reinvestment Coalition, March 19, 2019 < https://ncrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/NCRC-Research-Gentrification-FINAL.pdf>.

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