

Latino Landscapes: Postwar Cities and the Transnational Origins of a New Urban America by A. K. Sandoval-Strausz

A. K. Sandoval-Strausz writes in his article about Latino landscapes and how Latino immigrants have saved and shaped U.S. cities. He argues that thanks to Latino immigrants, many American neighborhoods stopped losing residents and businesses. He starts his article by stating that until 2006 many historians and scholars had focused on white flight, suburban growth, increasing crime rates, and neighborhood abandonment when they were writing about the urban crisis. In the article, Sandoval-Strausz claims that many scholars didn't acknowledge Latino urbanism and they excluded Latinos from founding, making, and telling U.S. history although Latinos transformed American cities by repopulating and reviving the area.

According to Sandoval-Strausz, Latinos saved urban America by purchasing homes, opening new businesses, reviving commercial districts, and adapting their spatial preferences to the United States. He focuses his article on Oak Cliff, Dallas and he starts by giving a brief history of the city. After, he mentions how Oak Cliff had been founded on a foundation of racial segregation. He mentions that because of racial zoning ordinances, the majority of people of color lived in locations that white people did not want to live. Their settlement was limited by violence, threats, harassment, vandalism, and house bombings. After the desegregation of public spaces, many whites began to leave the city and move to the suburbs which led to increasing Latino settlement in the cities. Sandoval-Strausz, then, focuses on the reasons behind the emigrations of Latinos to the Oak Cliff and how Latinos became the largest demographic in the city. He claims that Latino presence in Oak Cliff started in the late 1940s and increased in the 1960s because of the highway projects that disrupting the people of Little Mexico, Dallas. Changing economic conditions in Mexico and the 1960s crisis led to the migration of rural Latinos to the United States. Similarly, in the 1980s, due to changes in economic policies and financial crises in Latin America, many educated Latinos started to move to the U.S. for opportunities in the business and communication sectors. Moreover, thanks to The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, many Latino immigrants who were illegal immigrants were able to invest and open more business.

I think Sandoval-Strausz's article is one of the perfect resources to understand how Latino lifestyles and urbanistic practices have affected U.S. cities. For many years, I have studied the reasons behind the emigration of Latino people to the United States and why they worked in low-wage jobs but I

have barely examined how much they have changed the United States by their everyday behaviors, residential practices, and public presence, therefore, it was very interesting to learn about how they affected America's labor and economic history substantially. What stood out to me most about this article was the realization of the relationship between walking and business. According to Sandoval-Strausz, Latino's affinity for walking has saved businesses because unlike Anglo Americans who use cars to travel everywhere, Latinos discover the city on foot, thus they could see more and buy more. In his article, Sandoval-Strausz includes people's experiences and their own words to present evidence and strengthen his claims, it was really interesting to read different perspectives on the subject from different types of people. It was also compelling to read Latino's perspective on the proper use of public spaces and neighborhood improvement. For instance; Latinos use parks to have constant interaction and get to know each other. They see domestic space as a place to hang out and have a great time. They extended the social space to the fenced front yard by bringing forms of Mexican courtyard houses to the U.S. In my opinion, bringing people together to help and improve their community is another unconventional aspect of the Latino people. Contrast to American individualism, Latino immigrants value collectivism; they collect money to build homes, pave the streets, fix up the schools, and renovate churches.

As Sandoval-Strausz states in his article, one of the advantages of being a social community is that it is safe for children to go outside and play in the streets because they are kept under casual surveillance all the time by neighbors who sit in their front yard or looking out the windows. This advantage resulted in safer cities and lower crime rates. I think Sandoval-Strausz was trying to reduce the negative impact of Latino stereotypes by constantly mentioning lower crime rates in Oak Cliff since many Latinos are associated with crime and toxic masculinity. In my opinion, the author is successful at showing the other perspectives about the reasons why so many Latin Americans have left their country and move to the U.S. and how this relationship between Mexico and the United States has influenced the economy positively. His language is clear, inclusive, persuasive, and appeals to common sense. The only thing I can complain about this article is that the author is mainly focused on Mexican American immigrants and Mexico rather than examining other Latin countries and Latino people.

In conclusion, I totally agree with Sandoval-Strausz opinion about Latinos have been left out of the history of postwar urban America and giving not enough credit for their contributions to American society and culture. The author was successful in completing his aim and intended impact on

readers by showing examples of how the Latino community has influenced American urban history not just by being a cheap labor source but being a collective community which values unity above individuality. Through his article, A. K. Sandoval-Strausz proves to the reader that people who transform history weren't rich elites, it was working people who have endured outright wage theft and difficult living conditions.