

Proceedings of a Bi-National Conference

Sponsored by the Mexican Center of the Institute of Latin American Studies at the University of Texas
at Austin

May 5-6, 1995.

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Housing Production & Infrastructure in the *Colonias* of Texas and Mexico: Towards A Cross Border Dialogue

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Peter M. Ward

The Mexican Center of ILAS

The University of Texas at Austin

The inspiration for this conference and for the two-semester LBJ School Policy Research Project from which it derives began with a Governor's Task Force meeting on the *Colonias* held here in Austin some three years ago. Indeed, many here today were at that meeting which brought together a mixed-constituency group of academics, public officials, non-governmental organization representatives, religious and other leaders. My presence at that meeting was as one who then knew very little about Texas "*Colonias*", but had studied and advised Mexican governments over twenty years on the parallel and much more widespread phenomenon of illegal urban growth and so-called irregular settlements in Mexico (also called *colonias*). Yet I was surprised to discover that Texas appeared to be "rediscovering the wheel" in its response to the existence and expansion of its *colonia* problem. Many researchers and public officials -- invariably in good faith -- were seeking to understand the underlying causes and nature of *colonia* growth. They were asking how public policy might respond to *colonia* land developers? How to effectively address land title ambiguities and insecurities? How to provide essential services of water, power, public transport, and social service infrastructure to low-income and low-density populations? How to engage with these settlement populations and with the community development organizations that had evolved within them?

These are all very pertinent policy questions, but no one seemed to be asking what we might learn from Mexico about these processes and about the appropriate public policy response. After all, in many Mexican cities over one-half of the built-up area began as *colonias*, and these settlements represent **the** only true affordable low-income housing option for over sixty percent of the population. Moreover, Mexican national, state and local governments have almost twenty years' experience of policies in response to these same questions and, notwithstanding the nation's relative poverty and

underdevelopment, are gradually integrating such areas into the physical fabric of the city. Indeed, it seemed to me that the only thing that Texas had learned from Mexico in this respect was what to call the phenomenon -- *Colonias*.

Therefore during 1994-5 a Policy Research Project (PRP) was conceived with the express purpose to analyze the *colonia* phenomenon on **both** sides of the border at the LBJ School of Public Affairs. Our assumption was not that the *colonias* in Texas and Mexico are the same, but that they would benefit from being analyzed comparatively, and that they form part of a common logic of economic development and labor power reproduction. We also began with the assumption that Texas could **learn** from some of the tried-and-tested policy approaches in Mexico, and that policy makers and community officials on both sides of the border would benefit from a cross-border dialogue of their respective housing and community development experiences.

Indeed, as our Final Report and presentations at this conference will show, there are fundamental differences between the nature of *colonias* and *colonia* development in Texas and Mexico. Briefly Texas *colonias* are different in the following important respects:

- 1) Unlike their Mexican counterparts the land development process is usually a legal one (through Contract for Deed);
- 2) Texas settlements are very much smaller, with large lots and low densities making public intervention much more expensive in unit terms, and less imperative in political (voter/electoral) terms;
- 3) There is little or no sense of community, and formal and informal community organization structures are weak or non-existent, especially during the early phases of settlement development;
- 4) There are major differences in the jurisdiction and nature of city and public sector responsiveness. In Texas, *colonias* are invariably located in an administrative no-man's-land, falling beyond the city's limits or in the discretionary, extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ) where there is no incentive nor requirement for the city to respond. In Mexico there is no jurisdictional ambiguity since the city and municipality (county) authorities are one-and-the same;
- 5) Arising from the previous point, Texas *colonias* are subject to more multiplex interventions from various public and private sector organizations often acting independently of one another -- to a much greater extent than their Mexican counterparts.

In short, Texas does not appear to have an integrated housing policy, but rather a series of segmented lines of action often reporting to different levels of government. The *colonias* housing "problem" is conceived more in terms of an issue of environmental and health care concern, rather than as a housing issue *per se*. Thus, public sector responses are constructed in terms of "task forces" and "strike forces" which see the problem in partial and temporary terms, as a dysfunctional aberration, and not as an integrated problem of housing and economic underdevelopment.

The Policy Research Project was undertaken at the LBJ School of Public Affairs at UT-Austin over a two-semester period. It was co-directed by myself on behalf of the LBJ School, and by Dr. Duncan Earle on behalf of the Center for Housing and Urban Development (CfHUD) at Texas A & M University. Through support it receives from the Texas Legislature, the CfHUD has taken the lead in developing research and supportive actions in the *colonias* of Texas. Given the LBJ School's expertise in public policy, and its current strength in contemporary Mexican and Border research, this PRP was commissioned by CfHUD. I am grateful to Mr. Kermit Black, Director of the CfHUD at Texas A & M

for being willing to set aside considerations of academic rivalries in order to bring our respective expertise to bear on what is, perhaps, the single most pressing problem facing the State at this time, albeit one that is spatially limited. They say old habits die hard, but let us hope that this year's experience may be the first of many fruitful collaborations between our two institutions in the service of the State of Texas.

Under my and Dr. Earle's direction the research was conducted by 24 graduates almost all of whom came from UT-Austin: from the LBJ School, from ILAS, and from Community and Regional Planning. Some of the group's findings are presented in four separate papers at the conference (see abstracts in this *Synthesis/Memoria*). The group's analysis was undertaken to a common methodology applied in six border cities: Ciudad Juárez, El Paso; the two Laredos; Matamoros and Brownsville. The methodology sought to identify how *colonias* are "produced" on both sides of the border. Specifically the methodology addressed the following areas: 1) the actors involved, and the processes of land and housing development; 2) the physical and social infrastructure providers; their responsibilities, actions and impacts; 3) the wider political-administrative environment which shapes public and private responses and state-community interaction and liaison; 4) the populations themselves, selecting in each city two or three *colonias* for detailed survey and analysis.

At least two separate visits were made to each city by members of the research group, and intensive fieldwork was conducted in January 1995. This comprised semi-structured (in-depth) interviews with private developers, public sector officials, non-government organizations, community leaders and residents, service providers, politicians, etc., in order to explore first hand the processes and research questions identified above. Prior to fieldwork, extensive analysis and archival research was undertaken of the housing problem and its sectoral manifestations, as well as the legal statutory arrangements for Texas and for the two Mexican border states (Chihuahua and Tamaulipas), and for each of the six cities themselves. Many of those interviewed are participating in this conference today, and may I take this opportunity to thank you all for interrupting busy schedules in order to spend time patiently responding to our inquiries during our fieldwork. In the course of the next two days you will have an opportunity to measure and comment upon the results of our labor, and I hope that you will feel satisfied that your time was not misspent!

Finally, allow me to say a few words about this particular conference. Organized by the Mexican Center of ILAS, I wish to thank the Ford Foundation (Mexico City) for providing the primary sponsorship required to mount the event. In addition may I acknowledge the additional support received from the College of Liberal Arts; Professor Sidney Weintraub and the US-Mexican Policy Studies Program here at the LBJ School; and of course to the CfHUD at Texas A & M for funding the research project itself. May I take this opportunity to thank the student members of the research project whose efforts are embodied in many parts of this conference program, and to congratulate them on what is, I hope you will agree, a job well done.

Above all, may I thank you all for coming to participate in this two day event. As I mentioned at the outset, the aim of this meeting is not simply to report on our and others' findings on *colonias*, but to bring together public and private sector actors from both sides of the border. Just as throughout the project we have sought to analyze *colonias* within a regional cross-border framework, the purpose of this meeting is to facilitate a dialogue between communities, residents, leaders, and public officials from Mexico and from Texas. Although some of you may already know your cross-border counterparts, this conference is unique, bringing together for the first time such a large number of *colonia* housing actors

and public officials from the both sides of the border. You are a distinguished group. You are an extremely well informed and experienced group. Above all you are a committed group, working and living in difficult circumstances. Our hope in mounting this conference is that you will forge a mutual solidarity -- working as you do at the "sharp end" of the housing question -- and that you will have much to share and to talk about during this brief "time-out" here in Austin. Once again: Welcome, and Enjoy!

Session One:

Analyzing Colonias and the Housing "Problem": Comparative Approaches in the USA and Mexico

Chair: **Robert Wilson**

LBJ School of Public Affairs

The University of Texas at Austin

DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN THE U.S.A.

Willem van Vliet

College of Architecture and Planning

University of Colorado

The annals of U.S. housing history are replete with examples of notorious white elephants. Pruitt-Igoe in St. Louis, Cabrini-Green in Chicago, Columbia Point in Boston, and most recently Raymond Rosen in Philadelphia readily come to mind as some of the better known examples of misguided policies.

However, these cases should be seen against a more general background of difficult and deteriorating housing conditions for the poor. The following statistics illustrate recent trends:

- from 1978 to 1991, there was a 50% increase of households paying in excess of one-half of their income on rent or living in substandard housing; today, among those living in poverty, 35% of Hispanics and 51% of blacks pay 50% or more of their income on rent;

-from 1970 to 1990, the proportion of the U.S. population living in neighborhoods of extreme poverty increased from 5% to 11%;

-the median income of renters, as a proportion of the median income of owners, declined from 64% in 1972 to 51% in 1982, to 48% in 1993.

These figures indicate a trend of socioeconomic polarization. This polarization is situated in the broader context of global economic restructuring. Yet it is important to recognize that communities are not doomed to be the passive recipients of the negative impacts of global restructuring. A case can be made for politics that can modulate these consequences. In connection, housing policies can play an important role.

In the absence of effective federal policies, local communities have developed initiatives to deal with the growing challenges facing them. Recent case studies of such efforts point to a number of "ingredients of success." These communities were previously characterized by abysmal conditions, including high rates of unemployment, poverty, infant mortality, crime, abandoned buildings, and a badly deficient physical

and organizational infrastructure. Their attempts to reverse the situation share common themes:

Comprehensiveness. The problems of these communities are complex; that is, the issue is not just the lack of decent affordable housing - there are other problems, related to education, jobs, health care, safety, etc. Successful redevelopment is predicated on the recognition that the multiple and interrelated problems require a comprehensive approach.

Community Base. Successful approaches focused on a community in a particular place, a neighborhood, rather than a targeted group dispersed over a wide area. Further, these approaches have emphasized participation by and real responsibilities for community residents in all stages of the redevelopment process.

Funding. Two salient aspects in this regard are the level of funding and the sources of funding. The latter typically involve a complicated patchwork. Each source will have its own specific requirements for application and accountability reporting.

Quality of Management. Regardless of form, effective management has been judicious in its process of tenant selection, firm in implementing eviction of drug dealing or similarly aberrant households, and professional in its day-to-day operations.

Quality of Physical Design. Successful development depends on plans that reduce opportunities for crime and housing types that are responsive to the needs of residents.

Coalition building. Success is produced by the joint efforts of many groups, representing the community, the private sector and various levels of government.

Expertise. Many of the foregoing points indicate the importance of expert staff. Reliance on the commitment of *pro bono* volunteers undermines the stability of redevelopment efforts.

Time. When communities reversed their misfortunes, success did not come overnight.

The themes identified above are based on case studies of communities in large cities across the country: New York, Chicago, Boston, Baltimore, Cleveland, Los Angeles. The intent is to explore the broader applicability and to derive from them lessons that can help inform approaches elsewhere. However, it remains important to acknowledge that each community has its own particular local dynamics and requirements.

REDUCING REGULATORY BARRIERS TO LOW INCOME HOUSING: EXPERIENCES FROM MEXICO

Gil Shidlo

The Center for International Development
and Conflict Management
University of Maryland

This paper argued that the burden of housing regulation in Mexico has been reduced by a national campaign for state-level reforms. Mexican states have agreed to meet specific targets for lowering and standardizing regulatory charges and permit times. Excessive regulatory costs have been known to have a negative impact on the supply of housing. They tend to make housing unaffordable to low-income groups and first-time buyers; they can also restrict residential land supply; and, above all, they are likely to create bureaucratic bottlenecks causing unnecessary delays, providing a breeding ground for corruption.

Four years after the initiation of regulatory reforms, surveys carried out by SEDESOL and FOVI demonstrate that there has been a significant reduction in the time required for to secure building permits in most states as well as other regulatory costs such as notarial fees for social housing.

MEXICAN SUBURBS - AMERICAN STYLE: REFORMING BORDER SPATIAL THEORY

William J. Siembieda

School of Architecture and Planning

University of New Mexico

Colonias are the material expression of the dynamics of spatial development on both sides of the border (Mexico-US). *Colonias* exist because people are poor, need a house, and are marginalized by the dominant mode of housing production in the U.S. Expansion of *colonias* (the settlements areas of the working poor) is influenced by industrialization of Mexican border cities, differential land prices and concentration versus dispersal of land ownership between U.S. and Mexican cities and *municipios*. Cultural factors related to patrimony, security and political relations all intervene in the land supply system. The expansion of the *maquiladora* industrial sector in Ciudad Juárez to 140,000 jobs and at least fifteen industrial parks has changed the pattern and function of land use within the urban area.

Ciudad Juárez and El Paso thus form a metropolitan area of more than 2,000,000 people where the border is a transparent administration curtain, not a functional barrier in the daily life of the region. In New Mexico *colonia* expansion has increased more than 100% between 1990 and 1995 and located in peripheral (ex urban) areas in counties along the border. *Colonias* follow a three stage settlement framework of access, consolidation and integration.

function of a new stage of urbanization along the border; the rising land cost in Mexican cities as these cities take on industrial functions; and the concentration of land ownership in Factors influencing the settlement patterns of *colonias* include: expansion of *colonias* as a Mexican cities. Land prices in Ciudad Juárez are four times more expensive (on a square meter basis) than in Dona Ana county in New Mexico.

There is a need to establish theory of spatial organization that adequately explains the process and can assist in policy initiatives that address the problems. Solutions that provide low-cost, serviced land parcels and assist in policy initiatives that address the problems are needed. Such solutions should provide low cost, serviced land parcels; assist in self-help housing construction; and promote community organization.

DEFINING COLONIAS: PERSPECTIVES & SOLUTIONS ON THE "PROBLEM" IN TEXAS

Duncan Earle

Dept. of Anthropology/CfCHUD

Texas A&M

Traditional definitions of Texas *colonias* along the Mexico border emphasize their material conditions,

and what they lack in terms of physical infrastructure. Popular, institutional, and traditional academic perspectives promote definitions that emphasize a variety of narrow concerns (e.g. health, environment, immigration control, urbanization) but which do not provide any consistent, cohesive, integrated definitions of *colonias* as socioeconomic or cultural phenomena. Such a definition is presented as necessary for the proper formulation of policy at any level, from the most local to the state and national. Recent research suggests alternative definitions that explore the social dimensions of this dynamic new form of settlement now so pervasive on the border. The concepts of social isolation, emergent community, and social networks as well as horizontal and vertical social infrastructure illustrate social problematics in the development of *colonias*, by looking at them comparatively with their Mexican neighbors in terms of intergroup communication. Furthermore, this view locates *colonias* within a regional political and cultural economy, as a form of low-income, low-employment population that is derived from combinations of three basic social histories (post-peasant, post-migrant, post-urban) with a short group history yet a cultural form nearly uniform in broad outline while at the same time highly differentiated in its specific form, depending in great part on region of origin (Mexico, Texas), time, distance and degree of displacement, and history if any of prior displacements (as in the case of step migrants or seasonal agricultural migrants.)

Colonias are viewed here as settlements of discrete households with high levels of mutual intelligibility but low levels of communication, placed together by the vagaries of land sale procedures by developers, and in need of forming a community out of their distinct specific backgrounds in order to become empowered enough to take control of community destiny. *Colonias* are viewed as a social formation unique to the border, not truly "Third World" nor easily fitting within the urban ghetto, rural slum, or shanty suburban subdivision definitions of the poor, having qualities that are similar to each, and other qualities both transnational and transcultural in nature. While united in space by contiguity, *colonias* are divided by generation, amount of time a household resides in the *colonia*, degree of acculturation, origins, religion, employment and other social factors. The legally marginal condition of *colonia* households, their land tenure and developer control problems, and their incremental approach to housing further positions *colonias* within the ambiguities of the development of the border region, in this view. An outline of their social domination and resistance to it has bearing on their potential for sustained and sustainable self-development because social development requires some level of local empowerment, some kind of community "ownership" and control, some basis for identity and shared pride beyond the household. Any attempts at "regularization" of *colonias* must take these factors into account, if the *colonias* are to be helped effectively to become strong and self-sustaining communities. From this perspective, participation is viewed as key to development success, and this arises with ownership by residents of their *colonia* and what goes on in it (land tenure, local authority). Studies suggest home ownership is central to a sense of community investment and social group identity that is necessary for communities to prosper and keep a stable social order. Such may also be the case for public buildings, such as community centers, parks, or any public space felt to be held in common. Most *colonias* today have no such public space.

Situating *colonias* as sociocultural constructs in a historically informed region shifts the discourse about *colonias* policy from exclusively poverty/physical infrastructure issues toward notions of social process, relations and networks, as well as issues of power and control over the development trajectory of *colonias*. It looks at *colonias* as landscapes of creative adaptation to the public housing and homelessness crisis and the vagaries of employment and housing costs, not as just materially inferior

forms of human settlement. It looks to title reform, the creating of public spaces, and the facilitating of collective self-betterment efforts with the help of multiple partnerships as potential solutions to the social ills that have arisen in the *colonias*, ills that threaten to otherwise make their poverty intractable and permanent.

This new approach to conceptualizing *colonias* gently alters the language by which policy might be formulated to best facilitate sustained improvements in *colonia* quality of life to one more inclusive of non-material factors. It suggests new approaches to long-term planning and community/regional development concerns on the border where *colonias* are involved. This presentation points, therefore, to the inadequacies of most current ways of defining *colonias*, both material and social, and how these may lead to problematical policy formulations and provides a socioculturally multivariate and dynamic alternative approach to *colonia* policy based upon in-depth, field-based, qualitative as well as quantitative research.

CHANGING METHODOLOGIES FOR ANALYZING LOW-INCOME LAND AND HOUSING MARKETS

Peter M. Ward

Department of Sociology/LBJ School
University of Texas at Austin

This presentation touches upon three major themes: 1) The dilemmas any country faces in producing affordable housing for its worker population; 2) The shifting methodologies and paradigms used to analyze the housing "problem"; and 3) The significant changes in Mexico's housing policy in recent years.

1) Dilemmas of Producing Low-Cost Housing. Diagrams are presented comparing the "industrialized" and "self-help"¹ modes of housing production revealed that housing is an expensive commodity because it valorizes capital and articulates many interest groups. These intervene in various phases of the housing process: land clearance and preparation; design, financing and regulatory authorizations; actual construction (often with multiple subcontracting); commercialization (realtors); ongoing use and maintenance. At each stage multiplex actors and capital interventions occur, sometimes informed by monopolies.

The "self-help" (*colonia*) mode, however, comprises a much more simple arrangement in which there is less opportunity for multiple intervention in the housing production process, and in which services are either absent and/or "sweat equity" of the residents themselves substitute for other forms of profit-seeking interventions. Thus, in *colonias* housing is made affordable to the poor by reducing quality -- tenurial insecurity, a lack of services, and often by the very illegal nature of its development. Housing may be affordable but the social costs associated with that inadequate housing is high. Without subsidy (not usually an option), or without greater sensitivity in policy actions, public sector efforts may articulate the profit seeking or cost raising interventions, thereby undermining affordability, delaying upgrading and dwelling improvement, and displacing original residents.

2) Methodology and Why it is Important. When we analyze *colonias* we do so through a particular "optic" -- often implicitly without understanding that the particular optic used colors and defines our way of viewing and responding to the problem at hand.² There are two broad paradigms today. The "neo classical economics" approach tends to disaggregate different housing markets and their

operationalization in terms of supply/demand, location, and the extent to which the market responds smoothly. Policies here seek to make the market operate more efficiently. The "political economy" focus looks at actors, interests groups, and the alignment and interactions of those interests in articulation of capital accumulation. It looks more at the ways in which housing is produced and articulated by state policy (or non-policy). Policies here tend to depend more heavily upon state intervention and activism. Both approaches are valid, but the importance is to recognize the relationship between the methodology adopted and policy approaches that will be invoked.

3) Changing Approaches to *Colonias* in Mexico since the 1970s. Important shifts in housing policy may be identified. During the 1960s Mexican governments followed the orthodoxy of formal housing projects, stereotyping *colonias* as a "cancer," marginal and as a dysfunctional aberration arising from rapid urbanization. Policies at that time comprised evictions, formal housing projects, and neglect (*laissez faire*) due to the magnitude of the problem.

From the mid-1970s onwards, *colonias* began to be viewed more positively, and policy sought to embrace "self-help" by small scale interventions that would legalize illegal land titles, provide essential services, support community organizations and initiatives etc. New forms of small credit were generated, and a series of agencies emerged with specific responsibility for housing sector policies. The 1980s saw a streamlining of those agencies and greater integration of their efforts supported by national housing policy legislation. Many of the federal initiatives began to be applied more widely by state and local government. Increasingly, too, there has been a focus upon rental and non-owner housing and policy interventions.

Today, World Bank orthodoxy in the form of the "New Urban Management Policy" is also finding an echo in Mexico, seeking as it does, to incorporate *colonias* into the fiscal and regulatory basis of the city, and to stimulate the "urban productivity" that may be derived from such areas. Opportunities exist, both as a source of income for cities and for residents through the equity and production that lot holding and occupancy may offer.³

In Texas there continues to be a tendency to view *colonias* as a temporary problem of dysfunctional urbanization and as refuges for cross-border immigrant populations. As a result the role, as legitimate working class communities, and their contribution to economic and industrial development in the border region, has neither been sufficiently recognized or emphasized. Leadership exercised by state government has been limited, while local governments are unwilling and/or ill prepared to respond to < I>colonia needs. In short, we need to give greater consideration to the way in which we, in Texas, approach the *colonias* phenomenon, and to think more aggressively and imaginatively about how we can intervene more effectively. Lessons may be learned from Mexico in this respect.

SESSION ONE: SUMMARY OF THE COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION

Analyzing *Colonias* and the Housing "Problem": Comparative Approaches in the USA and Mexico

Robin Redford
PRP (UT-Austin)

Commentators: Robert Holz and Henry Selby

Robert Holz

In terms of geography, the *colonias* can be identified by remote sensing technology using satellite/ aircraft imaging equipment. This data gathered using this technology must be analyzed in the context of the defining physical characteristics of *colonias*. For the purposes of the remote sensing data, *colonias* are identified not simply as a collection of homes, but also as a restructuring of the urban industrial landscape.

Graphically, *colonias* can be described as "paternoster" settlements, as the distribution of settlements resembles the spacing of beads on a rosary. Many *colonias* are located along old roads and outside urban areas. They are originally rural, but they begin to take on urban activities and may merge with the nearest urban area in the future.

The Rio Grande "valley" is really a delta which exhibits complex soil patterns. Remote sensing data reveal that *colonias* tend to occupy land with poor soil that is not optimum for agricultural use. The only option for use of this land is development, thus there is a high correlation between the location of poor agricultural land and the sites of *colonia* development.

Based on extensive house-to-house surveys, it has been found that the majority of dwellings in the *colonias* are owned rather than rented. In many cases, the owner is absent -- living outside Texas - and waiting to pay off the land in order to build a home and retire. Home ownership in the *colonias* represents the pursuit and acquisition of part of the American Dream.

Henry Selby

The panel members have brought several important points to light, however, what is wholly absent is a discussion of realistic solutions and their relationship to employment issues. The World Bank may have failed to extend mortgage credit to *colonia* home buyers, but this has turned out to be a blessing since the peso has subsequently collapsed. So some "solutions" ignore the economic realities that *colonia* residents face. Also, the reduction of regulations is a worthy goal, but each fee paid by a resident represents food in the mouths of someone else's family. Further, the paying of these fees is really only a problem if you do not have a *patron* who helps cover initial expenses.

What is also absent from the discussion so far is the recognition that we are discussing populations in resistance and as such, they have some very useful dynamics that are vital for successfully achieving the goals of the *colonia* communities. We must understand the translation of popular forces of resistance which enable the *colonia* to expand its living space. It is a fundamentally capitalist process with all the relevant exploitation. The predators on the poor will only relent if there are no profits to be had.

We also cannot underestimate the degree to which this is a political process. The process of *colonia* development is in no way benign. In fact, PRONOSOL is one of the worst examples of complete co-optation.

In short, we must emphasize the necessity of mobilizing popular forces in order to expand living space. Popular resistance is the only way to change the conditions and the incentive structures in and around

the *colonias*.

Discussion from Audience:

Kermit Black : Research shows that Hispanic populations throughout Texas share many of the same characteristics, whether living in a *colonia* or in another area of Texas. The improvements to physical infrastructure have not improved people's lives as some suggest. We must work to prevent growth and improve people's quality of life, but the costs are still rising. Where will people live if the costs rise too high? We may be creating another kind of problem.

Henry Dietz: Are we not contradicting ourselves in that the World Bank seeks to reduce the cost of regulations, yet we advocate fixing problems through greater regulatory control? How can we advocate introducing additional actors while saying we want to reduce regulatory costs?

Marina Sukup: There is a danger in over generalizing; we cannot assume that what is a problem in the lower valley is also a problem in El Paso. We must recognize the unique aspects regarding factors contributing to *colonia* development and the related problems.

Bill Siembieda: New Mexico reformed its state subdivision regulations, but only by making existing law more stringent - this does nothing to address *colonia* formation or *colonia* conditions. Problems will not be solved through a solely judicial approach.

The underlying force behind *colonia* development is people's seeking land to build shelter, but this is not part of the language of regulation reform.

Mrs. Sukup is right in that we must recognize unique problems and experiences, but the framework of lack of housing, interactions with developers, struggles IN STAGES is not that different and we can learn a lot by seeing that there might be similar solutions to problems.

Gil Shidlo: Regarding Mr. Selby's comments, I would submit that, as may be true in Washington D.C., there are too many bureaucrats in Mexico. The point should be to help improve conditions for people found to be living in dangerous conditions or substandard housing.

Willem van Vliet: What we are discussing is not how the system does not work, but rather how the system does work and what needs to be changed. Important, albeit small, changes are actually happening. An example could be reinventing government initiatives to streamline the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Duncan Earle: There is a problem defining *colonias* as collections of dilapidated homes with Hispanic populations. *Colonias* are actually less socially integrated because they are new. We cannot define *colonias* as physical entities alone - they are new settlements, not communities. *Colonias* were established on a first-come, first-served basis which is antithetical to a community. For this reason, *colonias* are different from other social formations. They are also different from other Hispanic

populations that are not *colonias*; one cannot say that poor communities in East Austin are like unto *colonias*.

Robert Holz: If we raised prices and created more regulations, thus making homes more expensive, we are not going to solve the problem. People will locate on further marginal lands and settle there.

Peter Ward: While there may be dangers in over generalizing, it is a "cop-out" to say we can do nothing to address concerns. We cannot leave it to each individual village or city to make tailored changes - we must recognize the similarities in situations and learn from them. We must understand local nuances, but general ideas are necessary and useful.

When mentioning "benign neglect" in reference to policies in Mexico, this refers to the era *after* the government's wholesale evictions and destruction of homes and communities, which incurred enormously high social costs, compromising the ability to raise children and maintain a home.

While there are drawbacks to PRONOSOL, we must recognize that there is also much to commend it and it was a major political force.

We must recognize that by formalizing and developing a process we may prejudice the reduction of those costs by new informality. This has been borne out through research.

Colonias Resident: *Colonias* are home to those who cannot afford to buy homes in the city. This is the reason we buy land in the outskirts. If the state had the funding or the will to support these families, then there would be no *colonias*. Developers routinely cheat *colonia* residents - they lie and say they will provide services. We cannot afford these services and we cannot get loans.

Robert Wilson - chair: *Colonias* are a solution, then, to the lack of affordable housing within the cities. The state has an obligation to make affordable housing available.

Pablo Soto - Director of Planning, Nuevo Laredo: In Mexico we refer to *colonias* as "irregular" settlements or squatters - as there is no payment for land. This is very different from U.S. *colonias*. In Mexico there is very strong pressure to give these residents the services they need. Perhaps a regional approach is more appropriate - not a completely global approach. In part, Laredo/ Nuevo Laredo has been able to coordinate to find solutions and work towards goals together. We find we have similar concerns and similar social origins, but very different legal issues. For this reason, the problem regarding urban settlements in Mexico and the U.S. are different.

Session Two:

Land Provision and Housing Production: Private Practices and Public Policy Responses and Outcomes

Chair: **Peter Ward**

Department of Sociology/LBJ School
The University of Texas at Austin

THE PRICE OF LEGALITY: LAND & SELF-HELP HOUSING PRODUCTION IN THE COLONIAS OF TEXAS AND MEXICO

Laura Powell

PRP (UT - Austin)

In Texas, *colonia* formation is a rational response to the shortage of low-income housing available along the border. Facilitating *colonia* development are a number of factors, including the existence of ample idle land; a lack of enforceable land development regulations; and the contract for deed. Legal requirements for land development and housing have always applied to land within city limits, but before 1989, subdivision regulations for rural land were minimal or nonexistent. Texas counties have no authority in the areas of planning, zoning, or the enforcement of building codes, creating a vacuum which has allowed for the generation of *colonias*. The key to *colonia* development, however, is the contract for deed, which allows a seller to avoid conveying a property deed to a buyer until the purchase price has been paid in full. Delayed payments allow the property seller to repossess the land and any improvements automatically without foreclosure proceedings. Some lots are forfeited and resold many times. Developers use these mechanisms and circumstances to their advantage in creating *colonias*. One well-known developer even outlined his "recipe" for a *colonia* to a city official, and recommended bankruptcy as a way to avoid providing promised, legally required services.

The federal response to the problems of *colonias* which have arisen as a result of these development processes has generally come in the form of funding for water and wastewater improvements, through agencies such as the EPA and HUD. The State of Texas has taken action with legislation such as Senate Bill 2 (1989), which provides funding for water and wastewater improvements, but which also outlined the Model Subdivision Rules (MSRs). The Texas Attorney General's Office has set up a *Colonias* Strikeforce to prosecute developers under a variety of laws. However, enforcement is still difficult, and hundreds of acres subdivided before 1989 were grandfathered and are, therefore, beyond the reach of post 1989 regulations.

In Texas, therefore, the originating points of illegality for *colonias* are numerous, including the subdivision process, the development process, and the "sub-standard" condition of housing. The existence of the contract for deed mechanism, however, means that the process of acquisition is entirely legal. On the other side of the border, however, Mexican *colonias* are classified as illegal or "irregular" precisely because the residents' means of acquiring the land is typically illegal. *Colonias* in Mexico may be founded on public, private or communal (*ejidal*) land, through illegal subdivision or invasion. In our case studies (see Ward, pp.3), the mode of land production differed substantially among the three border cities studied, ranging from invasion to the conversion of unproductive *ejidal* land.

Developers in Mexico are not a uniform class and may include *ejidatarios* or the first residents of particular *colonia*. The process of land development in Mexico, however, is followed after a period of time by the process of regularization, or the transformation of the status of land (and the *colonia*) from illegal to legal. Regularization took place in a variety of ways in the case study cities, ranging from the government expropriation and titling, to the facilitation of agreements between residents and private

land owners.

In our case studies, we noted that the federal *Solidaridad* program has significantly affected the processes of land development and regularization in some border cities. In Matamoros, for example, *Solidaridad* has clarified the land development process and made the creation of *colonias* a more bureaucratic and orderly, and less political, process.

One of the most noticeable similarities between the Texas and Mexico *colonias* is that the housing on both sides is almost uniformly self-built by the resident themselves. The percentage varies among settlement, but can reach up to 95 percent. Residents of Mexican and Texas *colonias* also all experience insecurity of tenure to varying degrees, although the process of regularization in Mexico reduces long-term uncertainty there.

Physical differences between the *colonias* of the two sides are clearly apparent in the areas of settlement densities and location. Lots in Texas are typically one-quarter to one-half acre in size, while Mexican *colonias* plots vary from 200- 400 square meters. In Mexico, too responsibility for the *colonias* lies unequivocally with the municipality, whereas in Texas they are invariably beyond the city's ETJ. Both of these factors affect the provision of services and infrastructure. The variation in housing stock is also more noticeable in Texas, where dwellings range from trailer homes to 3-bedroom brick houses.

Mexican *colonias* exhibit a greater standardization of housing types, and usually, a modal plan of a 2 to 3 room concrete block structure.

The most significant difference between the *colonias* of the two sides, however, is that residents of Mexican *colonias* are a voting bloc, and they are courted by the political system. The *Solidaridad* program is a federal initiative that has targeted the residents of *colonias* in an attempt to improve their living conditions. In Texas, however, the residents' political support is not considered crucial, and the city and the county therefore each try to make each other assume responsibility for any problems in the *colonias*. Mexico therefore has an established policy of regularization and service provision, whereas Texas has yet to develop such an established mechanism of political and financial incorporation.

Our investigation generated a number of policy recommendations in four areas: government regulation and coordination, land access for low-income people, land and housing finance, and support for the self-builder/consumer. Specific recommendations include :

- Improving inter-governmental coordination should be priority on both sides of the border. In Texas, officials should consider merging city and county roles in regulation, as is being done in the El Paso area. In Mexico, the process of land and housing production should be de-politicized, and long-range technical criteria should guide the settlement process.

- Policies of increasing land access will reinforce each other across the border since the latter is not an effective barrier to settlement. Mechanisms for facilitating access include: densification, land banking, sites and services projects, and public-private partnerships.

- In both Texas and Mexico access to land and housing finance needs to be improved, through mainstream and alternative mechanisms and programs. Special attention should be paid to mortgage programs, particularly in terms of required qualifications.

- In both Texas and Mexico the residents themselves should receive additional, targeted assistance and support, including education about policies, regulations and procedures in the areas of land development and housing. In Texas, this will require recognizing self-build as a viable means of housing provision. Passage of the Fair Land Sales Act or a similar measure in Texas would reform the contract for deed.

The *colonias* as they exist in Mexico and Texas are partial solutions to the shortage of low-income housing. Policy makers should also realize that formalizing and incorporating these self-built settlements may lead to increased land and housing prices and more limited access for low-income individuals.

URBAN CRISIS AND STATE INTERVENTION: THE HOUSING MARKET IN CIUDAD JUAREZ

Kevin Ruf

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The housing market of Ciudad Juárez represents a significant factor in the urban crisis residents of the city experience. There is a serious shortage of housing and material conditions are extremely poor in many cases. This is caused by two factors: the model of development in place in the city based on *maquiladora* industrialization has attracted a population that cannot afford to purchase housing on the legal market. Secondly, the political structure impedes action on the part of the state. If solutions are to be found, the popular sector must take a greater role in planning.

PRODUCTION OF HOUSING AND INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE CITIES OF THE US-MEXICAN BORDER

Francisco J. Prieto Muñoz

Desarrollo Urbano y Ecología,
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To begin I would like to point out that those policies which are described herein are based on the strategies of the government of Francisco Barrio Terrazas and the experience and actualization that we have had in Housing and Urban Development in the past two and one-half years in the state of Chihuahua. We don't claim to have found the 'dark thread' that will unravel the dilemmas of the housing crisis in Chihuahua. However, our experience has taught us something about how to understand the housing and infrastructure dilemmas in a broader context.

It is necessary to change certain things. For example, we note that as effective as has been the scheme of "Deconcentración de Facultades del Gobierno Federal" by means of "Delegaciones Estatales," in the making of decisions, a real institutional decentralization has failed to take place, particularly with regard to resources and the allocation of money that generates those resources. Also, the "organismos Estatales," like the Institutos de Vivienda, have not reaffirmed their role, that for which they were created in this historic moment.

In this context we would like to put forward our first proposal, which is the following. As has been discussed at the national level, there is urgent need for a real federalism. Governor Francisco Barrio Terrazas has pointed out three important trends affecting democratization.

FIRST: He has indicated that electoral democracy has advanced considerably.

SECOND: That the separation of the party and the government also show indications of improvement;

Chihuahua is an important example.

THIRD: That, in terms of achieving a real federalism, there is still much to be done.

We insist that to reinforce that authority of *municipios* and federal entities is to give them financial autonomy; it is to permit that states and *municipios*, that are close to the community, are given the latitude to direct both the before and after phases of policy implementation.

The state agencies should be able to conduct regional programs and support the *municipios* with resources.

In Chihuahua the principal problem is to resolve the access to housing of families earning between two and five times the minimum wage, and to better the conditions of housing which already exists.

To manage the crisis, we propose to redefine the criteria for credit, private and public, to ensure a decentralization that is more effective and efficient.

We propose:

1. Institutional decentralization, which would involve the transference to federal entities and *municipios* the means to control and develop the resources necessary for implementing programs.

2. The redefinition and effective operation of a financial organ that attends to the needs of social groups earning less than 2 and one-half times minimum wage and guaranteeing state governments financial resources.

3. That banking institutions be accountable to the state to ensure that adequate credit could be made available .

4. To give special attention and increase in credits for self-help housing, the construction of lots with services, and other housing improvements.

5. That the Institutos de Vivienda be consolidated as normal organs, promoters and coordinators of the institutional housing programs

6. That, as in the case of Chihuahua, states put into practice an urban reform, proactively addressing social housing needs, responding to the demand for lots with services and supporting efforts towards self-help housing.

<SELF-HELP HOUSING IN THE *COLONIAS* OF NUEVO LAREDO

Eduardo Alarcón Cantú

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Nuevo Laredo, Mexico

The present paper is divided into two parts: the first part includes the condition of infrastructure and the spatial distribution of population socioeconomically in Nuevo Laredo and Laredo, Texas; the second examines the dynamics of the actual *colonia* situation in Nuevo Laredo.

In this paper we refer to two criteria for evaluating the urban structure: the coverage of physical infrastructure and the spatial distribution of population socioeconomically. What we find is that the spatial distribution in Nuevo Laredo is completely different from that in Laredo, Texas.

In Laredo, Texas, the majority of persons of the highest level socioeconomically are concentrated to the north of the city. The next level is located in two areas: one to the south of the aforementioned high income area, another to the east of the city. The lowest level socioeconomically is associated with areas

that are difficult to access: to the west of the city along the principal highway or other location to the south of the city, practically on the secondary highways. The most extreme socioeconomic groups (both low and high) occupy the most recently settled districts.

Nuevo Laredo, by contrast, has a settlement pattern that is lineal-concentric. Socioeconomic levels descend with distance from the center of the community, focused on the principal access routes of Avenida Guerrero and Avenida Mexico.

The results of the analysis of the coverage of physical infrastructure (water, drainage, electricity, pavement, roads) are the following: in Laredo, Texas, the best level of coverage extends over a very high percentage of the city (70%), and only areas not extensively settled or developed have less than optimal coverage. These areas are to be found in the extreme southeast of the city by one of the secondary highways and to the west, between the railroad tracks and the river.

In Nuevo Laredo the level of coverage of physical infrastructure generally matches the socioeconomic level of the inhabitants. That is to say the highest socioeconomic levels along and between the principal roads (north-south) and the level of infrastructure coverage lessens with distance of settlement from the aforementioned major roads.

Recent physical growth in Nuevo Laredo (1989-1994) has seen a significant increase in settlements by persons of few economic resources. It is possible, in combination with other factors, that this increase is the result of the growth in the number of workers in *maquiladoras* between 1987-1990. However, it is likely that much of the growth of newly settled areas is also related to a demand in Nuevo Laredo for low cost housing generally which the market has at least temporarily accommodated, and the circumstances which have made it so. Political factors also play a role in provision of physical service, as evidenced in the example of the settlement of the *colonia* "Nuevo Era" in Nuevo Laredo.

In Nuevo Laredo the problems of the population of low economic resources are similar to those found in much of the country. Political factors must be separated from the process of providing housing. Rather than forecast an end to the need for housing programs we should support the process of self-help housing as the best means to assuaging the considerable shortages in this area.

[This paper also presented a series of tables (not included here) providing socioeconomic data for two *colonias* in Nuevo Laredo]

LOS PROCESOS DE AUTOCONSTRUCCION DE VIVIENDA POPULAR EN CD. JUAREZ

Pedro Cital Beltran

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Cd. Juárez

Al igual que la mayoría de las ciudades de la frontera norte, Ciudad Juárez ha experimentado un acelerado crecimiento demográfico en las últimas décadas, que se manifiesta generalmente en la ocupación desorganizada del suelo urbano y sus espacios habitacionales, ocasionando que el acceso de la población a los diversos satisfactores básicos entre los que destaca la vivienda, presente serias y notables deficiencias.

Día tras día, la demanda de vivienda, se incrementa considerablemente, convirtiéndose en un problema con escasas posibilidades de solución para las clases más desprotegidas en la ciudad. Por un lado, la producción pública es insuficiente y por otro, los inversionistas privados atiendan a sólo un reducido segmento de la población que sí puede pagar los precios que le fija el mercado.

En consecuencia, en Ciudad Juárez, durante los últimos veinte años, el 70% de las viviendas ha sido construido de manera informal, mediante la autoconstrucción, generalmente en asentamientos espontáneos carentes de alguna norma de planeación.

Así, este proceso "informal" de producción de la vivienda es actualmente la forma más importante de producción de vivienda en las colonias populares, por lo que resulta necesario profundizar en su conocimiento para entender los problemas que se generan, y conocer hasta qué punto pudiera contribuir a la "solución" del problema de la vivienda en Ciudad Juárez. Por lo tanto, el objetivo general de esta investigación es analizar los diferentes factores que generan, fomentan o inhiben los procesos de autoconstrucción de vivienda en las colonias periféricas de Ciudad Juárez.

Para lograrlo, se propone determinar la forma y modalidades con que los diversos estratos socioeconómicos de bajos ingresos emplean sus recursos para autoconstruir su vivienda, así como el grado de eficiencia en el manejo de los recursos humanos, económicos y físicos que estos procesos implican.

SESSION TWO: SUMMARY OF THE COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION

Land Provision And Housing Production: Private Practices And Public Policy Responses And Outcomes

Jennifer Webster

PRP (UT-Austin)

Commentators: Javier Guajardo, José María Fernández, Raúl Barrera and Mario Aguilar

Javier Guajardo

In fact the best possible scenario today for successfully prosecuting developers occurs when the developer has retained ownership of *colonia* land under contract for deed; once *colonia* residents legally own their land, there is little legal recourse that can be pursued against a developer. The fact that "contract for deed" facilitates prosecution efforts against developers is somewhat ironic given that contract for deed has been used as a tool by developers against *colonos* for many years. Another key factor in bringing suit against developers is cooperation among government agencies such as Texas Natural Resources Conservation Commission (TNRCC) and Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA). Unfortunately, it is still very difficult to build a case against even the most corrupt developers, as illustrated by the tremendous resources required to force developer Cecil B. MacDonald to declare bankruptcy.

On a side note, Fernandez added that a non-profit housing corporation was created to oversee MacDonald's fifteen *colonias*, and that TDHCA is helping residents to obtain legal ownership of the land.

Current and proposed legislation supported by Attorney General Morales touches upon several issues pertaining to *colonia* development. First, the legislation strengthens the attorney general's ability to prosecute *colonia* developers for violations of health and safety codes. Second, all counties will be required to adopt Model Subdivision Rules (MSR); currently only counties applying for Economically Distressed Areas Program (EDAP) funds are required to adopt MSR. Third, the legislation designates

Travis County, where the Strike Force has yet to lose a case, as a possible venue for all lawsuits brought against developers. Fourth, the legislation contains provisions allowing for prosecution of developers accused of creating a public nuisance such as an illegal dump site or other health hazards on *colonia* property. Fifth, the legislation address the jurisdictional confusion pertaining to *colonias* by designating cities as responsible for regulation and enforcement in their Extra Territorial Jurisdictions (ETJ), and counties as the regulators of ETJ limits. Finally, the legislation contains provisions requiring developers who will retain ownership in grandfathered *colonias* to provide water and wastewater.

José Maria Fernandez

Fernández began by underscoring the magnitude of the affordable housing deficit faced by Ciudad Juárez. The growth rate in this border city is the second highest in the country at 3.5%, and forty families arrive daily in need of housing. 9000 families currently reside in "high risk areas" where PEMEX pipelines, levies, high-tension wires, and other hazards threaten their health and safety. Ciudad Juárez confronts a deficit of 45,000 homes for low-income families.

Fernandez then offered a perspective different from an earlier presenter regarding the benefits that *maquiladoras* have brought to the city. He noted that while *maquiladoras* have significantly increased employment opportunities, the jobs they have created offer very low wages paying only one-half to two times the minimum wage. Families surviving on such low wages cannot afford or qualify for bank loans. Exorbitant prevailing interest rates makes loans and qualifying for loans prohibitive for low-income families in general.

Fernandez then described how the governments of Ciudad Juárez and the state of Chihuahua have addressed the lack of affordable housing through a 2000 hectare low-income self-help housing development called *Tierra Nueva*. *Tierra Nueva* provides an alternative to irregular settlements and offers a number of advantages including convenient access to transportation, areas designated for infrastructure development, and provision of basic services such as water, police, electricity and garbage collection. Prospective residents receive instruction and assistance in self-help construction. Qualified applicants receive very low interest loans to purchase property and to buy building materials. In addition, residents negotiate directly with the government thus eliminating the resident middlemen in irregular developments who are often corrupt. The outcome of the project is better land use and integrated development that is not achieved in most irregular settlements.

Raul Barrera

Barrera expressed appreciation for the efforts of government agencies and NGO's to improve conditions in the *colonias*, but he emphasized that much work remains to be done. He feels that education is perhaps the most critical type of assistance needed. For example, few residents are knowledgeable about the nature of contracts for deed. Barrera recommended that those interested in aiding *colonias* provide assistance by helping residents identify their problems and by teaching them ways to resolve problems themselves. As an example he referred to the *Union de Colonias Olvidadas* which organized residents in ten *colonias* along Webb County's Highway 359; the *colonias* banded together to demand water service and were successful in achieving this goal within a year's time.

Mario Aguilar

Aguilar discussed the activities of the Texas Department for Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) in El Cenizo funded by a Community Development Block Grant. TDHCA petitioned the local bankruptcy court in order to buy all the properties in El Cenizo. They then instituted a program which involves 1) buying all properties or contracts for deed 2) offering an interest rate at 8% (reduced from

the 12% residents previously paid) and 3) exchanging contracts for deed for warranty deeds and conventional mortgages. TDHCA handles all the necessary documentation at no cost to El Cenizo residents. An important component is the education of the residents so that they understand the process and the definition/meanings of the different documents. This program has the overwhelming support of the *colonos* and is the first of its type at the state level. Cooperation among numerous government agencies is key to the success of this program.

Discussion from Audience

Peter Ward asked Mario Aguilar who pays the cost of the TDHCA deed exchange. He noted that in Mexico it is the residents who absorb the costs of regularization.

Mario Aguilar responded that the agency allocates the funds for this program and absorbs the costs, reiterating that residents are not charged. An interesting point he added was that the judge assumed residents had made regular payments on their contract for deeds when in fact many residents had not. Consequently, many residents benefited by having outstanding balances erased.

Peter Ward also asked Francisco Prieto about the strategies Mexican officials used to obtain the consensus of property owners to sell their land to illegal invaders, and what steps were taken if an owner opposed the purchase.

Francisco Prieto explained that where land invasions have occurred on private property the government negotiates an agreement between the owner and often hundreds of *colonia* residents. Property owners have little recourse for dealing with land invaders otherwise, so they have a strong incentive to accept an offer by the government for compensation for their property. A strategy employed by the government is temporary regularization and working out a payment plan for residents to repay owners for the land. If negotiations fail the government can expropriate the property but must pay the commercial or market price to the owner. The government has not needed to resort to this method and does not anticipate a need to do so in the future given that the government has acquired enough land reserves to offer to low-income families.

Ingrid Castillo from UT Pan-American discussed her experience with *colonos*. She underscored the importance of listening to residents because they understand their situation in a way outsiders can't. She also emphasized the need for all actors: residents, academics, service providers, etc., to work together to use resources wisely. She also noted that patience is necessary because change and improvement take time.

One conference attendee asked whether there were any programs linking *maquiladoras* and housing development but the panel was unaware of any such initiatives.

Another attendee asked about the type of leaders emerging in Tierra Nueva (Cd. Juárez) and whether there were problems with corruption as in irregular settlements. Prieto responded that emerging leaders are involved in organizing residents to raise money for service provision as currently many areas lack services and the process is slow. He emphasized that the residents are no longer at the mercy of manipulative leaders, and that residents cannot be cheated since the government distributes land. Leaders of the former type that were involved in organizing land invasions are being sent to jail.

Session Three:

Physical Infrastructure Provision to the *Colonias*: Practices, Policies, and Obstacles

x

Chair: **Christopher Shane Davies**

Department of Geography

University of Texas

SERVICING NO MAN'S LAND: AMBIVALENCE VERSUS COMMITMENT IN THE TEXAS-MEXICO COLONIAS

Jason Leuck

PRP (UT- Austin)

The lack of physical services is commonly referred to as a determinant of what constitutes a *colonia* on both the U.S. and Mexican sides of the Border. The way this condition is managed, however, is largely what differentiates the two sides. On the U.S side, a maze of overlapping and sometimes contradictory regulatory and jurisdictional frameworks masks a general failure of policy which is characterized by the absence of political will to address the problems presented by inadequate physical infrastructure. In Mexico, the federal, state, and municipal levels of government have pointedly addressed in a coordinated manner the dilemmas which the lack of physical infrastructure in *colonias* represent. There has been remarkably little cross-border dialogue about the provision of physical infrastructure despite the evidently common problems, such as those related to issues of health and environment, that *colonias* present to both the U.S. and the Mexico. Viewing the Texas-Mexico border as an international boundary that separates two distinct and independent entities limits policy approaches. Services such as water and drainage transcend the international boundaries and demand planning and cooperation from both sides if each plans to enjoy clean and plentiful water resources, efficient transportation and an overall positive standard of living.

It appears that Texas officials have more to learn from Mexico than vice versa. In fact, results of this study indicate that there are a number of ways in which Texas policy makers can learn from their Mexican counterparts. The first suggestion is to de-centralize decisionmaking. This can be as simple as ensuring that residents are included in the process of acquiring services that will be both affordable and accessible. More alternative approaches should be considered such as on-site septic system management for those in rural areas. This may well involve innovative and alternative approaches that incorporate self-help and links to human and economic development. The need, therefore, is to incorporate in the planning process individuals familiar with these options, not just engineers who have always

constructed large-scale infrastructure. The government could fund and work with non-profits who have expertise in this area. Non-profits could be used for outreach and community organizing to get services in alternative ways, such as, the simplification of the application process for infrastructure projects and consolidation programs into one coordinating agency for all grants and loans. There should be outreach programs to communities and eligible sponsors to inform about programs available. Other suggestions call for more resources for regulation enforcement at the county level: connecting affordable housing and infrastructure in higher density areas; making service provision more attractive to political subdivisions such as cities and counties by offering incentives, or reducing regulations regarding housing codes, liability, etc.; eliminating the requirement that only a political subdivision sponsor *colonias* for water infrastructure so that residents can organize and apply directly.

One approach currently being taken in Mexico, specifically in Ciudad Juárez, is to channel future growth to a particular area of the city. By doing so, officials can better service the land before people move into an area. In addition, it is then possible to direct development towards areas that will be easier to service. One way this is done in Ciudad Juárez is to tell *colonia* residents that the high risk zones will not receive services as they are cost prohibitive. This serves to deter additional individuals from moving there as well as encourage the current residents to move to new areas that will receive servicing. Perhaps Texas officials can also focus more on planning ahead rather than reacting to events after they occur.

Another Mexican policy approach is to increase densities the city in order to decrease the cost of extending utility lines. Although the degree to which this sort of policy will be acceptable in the U.S., and especially Texas, is problematic, it is still an avenue that should be explored.

DESARROLLO FRONTERIZO, VIVIENDA Y ASENTAMIENTOS IRREGULARES EN CIUDAD JUAREZ

César Fuentes Flores

Colegio de la Frontera Norte

Ciudad Juárez

El "desarrollo fronterizo" puede ser evaluado desde diferentes ángulos, paradigmas, metodologías, etc. Sin embargo en este caso me referiré tan sólo a un indicador que me permitirá analizar dicho "desarrollo": la vivienda y el mercado formal del suelo urbano en Cd. Juárez.

Generalmente cuando se habla del modelo de desarrollo regional, que se siguió en las ciudades fronterizas del norte de México a partir de mediados de la década de los sesenta, se tiende a resaltar principalmente sus innegables beneficios económicos, y se hace poca alusión a sus impactos sociales. Uno de los efectos principales del Programa de Industrialización Fronteriza, fue de que al impulsar a Juárez como "polo de desarrollo", generó entre otras cosas un gran desequilibrio territorial al interior del estado de Chihuahua y las zonas de influencia de ésta misma (Coahuila, Durango, Zacatecas, etc). E decir, se concentraron las actividades económicas en ésta región del estado de Chihuahua, y con ello se volvió más atractiva la ciudad para grandes establecerse temporal o definitivamente dada la gran oferta de empleo.

Lo anterior ha ocasionado que Juárez experimente un gran crecimiento por migración, lo que ha significado una gran expansión de la mancha urbana y como resultado una mayor demanda de

satisfactores básicos para la población (alimentación, vestido, servicios públicos y vivienda). Lo anterior ha ocasionado que la ciudad presenta graves déficits de infraestructura urbana, siendo más altos estos en las colonias que se crearon de manera irregular.

Sin embargo en el caso de la vivienda el crecimiento poblacional superó por mucho la oferta de este satisfactor, debido principalmente a elementos de tipo económico, social, político, binacional, etc. Los factores previamente mencionados, han provocado que en materia de vivienda y del mercado formal del suelo urbano Ciudad Juárez presente grandes distorsiones, causando entre otras cosas que la ciudad tenga grandes superficies ocupadas por asentamientos irregulares. Según cálculos de la Dirección de Asentamientos Humanos del municipio, hasta febrero de 1993 el 40% de la superficie de la ciudad se había creado como asentamientos irregulares, lo cual nos da una idea de la magnitud del problema en ese momento.

Desde mi óptica, el principal indicador que ayuda a explicar con claridad el crecimiento de las zonas irregulares es el ingreso. En 1990 según el Censo de Población y Vivienda en Ciudad Juárez, el 6.42% de la población económicamente activa (PEA) recibió menos de 1 salario mínimo (s.m.), el 43.46% entre 1 y 2 (s.m.) y el 36.30% como más de 2 y hasta 5 (s.m.) Esto muestra que un gran segmento de la población de Juárez recibe bajas remuneraciones, por lo que en ese sentido su capacidad de ahorro es limitada y como consecuencia no existe capacidad de compra de vivienda, dados los actuales costos de la misma.

Es por ello, que algunos estudios han encontrado que en este momento la ciudad tiene un déficit de 47,000 viviendas nuevas.

El problema de acceso a la vivienda es mayor cuando analizamos el ingreso por sector de la economía. Como sabemos actualmente la industria manufacturera es la actividad más importante en Ciudad Juárez, ya que da empleo a 129 mil trabajadores y de ellos 60% percibe un salario mínimo. Si este ingreso se contextualiza en los costos de vida de las ciudades fronterizas y específicamente en el caso de Juárez, sabemos que la capacidad de ahorro es nula y como consecuencia la posibilidad de obtener una vivienda del "mercado formal" o un terreno para autoconstruir es muy baja.

Aunque afortunadamente todavía existen mecanismos oficiales para la obtención de la vivienda como son INFONAVIT, FOVISSTE, FONHAPO, IVIECH, etc. El grueso de los trabajadores de los diferentes sectores de la economía, presentan problemas para calificar para el otorgamiento de financiamiento para la compra de vivienda. Sabemos que el 60% de los trabajadores de la industria maquiladora no califican para los créditos de INFONAVIT e IVIECH debido a las condiciones que estas instituciones demandan. Por ejemplo INFONAVIT requiere contar con un suelo equivalente a por lo menos 2.3 salarios mínimos, tener cotizados en el Infonavit un mínimo de 9 años, tener registrados a por lo menos 3 dependientes económicos, etc.

Sin embargo, el panorama no es totalmente negativo ya que en la actualidad se han generado algunas nuevas opciones para la adquisición de vivienda, como son los convenios entre algunas empresas maquiladoras y el Instituto Chihuahuense de la Vivienda, los que en este año construirán 160 casas habitación destinadas a un número igual de trabajadores. En este convenio participan la empresa, los trabajadores y el instituto, quizá estos sean los primeros pasos que permitan que un mayor número de trabajadores tengan acceso a vivienda, y como resultado disminuyan las presiones sociales hacia la búsqueda de la invasión de terrenos como su única opción.

Un segundo elemento que tiene una gran importancia en el crecimiento de los asentamientos irregulares es el político, ya que son los líderes de colonias o de partidos que durante mucho tiempo han utilizado

este mecanismo principalmente como medida de control. Por lo que el proceso de invasión se ha dado de tres formas; el promovido por líderes de colonias y organizaciones políticas, el proceso de "invasión ordenada", comdemnada por el partico oficial, y la invasión tipo hormiga.

Un tercer factor que explica el gran crecimiento de las áreas irregulares y que ha sido poco considerado, es la internacionalidad de las ciudades de la frontera. Las condiciones de vida de la población pueden definirse por la amplitud de su acceso a determinados bienes y servicios, la tendencia favorece a la población fronteriza en aquellos productos que la internacionlidad permite adquirir directamente, a precios inferiores al promedio nacional. Entre los bienes y servicios no acces ibles internacionalmente y que afectan directamente las condiciones de vida, se encuentran la vivienda y los servicios públicos. Este es otro factor que desde mi punto de vista influye en que los asentamientos irregulares en las ciudades fronteriz as sean mayores que en otras regiones del país.

SESSION THREE: SUMMARY OF THE COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION

Physical Infrastructure Provision To The *Colonias*: Practices, Policies And Obstacles

Lara Coger-Lopez
PRP (UT-Austin)

Commentators: Jorge Manjarrez, Demetrio Jiménez, Ramiro Azuara Oliva, Marina Sukup

Jorge Manjarrez

Nuevo Leon has and is currently experiencing rapid immigration rates and high levels of natural increase. The surge of population growth in Nuevo Leon has led to a serious affordable housing crisis. In Nuevo Leon paradoxically there exists three times t he amount of housing required for upper scale housing, while demand for affordable or public interest housing is four times greater than supply.

The state housing institution, Instituto de Vivienda, was created to address the housing crisis of Nuevo Leon with specific attention to be given to the 150 irregular settlements housing approximately 150,000 persons in the surrounding area of Monterrey. For Manjarrez the term *colonia*, referring to these irregular settlements, is synonymous with need. The Instituto is working to address the needs of *colonos* as well as others who are still without sufficient shelter. Many of these 150 sett lements are ten to twelve years old and enjoy varying levels of consolidation. The *colonias populares*, or irregular settlements, have not however resolved the housing shortage in Monterrey.

Manjarrez elaborated on the Instituto de Vivienda's program to address the land and housing crisis of Monterrey and Nuevo Leon. First, the public sector must work to increase territorial land reserves, especially through *ejido* purchases and throu gh negotiation with the primary private landowners in the area. Second, through associations and partnerships with the private landholders, the government has been successful in developing private lands for low-income settlements wherein the government s ector promises to install basic infrastructure services, increasing the landowners' land value some three to four

times. In addition to these land assembly and development programs, Manjarrez mentioned the importance of encouraging auto-construction, or self-help housing, and governmental recognition and regularization of irregular settlements. Nuevo Leon has also established a unique program called *Credito al Palabra* providing small loans for rapid housing construction.

Before finishing with his presentation Manjarrez reiterated his definition of a *colonia* as synonymous with need. The need for housing, health, education and employment are all closely correlated.

Demetrio Jiménez

Demetrio Jiménez' presentation focused on the involvement and commitment of the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs to the *colonias* situation in the border region. The primary function of he and his colleagues in the field is to facilitate the taking advantage by border counties of Community Development Block Grants for which they are eligible. Regarding the *colonias* specifically, counties can submit applications based on the local need for physical infrastructure including the distribution of and individual connection to community water and sewage lines. Grants are also made available for more socially-oriented developments such as community parks and community centers. To date CDBG have been successfully applied for and received in the Texas border *colonias* of Cameron Park, Larga Vista and other *colonias* of Webb and Maverick Counties. Jimenez noted the cooperative efforts enjoyed by his department and that of the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) in designating *colonia* regions as Economically Distressed Areas.

Marina Sukup

Marina Sukup's synopsis of the *colonia* problem boiled down to two statements, 'How much will it cost?' and, 'Who pays?' Sukup attempted to give a broad perspective of the *colonias* situation within the context of the border region. Sukup reminded the audience that the border cities population resemble all too much that of the *colonias*. In other words, the cities and counties themselves are too poor to begin to address the greater issue of the *colonias*. They may be committed to spend \$10 million on *colonias* projects, but the estimated housing upgrading and physical infrastructure developments carry a price tag of \$100 million. Sukup noted, however, that the TWDB is unable to spend the \$250 million they have set aside for *colonias*' physical infrastructure development because of problems built into restrictive eligibility requirements.

Sukup serves not only as Director of City Planning, but also fills the shoes of many other departments. Sukup is also Flood Plain Administrator and Building Code Inspector. She argued that this reality reflects the limited resources available to border city and county governments. Local and regional governments are poor and cannot afford to pay for the inefficient development of water, sewage, and solid waste disposal of low-income housing developments, which are sparsely populated and far from the city's servicing centers, nor can they afford the liability that goes along with such development. She noted the importance of density issues in addressing infrastructure. Environmental concerns and the economics of infrastructure development demand high population densities.

Discussion from the Audience:

An audience member asked if it is really a question of not enough funds or not in my backyard? Not only do city and county not have enough funds to deal with the multitude of issues regarding *colonias*, the conflicts between state agency regulatory frameworks also makes initiating improvements in the *colonias* virtually impossible. Each department has a standard list of requirements that must be fulfilled before they will begin work in the *colonia*. Thus, one improvement cannot be made without another having been achieved first. This results in little consolidation of physical and social services in border *colonias* over time.

An audience member asked what was the methodology of the policy research project and what kind of data was found on the quality of physical infrastructure? A PRP member answered that in surveying the coverage of physical and social services on both sides of the border most information was gathered from statistics provided by the appropriate governmental departments. This research was complemented by eyewitness accounts and discussions with key informants and *colonia* residents themselves. Problems do arise from utilizing statistics, especially on the Mexican side of the border as categories were very broad, i.e. water coverage included everything from water lines and hook-ups to truck delivery of water for storage in 55 gallon drums.

Peter Ward explained that in Mexico there is a lesser preoccupation with codes and regulations. The academic literature and the PRP study suggests that perhaps Texas should reconsider its overly high standards. What scope in Texas is there for minimizing codes? Is the possibility of litigation a significant consideration in lessening regulations?

Marina Sukup disagreed with Peter Ward's suggestion that standards are too high. She has seen first hand, as building inspector, the terribly dangerous conditions in which these people live and the threat thus posed to public health considerations. She was opposed to any lessening of codes and regulations. Sukup noted, however, that improvements cannot be realized unless certain steps are taken to meet these regulations, and many *colonia* residents refuse to take steps to do so. An example put forth includes the need to provide easements for physical infrastructure and road building. *Colonia* residents are opposed to any move that means they will have to turn over even a small part of their land.

Sukup continued with an elaboration of the difficulties of working with state agency imposed regulations. State and federal mandates including the E.P.A. regulations are often cumbersome and ill-applied to development restrictions in the area. For example, there are enormous additional costs associated with the development of landfills, designed to protect ground water. Sukup noted, Laredo does not have any ground water--all water is derived from the Rio Grande/ Rio Bravo.

An audience member directed a question toward Jason Leuck and Marina Sukup. Given that, unlike Mexico, Texas has the dichotomy of both city and county jurisdiction, how does this affect governance?

Sukup responded that each city in Texas has Extra Territorial Jurisdiction for oversight of subdivisions, but has no legal right or responsibility for service provision or taxation. The county, on the other hand,

has no authority to become involved with utility provision. The state has intentionally made the political subdivision of counties weak, limiting their ability to make innovative agreements.

In Mexico, Leuck argued, the municipality has responsibility for servicing *colonia* areas but with the limited resources available, this is impossible. Therefore, the state and federal governments often step in to negotiate directly with the *col onias*.

Kermit Black, referring to an earlier discussion, said that the autonomy of city and county governments is limited even if they have enough money. In order for a city or county to take on additional, non-mandated duties they must first get approval from Texas legislature. This is a lengthy process but should not deter city and county governments, working in concert, from continuing to bring their issues and possible solutions to the attention of state government.

Alicia Recruz argued that we need a new definition of *colonias*. As stated earlier, the term '*colonia*' equals 'need.' She suggested that *colonias* suffer from a need for identity. *Colonia* populations are unique. What do people outside *colonia* think of *colonia* residents? What do they think of themselves? In attempting to remedy the situation of *colonia* residents, solutions must be culturally appropriate. We must ask: Who are these people? What kind of identity should be encouraged? Furthermore, What is their understanding of various [governmental and nongovernmental] agencies and systems that affect their daily lives?

Jorge Manjarrez said that *colonos* are human beings and need to *pertenecer*, belong to something that is theirs. A historic problem associated with identity in Mexico has been the propensity to name *colonias* by number. This practice needs to be changed. People cannot identify with numbers, they need real names for their neighborhoods. It is interesting to note, however, that *colonos* living in some of those numbered neighborhoods do identify with the numbers, and are offended by efforts to change their names.

Session Four:

Community or Settlement? The Development of Informal & Formal Social Infrastructure in Border *Colonias*

Chair: **Henry Dietz**

Government Department

The University of Texas at Austin

INFORMAL SOCIAL ORGANIZATION & COMMUNITY IN THE *COLONIAS*:

SETTLEMENTS OR COMMUNITIES?

Heather Pierson

PRP (UT-Austin)

Social infrastructure and community participation provide a foundation for the concepts: settlement and community. A settlement is a generally spatially defined term that is characterized by paradoxes. Despite the large numbers of individuals living in close proximity, *colonia* settlements suffer from inadequately developed social as well as physical infrastructure. Settlement dwellers possess few common goals. Communication and interaction is usually forged only in response to crises. The concept of community, unlike that of settlement, is not exclusively dependent on proximity of residents. It does suggest, however, more thorough forms of social integration of a kind we should like to see develop in the border *colonias*.

One limitation to government response to the *colonia* dilemma in Texas has been a result of the disparity in policy imperatives preventing the development of *colonias* through legislation or improving infrastructure. Both governmental and non-governmental assistance programs tend to be divided by sectors, for instance by health, education, natural resource protection, or physical infrastructure development. This sectoral division tends to hinder the process of comprehensive community development because each initiative has its own individually articulated goals.

Though inextricably linked to the political system, the Mexican policy approach fosters social infrastructure and helps to create the needed environment for communities to develop. Of particular importance are fostering of the horizontal as well as vertical links between *colonia* residents. We must begin to think of *colonias* not as environmental disasters, subdivisions of substandard housing, or "ranchos". We must understand the human element within each of these communities and begin to forge a new policy which concentrates on the development of a community, both within the *colonias* and between *colonias* and their urban centers.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS OF SOCIAL SURVEYS IN THE COLONIAS OF TEXAS

George Rogers

Center for Housing and Urban Development

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The *colonias* are communities along the border with Mexico that often have substandard infrastructure compared to other Americans. These areas are frequently rural and thereby "extra-territorial" (i.e., beyond the regulatory authority of municipalities). *Colonias* are often isolated. They are geographically isolated due to the sheer distance to typical city services. They are culturally isolated in that most of the residents are Hispanic and many speak only Spanish. Residents are politically underrepresented and they have limited confidence in the political leaders that represent them. Moreover, they are socially isolated in that they typically have limited contact with the social institutions that serve them. Social surveys have been conducted in seven *colonia* areas, five in the Spring of 1992 and two more in the Spring of 1993. These surveys reveal a series of features that have important policy implications. The lack of infrastructure and stark poverty impact life in the *colonias* on a daily basis. This paper examines

these impacts and demonstrates how they create tremendous obstacles to *colonia* residents "*buscando la vida buena*," and discusses the associated policy implications associated with improving life in the *colonias*.

SOCIAL PROVISION AS AN INVESTMENT IN HUMAN CAPITAL

Martin Acevedo

(PRP-UT Austin)

Only after a minimum level of physical infrastructure has been provided can social services begin to have an impact. Yet often the opportunity to switch the primary focus from physical to social services is lost, and governments continue to focus on physical "things". And while it is easier to quantify progress with physical measures, such as counting the number of platted lots and paved streets, such a one-sided emphasis distorts real progress; the people being affected are completely left out of the development equation. This pattern of development leads to large capital projects with beneficiaries who are eager but ill-equipped to participate in them.

The point of this paper is to argue that investment in human capital will pay large dividends not only for *colonia* residents (intrinsically), but for governments and service providers as well (extrinsically).

Accessibility to basic preventative and curative health, continued and consistent education opportunities, and the security of engaged police and fire provision to one's *colonia*--these are some of the social services which enable *colonia* residents to "leapfrog" physical development by fostering the potential of the residents themselves. By understanding social service not only as an end itself, but as a *means* to improving the rest of one's life, a means of self-actualization, investment in social services can ultimately contribute to real progress in further social and physical infrastructure improvement.

The discussion is framed in three parts. First, there is a description of some broad characteristics for social service provision in Texas and Mexico, particularly education and health, with some attention to fire and police protection. Next, there is an accounting for some of these differences in social service provision in the two countries. Finally, there is a discussion of several policy implications in providing social services to the *colonias* in a manner that is interactive with *colonia* residents themselves.

The vast potential for improving social service delivery to the *colonias* of the Texas and Mexico border presumes that these communities will figure in the social landscape for years to come. Predictions that shifts in trade practice and employment opportunities will render the borderland a wasteland (economically, if businesses move elsewhere; environmentally, if businesses stay and pollute) neglect the defining strength and permanence of the region as a place to settle and live. Nowhere is this more clear than through the continued growth of *colonias* along the Texas and Mexico border. And while the sheer numbers and rates of growth along both borders merit awe amongst demographers and lay people alike, it is through the individual and collective instances of inadequate social service provision to the *colonias* that these numbers become clearly humanized. The question is not whether *colonias* will continue to flourish along the Texas and Mexico border, but rather, in what form and in which fashion. The current mode of social service provision to the *colonias* gives us a glimpse of the future, and as our policy recommendations suggest, perhaps alternatives which join economic growth, social service provision, and *colonia* participation will contribute to real community and bi-national development along the border.

The level of social service provision reflects government's commitment to its people. Through a cross-

border comparison of social service provision, one reaches several conclusions: 1) Social service provision to the Texas *colonias* is characterized by a variety of service providers whose aims and programs often overlap, but who are not coordinated or connected in a coherent and efficient manner. In Mexico, social service provision, with the *Solidaridad* program as the government's main extension, address the needs of the *colonias* in a much more interactive and streamlined manner, but which is often tinged with political allegiance; 2) Mexico's high levels of state/*colonia* interaction do not necessarily speak to the quality and manner of social service provision; 3) increased economic activity on both sides of the border has not necessarily increased the average *colonia* resident's standard of living (and in fact may be detracting from it, i.e. environmental degradation, debilitating work conditions, absent caregivers, etc.); and 4) the border region as a whole, and *colonia* in particular, have suffered from a lack of private sector and governmental accountability which would view, listen, and converse with its citizens, consumers, and workers in language which is neither alien, nor condescending, in a forum which is neither closed nor inaccessible, and in practices and goals that are neither unrealizable nor create further dependency.

As suggested in our policy recommendations, administrative changes, budget reallocations and better dialogue with *colonia* residents can improve social services without increased cost to the providers themselves. But in some areas where social service provision is not only lacking, but potentially or actually deleterious to *colonia* and/or non-*colonia* residents, additional financial appropriations should be aggressively and collaboratively pursued by *colonia* residents, non-*colonia* residents, service providers, private sector organizations, and government officials. Effective change in the service provision to the *colonias* is dependent upon the idea of dynamic communication and coalition. It remains that the most difficult change to bring about in social service provision to the *colonias* is an attitudinal one; one in which social service provision is recast as beyond political patronage, more than a government handout, unhampered by the real but perhaps predictable economic happenstance of the moment. Time spent listening and working with *colonia* residents would be understood as the necessary, albeit sometimes costly investment capital for successful service provision.

Ultimately, practice at communication would save time over current models of social service provision which spin out of control and take on a life of their own, regardless of the immediate need. Governments are the most visible institutions in need of reshaping service provision; service providers are the most frequent conduits; and as they gain a collective voice, *colonia* residents currently tossed between the fates of dependency and alienation, could ultimately effect the most change in reconstitution of the interpretation and manner of social service provision.

Health, knowledge, security -- these are the desired and strived for conditions for any just society, whether it be the isolated or densely inhabited *colonias* which populate our borders today, or the socially responsible and viable communities that we are helping to build for our children.

BUILDING SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE THROUGH THE EMPOWERMENT OF COLONIA WOMEN

Chad Richardson

Dept. of Sociology

UT-Panamerican

The presentation reports on an evaluation of a program sponsored by a Valley *colonia* advocacy group,

BARCA (Border Association for Refugees and *Colonia* Advocates), to empower *colonia* women. The research examines the extent to which the project actually empowers *colonia* women, allowing them to develop skills and networks to effectively deal with *colonia* problems. Four *colonias* where BARCA had conducted civic-participation organizing and two where only a self-development program had taken place were matched, *colonia* for *colonia*, with six that had experienced no BARCA intervention. Over 500 randomly selected respondents in these *colonias* answered fixed-response and open-ended questions that were developed from previous in-depth interviews. A preliminary analysis lends rather strong support to the conclusion that BARCA's empowerment strategy promotes collective action, raises a sense of efficacy of collective action and reduces feelings of helplessness with regard to one's ability to affect life conditions. There is modest evidence that *colonia* women in the BARCA *colonia* prefer to rely on an outside organizer speak for them, though the measures of such dependency are weak and not statistically significant.

These results are particularly impressive when one realizes that they were obtained by taking a random sample of *colonia* residents, many of whom would not have directly participated in training. BARCA's civic-participation organizing thus appears to have a carry-over effect to even those residents that have not participated in the program.

The implications of the results are far-reaching, especially when one considers that most programs of *colonia* development tend to use a "mass psychology" approach. That is, they are built on the assumption that helping a lot of individuals, as individuals, will improve conditions of most *colonia* residents. BARCA's approach is much more sociological in the sense that the target of development is really the entire *colonia* and not just individual participants.

Still, additional research employing before-after measures would certainly strengthen confidence in these findings. Until such research is conducted, however, we can give cautious enthusiasm to the approach taken by BARCA. Its unique focus on collective action and on women, as the source of such action, appears to offer hope for building a model of empowerment that is highly democratic and oriented to an often overlooked segment of low-income communities.

[The paper also presented a series of tables (not reproduced here) providing details of participation in the BARCA programs]

EL MOVIMIENTO URBANO EN NUEVO LAREDO EN LOS ÚLTIMOS 25 AÑOS: DESAROLLO COMUNITARIO Y ORGANIZACION SOCIAL

Gastón Monge Estrada

El Mañana

Nuevo Laredo

Los últimos 25 años han sido para Nuevo Laredo de un incesante crecimiento urbano y poblacional, donde las necesidades de servicio han rebasado en mucho la capacidad de las autoridades para satisfacerlas.

La población de Nuevo Laredo es básicamente urbana, casi el 50 por ciento de su población es migrante

y proviene de urbes más grandes donde ha adquirido alguna experiencia en movimientos sociales. Del mismo modo, casi el 50 por ciento de sus viviendas está construída de materiales poco resistentes, donde predominan la madera, las láminas de cartón y de metal, y los pisos de tierra o cemento rudimentario.

Esto ha hecho que ante la falta de servicios y de espacio urbano, surga el descontento social de las clases populares a través de movimientos casi siempre desorganizados, dando lugar a las invasiones de areas rurales o ejidos.

Desde 1970 se cuentan oficialmente 12 invasiones, ocho de ellas de 1991 a la fecha, donde 13,840 familias ocuparon un área de 531 hectáreas, predominando la falta de servicios básicos. Se ha visto que estas invasiones surgen por lo general, durante campañas políticas y electorales. Ello dió origen a un crecimiento anárquico y a un desarrollo comunitario casi nulo. Debido a que la dotación de servicios y la organización han estado siempre regidos bajo la tutela del gobierno, surgen dos tipos principales de organización, nacidos del PRI pero opuestos en su esencia.

El primer tipo lo constituyen los programas gubernamentales nacionales, estatales y municipales, donde si bien hay contacto con las bases, las decisiones se dan siempre de manera vertical, sin tomar en cuenta la decisión de las mayorías .

El otro tipo se refiere a las organizaciones sociales surgidas también del seno del PRI, pero que en los últimos años, ante la lenta respuesta del gobierno por dotar de servicios a las *colonias* populares, promovieron un contacto de tipo horizontal con los conglomerados populares.

En este trabajo, se tratará de analizar brevemente las motivaciones, los resultados y las proyecciones que los movimientos sociales de Nuevo Laredo han generado en los últimos años.

Pero siempre tomando en cuenta que de no llegar pronto a una planeación urbana adecuada, basada principalmente en el equilibrio del origen social y el urbano, el desastre demográfico, urbano y ecológico será el sello de esta ciudad. Actualmente se está viendo resultados desalentadores en el campo de la ecología, con la excesiva contaminación de las aguas del río Bravo.

SESSION FOUR: SUMMARY OF THE COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION

Land Provision and Housing Production: Private Practices and Public Policy Responses and Outcomes

Tom Luschei

PRP (UT-Austin)

Commentators: Gloria Moreno, Pablo Vila, Yolanda Padilla, Alicia Recruz

Gloria Moreno

Ms. Moreno spoke with the presenters, but as she had not been previously scheduled to speak, there is not a summary of her presentation with those of the other speakers. She spoke of her experience in the Cameron Park *colonia*, in which she has lived for 18 years. She reported that 60 percent of residents of

Cameron Park are immigrants and 90 percent are related to each other. As a result, there is a strong sense of unity and open channels of communication in the community.

Ms. Moreno reported the services which her community has succeeded in securing to this point: a child care center, water and drainage services, a cultural center, trash removal service, a governing board of local residents. Additionally, she reports that Cameron County will soon be paving the streets and improving the sewage system. Despite the triumphs Cameron Park has enjoyed in bringing services to the community, she concluded that to live in a *colonia* is to know how to suffer and to struggle.

Pablo Vila

Dr. Vila referred to this session and the previous day, specifically to remarks by Duncan Earle, Henry Selby, and George Rogers. Dr. Vila spoke about the word *colonia* and explored reasons as to why an English word has not been developed to take its place on the northern side of the border. He pointed out that some Spanish words are incorporated into English while others are not; for example, the word *adobe* is used in English, while the word *piedra* is not. The word *vigilante* found its way into English, while the word '*juez*' (judge) did not. In addition to the selectivity of words incorporated, the Spanish language is actually used differently than English in the American Southwest. For example, Spanish signs outside of stores often request that the patron pay in full at the time of purchase, while English signs allow the use of credit cards or checks.

The selective use of Spanish words and phrases, argued Dr. Vila, is not coincidental: the effect of this selectivity is to equate being Mexican to being poor and to being lazy. That is, words referring to poverty are generally incorporated into English, while more noble words of wealth and propriety are replaced with English words. As a result, while the term *colonia* in Mexico refers simply to a neighborhood or subdivision, its use in the United States has come to mean a shantytown or slum, or *colonia periférico* in Mexico. An important challenge, argues Dr. Vila, is to end the synonymy of poverty and Mexico and to identify the *colonia* problem separately from the general stereotype of Mexican poverty. Dr. Vila recommends an important first step toward accomplishing this goal: the replacement of the word *colonia* with the term border housing development.

Yolanda Padilla

Dr. Padilla began by referring to Martin Acevedo's presentation, agreeing that there needs to be greater communication between *colonia* residents and service providers. One of the problems of providing services, she reports, is that service provision is based on head-counting, in which many residents, such as undocumented immigrants, are not included. As a possible remedy to this problem, the University of Texas Department of Social Work undertook a survey in the border cities of El Paso and Eagle Pass and talked to 50 service providers in the areas of health, education and housing. Some of the problems they examined were teen pregnancy, school drop-outs, and the general problems arising from poverty. Dr. Padilla noted that one of the goals of the survey, like the work done by George Rogers, was to test the assumptions of service needs in the *colonias*. At the root of these assumptions is the lack of in-depth research on *colonias* issues.

The two most important findings of Dr. Padilla's work were (1) the need for international collaboration

in social service provision and (2) a strong sense of political isolation of the Texas border area from both state and federal government. According to Dr. Padilla, cross-border collaboration is essential because of the movement of families between the United States and Mexico. Oftentimes if a child or family in need of intervention crosses the border, there is no follow-up for those in need. For example, a pregnant woman needs continual pre-natal care regardless of what side of the border she is on; unfortunately, if she does cross the border, her services are interrupted. To address such problems, Mexican and Texan agencies need to jointly develop plans for providing services. Additionally, they need to share training and resources.

Fortunately, Dr. Padilla reports that there are some instances of cross-border collaboration between service providers, particularly between Brownsville and Matamoros. Cooperation in youth delinquency intervention has resulted in a decline in recidivism. The Departamento Integral de la Familia (DIF) in Matamoros has also worked cooperatively with Child Protective Services in Brownsville. Cooperation to this point, however, has been only informal, and the governments of each side have neither encouraged nor provided resources for collaboration.

The second point Dr. Padilla addressed was the political isolation of the Texas border region. There is disproportionately low funding of services in the border in comparison to the rest of state. Also, the head-counting approach to service provision does not take into account the fluidity of the area. In conclusion, Dr. Padilla reports that since the border area is much larger than simply the bank of the Rio Bravo, research must be expanded to reach from Monterrey to San Antonio, as growing economic integration between Mexico and the United States will have wide-reaching effects.

Alicia Recruz

Dr. Recruz introduced her comments by stating that while the topic of the previous day had been to define *colonias*, the purpose of today's discourse was to discuss approaches to understanding the *colonias* themselves. Dr. Recruz spoke of her experience working in *colonias populares* of Cancun, Mexico, where seventy percent of the residents are Mayas. She also drew on her experience in Hispanic barrios of Denton, Texas. Much of her work has focused on the extent to which culture is displaced during migration, and the extent to which cultural genes are transmitted through the migratory process. Dr. Recruz reports that in the case of Cancun, Maya peasants abandon aspects of their traditional culture upon arriving at urban centers. There they experience a fusion of their traditional culture and that of Cancun. In Denton, a unique geography, not completely Texan or Mexican, develops in Hispanic barrios. Much of this geography has to do with the landscape and culture which immigrants bring with them from Mexico. For example, pregnant women often bring their mothers, aunts, or grandmothers from Mexico to provide care for them and their new babies.

Dr. Recruz highlighted the importance of Chad Richardson's presentation of women in *colonias*. She argued that the role of women is indispensable in low-income families. Women act as social brokers, in providing a bridge of communication between the family and official organizations such as schools and other service providers. In addition, once in the United States, women often join the labor force, inciting competition between spouses. Another result of migration is that children are often caught in a crossfire between their parents and their friends steeped in a new culture. These are all examples of cultural factors which must be taken into consideration for the purposes of planning and policy. In conclusion, researchers must continue to more closely examine the heart of *colonias*, which is composed of cultural

genetics and identity.

Discussion from the Audience

Henry Dietz concluded the formal section of the session by highlighting some of the themes common to the presentations and following comments. These were: the distinction between community and settlement; the definition of *colonia*; comparison between Mexico and the United States; the challenges of social service provision; the need for further data gathering; the changing roles of women; horizontal and vertical integration of *colonias* and *colonia* residents.

Peter Ward congratulated the presenters and commentators for their excellence and he pointed out that the various presentations complemented each other nicely. Dr. Ward commented on the importance of Martin Acevedo's presentation, which discussed the provision of health and education services on both sides of the border. He suggested that an important consideration which Martin did not mention was the difference in approaches to service provision on both sides of the border. In Texas, there is a wide array of service providers, such as non-governmental organizations, along with federal, state, and local agencies. Such a multitude of service providers leads to problems of coordination and integration. In Mexico, this used to be the case, but more recently service provision had become much more streamlined. The contrasting approaches in Texas and Mexico make relationships between the two countries difficult. Perhaps a better approach to cross-border participation would be to link constituencies rather than service providers.

Dr. Ward posed a question to George Rogers: How did Rogers explain the variations between different border housing developments?

Dr. Ward asked Chad Richardson questions about BARCA (Border Association for Refugees and *Colonia* Advocates) and its relationship with leaders: Does it encourage the emergence of some leaders? What does it do when there are problems of multiple leaders, absence of leaders, or negative leaders?

Jose Maria Fernández, from the Planning Department of Ciudad Juárez, referred to George Rogers' presentation. Rogers had mentioned that one of the stereotypes of *colonias* is that Third World conditions predominate. Fernández remarked that the term Third World is a generalization, a pejorative term, and inaccurate.

Maria del Socorro Ramírez, from the Sparks Community Housing Development Corporation, addressed George Rogers: there are about 13 women working in the Corporation and no men offer to help -- why is this? Also, she remarked that these women do not qualify as activists. They are simply fighting for their needs.

Ms. del Socorro Ramírez also remarked to Martin Acevedo: while you are conducting studies, you should also try to bring help. The *colonia* residents are tired of being asked questions. They need basic services, such as water, which they are just now receiving in Ms. Socorro Ramírez' community. Ms. del

Socorro Ramírez pointed out that despite perceptions that most *colonia* residents in Texas are undocumented immigrants, most of them are actually legal residents or citizens.

Ms. del Socorro Ramírez also directed a comment to Chad Richardson: *Colonia* residents do not appreciate when organizations such as BARCA try to control them from outside.

Ms. del Socorro Ramírez responding to Pablo Vila's suggestion that *colonias* be renamed border housing developments stated that she prefers the term *colonia*.

Duncan Earle defended the term *colonia*. He argued that the term border housing development is inadequate because it is a physical description of a social problem. Reasons for using the term *colonia*, according to Dr. Earle, are: (1) in Mexico, *colonia* literally means sub-division, and is not a pejorative term; (2) the pariah status of *colonias* must be confronted, and inventing a new term will only result in that term receiving pariah status as well; (3) there is an interesting irony in the term *colonia* because of its reference to colonization; structural adjustment policies have led to a neo-*colonia* result in *colonias*; (4) the tradition of colonizing undeveloped areas which eventually will be regularized and normalized suggests that *colonias* will eventually be brought into the fold.

Kermit Black pointed out the importance of women in the Texas A&M-sponsored *colonia* community centers. Of the 2,000 to 3,000 contacts the center has each month with *colonia* residents, 95 percent or more are with women. Mr. Black suggested that service providers need to be sensitive to family roles when designing services. He made a statement to George Rogers: Mr. Rogers' data showed that 15 to 40 percent of *colonia* residents were registered to vote. However, Mr. Black pointed out that registration does not mean voting. In 1990 in one *colonia* there were fewer than 15 votes cast. There is room, then, concluded Mr. Black, to encourage and assist both voting and registration procedures.

Pablo Vila responded to Dr. Earle that he agreed with Dr. Earle's points about the term *colonia*, but he had wanted to point out the synonymy between poverty and Mexico. As names carry stereotypes, changing the name of *colonias* may help to change the stereotype. Perhaps a better solution would be to not use names, since categories always have hierarchies of power. Maybe we should just speak of *barrios* and leave it at that.

George Rogers responded to Mr. Fernández criticism of the term Third World, agreeing that he is likewise critical of the term and apologizing for not being more clear in his use of the term. Responding to Peter Ward's question about differences between *colonias*, Mr. Rogers stated that he and his research team are looking for mid-range theories to talk about individual differences, not one over-arching theory. As of yet, there are not enough case studies available to make that jump. Mr. Rogers also commented that in terms of information on voting, there is no better information available. In fact, his information examines reports of voting, and not actual voting, so there could be bias in the results.

Chad Richardson responded to Peter Ward's question about leadership, saying that BARCA does not have an agenda with respect to picking leaders. The organization's approach is to allow things to happen. Their emphasis is on the group, not leaders, and they emphasize everyone's role. BARCA does not have information about voting patterns because they do not ask such questions due to the sensitivity of the

issues of citizenship and legal status. BARCA does also not have a policy toward positive or negative leaders; they simply allow local women to make their own decisions about leaders.

Heather Pierson pointed out that along with the importance of women in *colonias*, it is also important to remember the role of men. For example, in El Cenizo, she heard complaints that the community center did not have programs for men, and that men are often excluded from services due to their work schedules. Ms. Pierson called for a holistic, integrative approach to examining the *colonias*. One example of such an approach is the *Colonias en Acción* organization in Nuevo Laredo, which has men and women working together for change.

George Rogers recommended a book called *The Border* by Metzger. Metzger makes the point that rivers make poor boundaries because oftentimes, geological conditions are much more similar on opposite sides of a river than in different drainage basins or sides of a mountain. More importantly, people themselves are often more similar across the border than along it.

Henry Dietz asked what percent of women are employed outside of the home. Chad Richardson replied that he did not have the exact figure, but the most common sectors of female employment were farmwork and manufacturing. Among all household workers in Hidalgo County, 47% work in farming and 20% in manufacturing.

Raquel Wexler, a graduate student in Community and Regional Planning and Latin American Studies, argued that voting is not the best barometer for measuring civic participation. Action is more important. Ms. Wexler referred to Lani Guinier, who wrote in *Tyranny of the Majority*, that voting can be an act of nay-saying or vetoing. She also referred to Saul Alinsky of the Industrial Areas Foundation, who emphasized praxis as a part of civic participation. Ms. Wexler argued that more attention should be paid to this aspect of organization in *colonias*.

Dean Graber, a graduate student of Latin American Studies at the University of Texas, pointed out that Dr. Padilla and Martin Acevedo both referred to real people and their needs. However, the human element seemed to be missing from the other discussions. He inquired how can we bring real people more into the policy debate?

George Rogers spoke of the importance of doing research in the *colonias* rather than making policy or working directly with *colonia* residents. He likened his relationships with policy makers to that between medical researchers and doctors. Researchers are doing something which they hope will help policy makers address the problems of *colonias*.

Pablo Soto, Director of Planning and Urban Development in Nuevo Laredo, spoke about the *Colonias en Acción*, a group of more than 100 *colonias* in Nuevo Laredo. According to Mr. Soto, the members are proud and satisfied to be living in *colonias*. He argues that the term *colonia* is a form of identity for *colonia* residents, and therefore the term is positive and cannot be changed.

Kermit Black spoke about data collection. Generally, the data collected depend on the questions asked and what respondents believe interviewers want to hear. Therefore, researchers and practitioners should

ask questions in more than one way, to protect themselves against the tendency to fit conclusions to preconceptions.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION OF CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS

MARIO AGUILAR received his J.D. from the University of Texas, where he received the Royson, Rayzor, Vickery and Williams Award from the Texas School of Law. He received his B.A. from Cornell University from which he graduated with distinction. His research work has included papers on undocumented workers and civil rights.

EDUARDO ALARCON CANTU realizado estudios de arquitectura durante 1965 y 1970 y de Maestria en Ciencias para la Planificación de Asentamientos Humanos durante 1979 y 1981, ambos en la Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León en la ciudad de Monterrey. Su desempeño profesional se ha realizado principalmente en tres áreas: El ejercicio de la arquitectura entre 1970 y 1987; la investigación en El Colegio de la Frontera Norte a partir de 1987; y la impartición de clases en el Instituto Tecnológico de Nuevo Laredo desde 1975.

Entre las publicaciones principales se encuentran: Evolución en el Noreste: Las ciudades fronterizas de Tamaulipas; Necesidades de vivienda en el trabajador de la industria maquiladora en Nuevo Laredo; "Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas: cincuenta años de crecimiento urbano"; "La estructura urbana de Nuevo Laredo" en *Las ciudades de la Frontera*, (en proceso de publicación).

FRANK BEJARANO is Program Management Director in Cameron County, Texas, with responsibility for implementing and managing the county's community development program, economic development activities, and special projects. Major projects he has worked on include the Valley's Empowerment Zone Application and creation of a county enterprise zone. From 1986-1989 he was planning director for Brownsville, Texas. Major projects included coordination of the city's Community Development Block Grant Program. He received a B.A. in sociology from the University of Texas at Austin (1973) and an M.A. in Urban Studies from Trinity University, San Antonio, Texas (1981).

PEDRO CITRAL BELTRAN received his maestria in regional development from El Colegio de la Frontera Norte (1994), where his graduate thesis dealt with *colonia* construction in Ciudad Juárez. He is currently coordinator of research and projects at the Instituto Municipal de Investigación y Planeación (IMIP) in Ciudad Juárez.

KERMIT BLACK received his bachelor's and Master's degrees in Chemical Engineering from Vanderbilt University and is a registered professional engineer. As Director of the Center for Housing and Urban Development, he has been involved intimately in the start-up and formulation of the *Colonias* Program housed in that Center. The *Colonias* Program includes arrangement for the delivery of

education, health, human services and community development programs into Texas *colonias* communities through community resource centers the *Colonia* Program builds.

Mr. Black's prior experience includes his position as assistant in the College of Architecture at Texas A&M University as Business Manager of the Center for Space Power (in TEES) in its first two years. **CHRISTOPHER SHANE DAVIES** received his M.A. (1968) and Ph.D. in Geography (1970) from Indiana University at Bloomington. He has been a professor of geography at the university of Texas since 1969. His publications include the articles "Remote Sensing Techniques for Population Estimation of *Colonias* in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas," "Third World Texas: *Colonias*, the 'Favelas' and 'Bustees' of the United States" and "Settlement Evolution of '*Colonias*' along the U.S.-Mexico Border: The Case of the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas" (all co-authored with Robert K. Holz). His current research concerns interpretation of settlement morphology of *colonias* along the U.S.-Mexico border.

HENRY DIETZ has been a faculty member of the Department of Government at the University of Texas since 1972. He received his B.A. in English from Miami University (Ohio) in 1964, his M.A. in political science from Indiana University in 1968, and his Ph.D. in political science from Stanford University in 1974. He has served as acting chair of the department and as associate dean of the college of Liberal Arts.

Dietz's major concerns include urban poverty and its political manifestations, political participation, electoral politics and political party systems, and civil-military relations, all within the general arena of Latin America. He has done a total of five years of research in Peru since the early 1960's, and has been a visiting professor or scholar at the Catholic University and the University of Pacific, both located in Lima, Peru. He has also been a visiting professor at the United States Air Force Academy.

Dietz' work has appeared in the *American Political Science Review*, *Comparative Political Studies*, *Social Science Quarterly*, the *American Journal of Political Science*, and the *Journal of Political and Military Sociology*. Hereceived the Hoover Institute prize for the outstanding academic article on Latin American politics in 1985.

DUNCAN EARLE, with a Ph.D. in Anthropology (Albany, 1985), has carried out extensive field work in Guatemala, Mexico, South Florida and the Texas border region, and since 1979 has focused largely upon refugees, colonists, and other types of displaced low-income communities, with special emphasis on community development, social networks, culture and policy issues. Dr. Earle has taught at Dartmouth, Vanderbilt, the University of Texas and Texas A&M, has generated numerous publications, made many professional, public and media presentations, and has been offered grant support from a number of sources, including the Rockefeller Foundation, HUD and Fulbright. He co-edits the *Journal of Borderland Studies*, and is co-editor of a University of Texas Press book series on border research. He joined the Center for Housing and Urban Development in the School of Architecture at Texas A&M in 1993 as Associate Director of Research, and currently is leading a federally funded research project in the *colonias* of Webb county.

CESAR MARIO FUENTES FLORES received his B.A. from the Universidad Autónoma Agraria "Antonio Narra" and his MS from El Colegio de la Frontera Norte, where he has been an associate researcher since 1991. He has received numerous scholarships and published several articles on urbanization and social organization on the border in relevant journals, including *Revista de Estudios Fronterizos* and *Revista Frontera Norte*.

JAVIER GUAJARDO holds the position of special assistant attorney general in the Office of the Attorney General. He earned a BS in biology from Baylor (1976) and a J.D. from St. Mary's University (1984). His duties focus on federal and state litigation in the following areas: attorney's fees, census discrimination, legislative redistricting, judicial redistricting, voting rights, election law, and constitutional challenges to state law under federal and state constitutions.

Before joining the Office of the Attorney General in 1985, Mr. Guajardo worked for the American Civil Liberties Union where he was involved in all phases of civil rights litigation on behalf of migrant farm workers and participated in early development of litigation under the Texas Bill of Rights.

ROBERT K. HOLZ received a B.A. and an M.A. in geography from Southern Illinois University (1958), and a PhD in Geography from Michigan State University (1963). His fields of specialization include cartography, remote sensing of the environment, aerial photo interpretation, and physical geography. His prolific list of publications includes the articles (all co-written with Shane Davies), "Third World Texas, *Colonias* in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas," "Settlement Evolution of *Colonias* along the U.S. Mexico-Border," and "The Size, Distribution and Growth of the Texas Population, 1980-1990." Dr. Holz' books include an *Atlas of Mexico* (with Michael E. Bonine and others) and *The Size Distribution and Growth of the Texas Population, 1980-2030*. Dr. Holz' numerous consultancies include work with the TNRCC and NASA.

DEMETRIO MICHAEL JIMENEZ graduated from the University of Texas with a degree in Architecture. He has worked with several design firms that have emphasized affordable housing and is now using his experience in the new Border Offices through the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs in El Paso. He is one of three Technical Assistance Providers for the Border area. These Technical Assistance Providers provide technical assistance to eligible *colonia* and non-profit organizations in the seventy Texas counties within 150 miles of the border. They provide local governments and non-profits organizations with information regarding various federal and state programs that could benefit *colonia* communities, serve as liaisons between the *colonia* residents and state agencies, and help *colonia* residents identify and remove obstacles that prevent improved living conditions.

JOSE ROBERTO JUAREZ earned a B.A. at St. Edward's University in 1957, an MA in Latin American Studies in 1959 and a Ph.D. in Latin American history in 1967 from the University of Texas at Austin. Dr. Juárez has taught at St. Edward's University, the University of Texas at Austin, and the University of California at Davis. For sixteen years he served as Academic Dean and Vice-President of Laredo Junior College. He has published numerous articles in journals such as *The Hispanic American Historical Review* and *Historia Mexicana*, and given numerous presentations on Mexican history and on the Chicano or Mexican-American in Texas and the Southwest. Currently, he is a Professor of History at Texas A&M International University in Laredo.

GASTON MONGE ESTRADA es licenciado en Sociología por la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. Cuenta en su experiencia como sociólogo, el ha trabajado como investigador de tiempo completo en el centro de Estudios Económicos y Sociales del Tercer Mundo (CEESTEM), de la ciudad de México, y ha publicado algunos trabajos en el campo de la cultura y educación. Fue coordinador de un programa de atención a los menores de la calle en la Sistema DIF de Nuevo

Laredo, y publicó algunos artículos relacionados con esa tema. Actualmente se desempeña como reportero en el periódico *El Mañana en Nuevo Laredo*, y recibió el premio estatal de periodismo en 1994 "Manuel Buendía," otorgado por la Unión de Periodistas Democráticos de Tamaulipas (UPD).

FRANCISCO JOSE PRIETO MUNOZ has been general director of the department of Urban Development and Ecology for the state of Chihuahua since 1992. He received his degree in Architecture from the Escuela Nacional de Arquitectura at U.N.A.M. (1970), and has also completed additional studies in Great Britain, Holland and France. His publications include *Hacia Una Política Integral de Vivienda en México* (1973) and *La Ciudad de Maynard Keynes* (1975).

CHAD RICHARDSON is Professor of Sociology, Director of the Borderlife Project, and Coordinator of the Sociology Master's Program at the University of Texas-Pan American in Edinburg, Texas. He received his Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Texas at Austin (1975). In 1993 he received an Academic Specialist Grant from the U.S. Information Agency to teach a Border Issues seminar at the Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo Leon.

His research focuses on problems of immigration in the border region His current research is conducted on the behalf of BARCA (a South Texas Advocacy group for *Colonias* and refugees), to evaluate a \$120,000 grant from the Kellogg Foundation for organizing and empowering *colonia* women.

GEORGE O. ROGERS is a faculty fellow at the Center for Housing and Urban Development at Texas A&M University. he has conducted comprehensive impact assessments of community resource centers in *colonias* along the Texas Border with Mexico. His research on environmental justice, community sustainability, and environmental hazards examines public policy options from the public's perspective. As a Research Associate at Oak Ridge National Laboratory, in the Hazard Management Group he participated in research on social impact assessment, including playing an important role in the Congressionally mandated SARA Title III survey of community warning capabilities and preparedness of chemical emergencies. In addition, Rogers led efforts to evaluate the effectiveness of protective actions for chemical emergencies as implemented by the public. He also participated in research supporting both programmatic and site specific environmental impact statements. His interests in public response to risk and hazards, emergency management, and the environmental impact of technology were developed at the University of Pittsburgh, where he completed a Ph.D. in 1983 and joined the faculty of the University for Social and Urban Research.

KEVEN RUF received a B.A. in history from the University of Washington in Seattle (1989), and M.A. in Latin American Studies and Community and Regional Planning from the University of New Mexico (1995). He completed thesis work on housing programs in Ciudad Juárez in the Spring 1994. Other research topics include study of the public transits system in Ciudad Juárez, the state of New Mexico, and the city of Albuquerque.

HENRY SELBY has taught anthropology at the University of Texas at Austin since 1966. Additional academic appointments include positions a lecturer at the Museu Nacional do Brazil, the Intercultural Institute in the Dominican Republic, and Harvard University. Dr. Selby received his BA at the University of Toronto (1955), an M.A. in Classics from the University of London (1961) and his Ph.D. in anthropology from Stanford (1966). He has written several books on socio-economic organization in Mexico, including *The Role of the Urban Household in Making Decisions about Migration* (1980), *The Mexican Urban Household: Organizing for Self-Defense* (1990), and *La familia en México Urbano* (1994).

GIL SHIDLO holds a B.A. (1980) in Political Science from the University of Tel Aviv and an MS

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His publications include *Housing Policy in Developing Countries* (1990); *A Case Study of Public Housing in Brazil* (Westview, 1990); co-editor with Henry Dietz *Elections in Democratic Latin America* (in press) and *The Military and Politics in the Third World* (Tel Aviv University Press, 1991). He has also published numerous articles in the area of housing and local government in Latin America.

WILLIAM J. SIEMBIEDA is a Professor of Planning at the School of Architecture and Planning, University of New Mexico, and holds a Ph.D. in Urban Planning from the University of California, Los Angeles. His broad U.S. teaching experience includes appointments at Tuskegee Institute, the University of Massachusetts, the University of California, San Diego; and the Lincoln Institute for Land Policy. He has been awarded academic fellowships by the Mellon Foundation and the Fulbright Program. He has written about large scale land development, irregular land settlement in Latin America, and urban land policy in Mexico. His research areas include land use policy, urban land economics, and computer assisted land information systems.

During 1994 he served as consultant to the Chilean Ministry of Housing and Planning, the Colombian Ministry of Economic Development, and the Cuban Integrated Group for the Preservation and Planning of Havana.

MARINA M. SUKUP has been Director of the Planning & Development Services Department for the city of Laredo since 1992. She received an M.A. in Public Planning from the University of South Dakota (1978) and her J.D. from the South Texas College of Law (1989). Ms. Sukup was Assistant Director of Planning for the City of Houston from 1976-1991, at which time she acted as Chairman of the Joint Referral and Council Railroad Committee. Her recent planning activities include the Urban Plan of the Dos Laredos, adopted by the Laredo City Council in 1994 and adopted by the Municipio of Nuevo Laredo and SEDESOL, the Laredo Land Development Code and the Laredo Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

RHONDA M. TIFFIN is the planning director of the Webb County Planning and Physical Development Department. She has twelve years experience as a civil engineering technician and eight years experience in subdivision review and enforcement measures. In January 1990, the county commissioners court appointed Ms. Tiffin as Director of the Planning and Physical Development Department which is charged with enforcing regulations and remedying problems in existing *colonias*. Ms. Tiffin assisted the Webb County Attorney in the development of the first enforcement action filed in the state under the 1989 legislation to control *colonia* development.

PABLO VILA is assistant professor in the Sociology and Anthropology Department at the University of Texas at El Paso. He received his Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Texas at Austin (1994). His publications include *Podría Ser Yo: Los sectores populares urbanos en imagen y palabra*, with Elizabeth Jelín, and articles on ethnicity, identity and music published in the journals *Studies in Latin American Popular Culture*, *Latin American Music Review*, and *Mass Music and Mass Movements*.

WILLIAM VAN VLIET received a doctorate in 1976 from the Free University of Amsterdam. From 1976-79 he was a Fellow at the Department of External Affairs and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, representing the Netherlands in a bilateral exchange. Research at the University of Toronto led to a Ph.D. in sociology in 1980. In 1979 he accepted an appointment at the

Pennsylvania State University and on leave in 1981-82 he conducted a study of Israel's national housing policy with the support of the Allan Foundation

In 1986 he moved to the University of Colorado at Boulder where he is Director and Professor of Environmental Design in the College of Architecture and Planning. He is also director of the Center for International Research and Education Projects. In 1989 he received the Dean's Award for Faculty Excellence, and in 1992 he was awarded a Japan Foundation Fellowship for a cross-national study of housing and community supports for the elderly.

A specialist in urban and environmental sociology, Professor van Vliet's publications include ten books, among which are *Habitats for Children: Impacts of Density*, *International Handbook of Housing Policies and Practices*, and *Learning from Failure and Success: Affordable Housing and Urban Development in the U.S.* He also serves as general editor for the *Encyclopedia of Housing* to be published in 1996.

PETER WARD has held senior teaching positions at the Universities of London (UCL) and Cambridge before moving to the University of Texas at Austin in 1991, where he is a Professor in the Department of Sociology and at the LBJ School of Public Affairs. Since 1993 he has also served as the Director of the Mexican Center of the Institute of Latin American Studies. He is currently completing two major research projects: local "opposition" governments in Mexico (with Victoria Rodríguez), and a study of residential land values and land development in Mexico. At various times he has served as advisor to the Mexican government and to several international development agencies. Among his most recent books are: *Housing, the State and the Poor: Policy and Practice in Latin American Cities* (1985); *Welfare Politics in Mexico: Papering Over the Cracks* (1986); *Mexico City: The Production and Reproduction of an Urban Environment* (1990); and (editor 1994) *Methodology for Land and Housing Market Analysis*.

DAVID C. WARNER has taught at the LBJ School of Public Affairs since 1981. He received his B.A. from Princeton (1963) and his Ph.D. in Economics from Syracuse (1969). He has authored fourteen books and monographs and forty articles including, "Health Care Across the Border" (1993), "Maternal and Child Health on the US-Mexico Border" (1988), and "Mexican-American Health Care in South Texas" (1979). He has been editor for *Public Affairs Comment* since 1979 and on the editorial board of the *Journal of Health Policy and Law* for twenty years. He has conducted research on diabetes, children's health, health care finance, Mexican health issues, and health planning and workforce issues.

ROBERT H. WILSON is Director of the Urban Issues Program and Mike Hogg Professor of Urban Policy in the LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin. He teaches local and state economic development policy and econometrics. His research activities are in the areas of local policymaking, telecommunications, development and public policy in Brazil.

Professor Wilson is co-editor of six books in the areas of state development policy, telecommunications policy, public policy in Brazil. He has authored or co-authored over 20 articles and book chapters on these same topics. These have appeared in such journals as *Economic Development Quarterly*, *Energy Economics*, *Environment and Planning*, *Public Budgeting and Financial Management*, *Policy Studies Journal*, and *World Development*. His most recent book, *States and the Economy: Policy Making and Decentralization*, was published by Praeger in 1993. He has served as principal investigator on grants for the Ford Foundation, National Science Foundation, Fulbright Commission, Southwestern Bell Telephone, Texas Telephone Association, and Tomás Rivera Center.

Professor Wilson has served as a consultant to the United Nations Development Program, Organization

of American States, Urban Institute, Legislative Education Board, and Texas Historical Commission.

**COPY OF PROGRAM
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