

Guest Editor's Introduction

***Cityscape* Symposium on the Hispanic Housing Experience in the United States, Part I—Hispanic Homelessness, Residential Segregation, and the Neighborhood Context of Hispanic Housing Experiences**

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The articles in the Hispanic Housing Experience Symposium span two *Cityscape* issues and cover a wide range of housing-related research on Hispanic households in the United States, including research on homelessness, subsidized housing, residential segregation, housing supply, and homeownership. Part I of the Symposium, in this issue, focuses on two themes: (1) Hispanic homelessness and (2) residential segregation and the neighborhood context of Hispanic housing experiences.

Background

According to the 2019 American Housing Survey (AHS), 13.9 percent of households have a Hispanic householder. Hispanic households, when compared with all U.S. households, are more likely to be renters (51.7 percent vs. 36 percent) and less likely to be owners (48.3 percent vs. 64 percent) (HUD, 2020). The poverty rate for the Hispanic population is 15.7 percent, and Hispanics are overrepresented in the poverty population with respect to their share of the general population.

Whereas their share of the total population is 18.7 percent, their share of the poverty population is 28.1 percent (Creamer, 2020). In 2019, Hispanic renter households accounted for 24.7 percent of households who had worst case housing needs¹ (Alvarez and Steffen, forthcoming) and 19.1 percent of households in HUD-assisted housing (HUD, 2020). They were 22.5 percent of persons experiencing homelessness in the 2020 HUD Point-in-Time Count (HUD, 2021). When compared with their proportion in the poverty population, Hispanic persons are underrepresented in the population experiencing homelessness. This underrepresentation is described by Gonzalez Baker (1996) as the “Latino Paradox.”

Hispanic households are more likely to experience overcrowding (more than one person per room), with 6.4 percent living in overcrowded units compared with 1.9 percent in the population overall (HUD, 2020). According to analyses of the 2017 AHS, Hispanic households had 3.3 times greater odds of occupying units that would make it difficult to isolate or quarantine during the COVID-19 pandemic (Sehgal, Himmelstein, and Woodhandler, 2021). Hispanics are segregated from non-Hispanic Whites but at lower levels, on average, than non-Hispanic Blacks (Frey, 2020). HUD housing discrimination studies have documented that prospective Hispanic renters—but not prospective Hispanic owners²—are told about and shown fewer rental units compared with non-Hispanic Whites (Turner et al., 2013). The articles in this issue examine these housing issues at national, regional, and local levels and provide context for understanding Hispanic housing experiences in the United States.

Symposium Articles

The symposium begins with an introduction by Rocío Sanchez-Moyano and Eileen Diaz McConnell (2021), who share their expertise and situate the articles in the issue within the wider research literature on Hispanic housing in the United States. They identify the major themes in the issue and connecting themes across the articles, which include Hispanic heterogeneity, the U.S. immigration context, the importance of location, and race and residential segregation. They conclude their article with future directions for research suggested by the articles in this issue.

The next two articles in the issue focus on the theme of Hispanic homelessness.

Aiken, Reina, and Culhane’s “Understanding Low-Income Hispanic Housing Challenges and Use of Housing and Homelessness Assistance” (2021) examines the extent to which Hispanic households are underrepresented in housing and homelessness programs and the reasons for underrepresentation where it occurs. The first part of their research is a national analysis of Hispanic representation in subsidy programs and in homeless shelter programs within counties. The second part of their research is a case study of Philadelphia that explores reasons for underrepresentation of Hispanics in programs, using data from local programs, focus groups,

¹ Worst case needs households are defined as those who are very low-income renters (VLI) (with household incomes less than 50 percent of area median income) that do not receive government housing assistance and pay more than one-half of their income toward rent or live in severely inadequate conditions.

² Measurable discrimination has decreased for prospective Black and Hispanic homeowners since 1977. The most blatant form of discrimination, not being told that an advertised unit was available, declined for both groups over the time period. However, the measure of being shown fewer homes than Whites remained statistically significant for prospective Black homeowners, but not for prospective Hispanic homeowners (Turner et al., 2013: XX-XXI).

and interviews with stakeholders. Their research provides a foundation for understanding the underrepresentation and provides suggestions on how local and federal policies can address it.

Looking deeper into the segment of the Latinx homeless population that does not interact with homeless services, Chinchilla and Gabrielian's "Factors Associated with Unsheltered Latinx Homelessness in Los Angeles County" (2021) analyzes differences between unsheltered and sheltered persons experiencing homelessness (PEH) in Los Angeles County and explores the implications of those differences for designing services to meet the needs of the population. Unsheltered Latinx PEH were more likely to be adult males, report alcohol and drug use, and have lower rates of public benefits enrollment. Although they were more likely to have full- or part-time employment or to be actively pursuing employment when unemployed compared with sheltered Latinx PEH, they were less likely to be earning more than \$200 in monthly income. The authors' findings suggest vocational and substance use disorder policy interventions and suggest future research on barriers to receipt of public benefits and on the development of culturally responsive interventions.

The next two articles in the issue focus on the theme of residential segregation and the neighborhood context of Hispanic housing experiences.

Arroyo's "Facades of Fear: Anti-Immigrant Housing Ordinances and Mexican Rental Housing Preference in the Suburban New Latinx South" (2021) examines the recent settlement of Mexican immigrants in the U.S. South, with a focus on Gwinnett County (metropolitan Atlanta). In the context of recent migration events—using ethnographic data from in-depth interviews, participant observation, and media analysis—Arroyo examines anti-immigrant housing ordinances (AIHOs), the adverse effects of the ordinances on immigrants, and the effects of the ordinances on immigrant innovation and the restructuring of the residential built environment.

Using data from several Decennial Censuses and the American Community Survey, Kucheva's "Residential Mobility and Hispanic Segregation: Spatial Assimilation and the Concentration of Poverty, 1960–2014" (2021) analyzes the geographic mobility and residential segregation of Hispanic households since 1960. The research examines predictors of household mobility over time and simulates levels of segregation under different counterfactual scenarios related to household residential mobility. Results show how patterns of residential mobility along with segregation by race, ethnicity, and income have differential effects for high- and low-income Hispanic households. The findings suggest that the relation between mechanisms of residential mobility and segregation should be taken into consideration in the development and implementation of housing-centered policies for poverty deconcentration.

The Symposium concludes with two articles that provide international perspectives on the topics explored in the issue.

In "Divergent Contexts, Convergent Inequalities: Immigrant Spatial Assimilation in the United States and Western Europe" (2021), McAvay examines how perspectives on immigrant incorporation developed in the United States apply to the Western European context. She notes similarities in processes of immigrant concentration and residential segregation examined in

the symposium across national contexts, paying attention to differences in redistributive and fair housing policies across countries. McAvay notes that immigrants are underrepresented in government support programs across national contexts and discusses policy implications and areas for future research.

Korekawa's "Residential Ethnic Segregation and Housing Issues in Various Societies: The Case of Japan" (2021b) compares Hispanic residential segregation to residential segregation in Japan. He notes that Japan has become an emerging destination for international immigration. He argues that geographic residential segregation in Japan is minimal, because recent migrants to Japan, in particular highly educated Chinese migrants, have achieved spatial assimilation through home ownership in high-rise condominiums (Korekawa, 2021a). He projects this pathway to spatial assimilation will spread to other highly educated immigrant groups in the near future and calls for more research on residential segregation across international contexts to shed light on the integration/assimilation process of migrants into host societies.

The articles in this symposium break new ground and increase our understanding of Hispanic homelessness, service utilization, immigrant adaptation, residential mobility, and residential segregation. The research suggests implications for U.S. federal, state, and local policies and for policies in other countries. I look forward to seeing the research this symposium will inspire and the policies it will inform.

Author

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