Chapter 2
Theoretical Considerations

Boston's Latin Quarter for all intents and purposes is still an imagined community. People within the neighborhood do not use this name when describing their home. Tourists visiting Boston do not flock to the Hyde Jackson Square (HJS) community of Jamaica Plain to experience Latin life. Storeowners do not advertise that they are located in Boston's Latin Quarter. Therefore, my study does not seek to examine the repercussions of a neighborhood already branded by an ethnic identifier; instead, I focus on how people think about such a rebranding effort in process.

In this study I specifically look at the redesignation of HJS as Boston's Latin Quarter to explore how identity and the cultural production of place occur within spaces called neighborhoods. Based on my interviews it became clear that there were certain hot-topics of particular concern to people living there: gentrification, the preservation of ethnic "old-timers" (in this case Latinos), and the concept of authenticity as it relates to people and places. In the process of analyzing my data, I came to realize that underlying these issues was a complex set of relations around race and class.

My study shows the interplay between these diverse and complex issues within HJS, as they relate to the construction of place-identity. However, before delving deeper into the empirical findings, I will provide an overview of the literature that my project builds on and pulls together. This will be organized into five broad, but interrelated categories: 1) place; 2) gentrification; 3) preservation, branding, and authenticity; 4) race, class and the American Dream; and 5) Latinos.

PLACE

A basic premise of social geography is that there exists a distinct difference

between space and place. *Place,* as outlined by Gieryn (2000:464-65), has three basic characteristics: 1) It has a geographic location—meaning it is "a unique spot in the universe." 2) It has material form: meaning that it must consist of things or objects. 3) It is invested with "meaning and value." This last part of Gieryn's definition is the most important for the purposes of my own work. My study looks at a moment in the history of HJS when place is being redefined through a formal name change of the commercial district in a way that reinvests it with a new "meaning and value." Establishing this place-identity is fundamentally important, because as Gieryn writes:

> without naming...identification, or representation by ordinary people, a place is not place. Places are...constructed: most are built or in some way physically carved out. They are also interpreted, narrated, perceived, felt, understood, and imagined.... In spite of its relatively enduring and imposing materiality, the meaning or value of the same place is labile—flexible in the hands of different people or cultures, malleable over time, and inevitably contested. (P. 465)

A place is not simply an abstract "space" on a map, nor is it "a setting, backdrop, stage or contest for something else" (p. 466). A place is socially constructed and given meaning that distinguishes it from any other space. While physical attributes do have a profound influence on place, as Paulson (2004) suggests, "A city or other place is not just a compilation of geography, structures, and people, it is also a site of imagining. Places are brought into being in the mind as much as they are on the land" (p. 244). If place-identity is socially constructed and a product of social imagination, then that meaning can be understood as flexible, fluid and constantly being redefined.

Moreover, as Gieryn (2000) points out, place-identity is shaped and reshaped by many different actors: powerful and well-funded developers, politicians, artists and architects, as well as ordinary people. Everyday experiences, and the voices of people who frame how places are advertised or marketed, shape understandings of meaning. (*See*

also de Certeau 1984; Etlin 1997; Paulsen 2004.) Hummon (1990) shows that meaning given to place is not a product of individual actors, but is the collective understandings of place. He argues, in particular, that there is a process of "enculturation." Through social interactions with peers, people learn how they are supposed to define place, creating a cohesive image of place. Thus one of the important aspects of my research project is not only to observe how place is constructed but also to observe how meaning is negotiated between the social actors in the neighborhood. What is perhaps most important about the construction of place by social actors is the realization that not all actors have equal amounts of power to name space. As Paulsen (2004) points out one must be "cautious about whether powerful and privileged voices speak the loudest" (p. 250).

I will use social geography's concept of place to look at how actors within a changing neighborhood negotiate place, in particular how these people project their own values and understandings of themselves and others onto place. While some of the larger scholarly debates are already well analyzed through the lens of place, for others this lens will offer a new perspective.

GENTRIFICATION

Gentrification is a concept that is constantly being redefined, negotiated, narrowed, and expanded within the literature. However, gentrification traditionally is understood as a process in which the inhabitants of a place change from a group that has less social status to one with more social status. This definition is based on Ruth Glass's original 1964 study on a London community in which working-class families were pushed out of their homes by more affluent ones. She coined the term *gentrification*. In her study she notes how the "working-class quarter of London" was "invaded by the

middle classes," transforming the "shabby, modest mews and cottages" into "elegant expensive residences." Glass continues, "once this process of 'gentrification' starts in a district it goes on rapidly until all or most of the original working-class occupiers are displaced and the whole social character of the district is changed" (p. xviii). The term gentrification is literal in that the wealthier, often white residents, the "gentry," push out the lower class. As Glass highlights, gentrification not only results in physical displacements, but a new "social character" for the neighborhood.

Based on this definition, gentrification helps explain neighborhood change and the renegotiation of place-identity. While gentrification literature often does not explicitly define it, place is arguably at the heart of the discourse (Gieryn 2000; Zukin 1991). Specifically, the gentrification literature often focuses on two related but distinct aspects of place: first, why wealthier middle-class residents want to move into traditionally working-class places; second, how these gentrifiers alter the place-identity of the neighborhoods they move into. While distinct, these two processes work simultaneously and are mutually constituting.

Addressing the first issue, why middle-class residents move into traditionally working-class places, a number of scholars increasingly argue against the traditional view held by earlier scholars (Smith 1996; Stratton 1977) that gentrifiers are motivated purely by economic reasons. Instead, they argue that people are moving from suburbs to these urban areas for cultural reasons (Caufield 1994; Zukin 2010; Judd 2003; Florida 2002; Brown-Saracino 2009, 2007, 2004; Ley 1996). For example, Judd (2003) and Florida (2002) assert that today a new class of people exists, who gain capital from their own creative nature. They point out that this "creative class," which has its own unique

culture, is moving back into urban areas. These residents "demand social interaction, culture, nightlife, diversity, and authenticity" (Judd 2003: p. 33) in their neighborhoods rather than the homogeneity of the suburbs. They want the grit associated with working-class, ethnic neighborhoods, rather than sanitized commercialized landscapes (*also* Zukin 2010).

In this study, the second theme about how gentrifiers transform the definition of place is the most pertinent. Understanding how gentrification changes neighborhoods helps clarify why Boston's Latin Quarter can be understood as a reaction to the fear of gentrification, namely that gentrification might cause HJS to lose its soul.

Gentrification as a Process that Changes Place-Identity

In one camp, Glass (1964) and Smith (1996) argue that gentrifiers transform places that were once understood as working-class territory into more affluent, trendier neighborhoods. They demonstrate how the transformation of place is often politically loaded. Economic developers historically have tried to define gentrification as a process of transforming a troubled place into something good—uplifting declining neighborhoods (Smith 1996). This is in contrast to the image of gentrifiers as "invaders," noted by Glass and later by Smith; well-heeled "invaders" destroy old communities and force out people who can no longer afford the rising housing costs. Whether or not one thinks gentrification, as a process, is ultimately good or bad, these works highlight how neighborhoods are transformed by gentrification into entirely different places.

Zukin (2010) contends that even when gentrifiers are attracted to the culture of the working-class neighborhoods this change of place-identity still happens. She demonstrates how gentrification, often framed as a residential process, also impacts

commercial space. This is particularly relevant for my study because the transformation of HJS is both residential and commercial. In Zukin's study of New York boroughs, she notes how some gentrifiers move into these neighborhoods because they are attracted to the "gritty" and "authentic" feel. She illustrates how the consumption practices of these gentrifiers quickly destroy the very authenticity that attracted them. Gentrifiers can and often do take over working-class urban spaces and redefine them so that it better fits their own class-based tastes. They often do not support the bodegas and dollar-stores. They bring in ritzy coffee shops and more upscale restaurants, which displace "longtime residents" from their "comfort zone" (p. 4). Zukin's conclusion is that despite the attraction of gentrifiers to working-class authenticity, their presence exerts, consciously or inadvertently, "a cultural form of power over space that puts pressure on the city's older working class and lower middle class, who can no longer afford to live or work there" (p. xiii).

Since I am not looking at HJS as a neighborhood over time, my own work does not explicitly seek to confirm or deny these finding that gentrification will change the place-identity of the neighborhood. Instead, I argue that people I have spoken with already understand gentrification as a process that can change place-identity, and fear what changes it might bring.

Who Are Gentrifiers

In the process of studying gentrification, it is important to identify who are gentrifiers within the community. Traditionally, gentrifiers are understood to be middle-class residents attracted to the affordability of a neighborhood (Glass 1964). However, as suggested earlier, they may be attracted to a particular place for cultural, not economic,

reasons (Zukin 2010; Brown-Saracino 2009). While gentrifiers are generally framed as a more affluent class of people, there is also an assumption that gentrifiers tend to be white (Brown-Saracino 2009). However, there is evidence that an influx of middle-class people of color would have similar impacts on neighborhoods because gentrification may be more a result of consumption practices based on class position rather than ethnic ethos (Patillo 2007; McKinnish et al. 2009). It is important to keep in mind that the assumption that only white residents are gentrifying HJS is an oversimplification.

Scholars such as Rose (1984) also caution against treating gentrifiers as a single group. Rose asks an important question: "What conceptual grounds exist for assuming that the 'first stage' and the 'end stage' affluent residents have anything in common other than the fact that their household incomes are higher than the original residents?" (p. 58). She asserts that gentrification is a "chaotic" process with a great deal of variability. She notes that the initial gentrifiers may be motivated by the belief that the neighborhood will be more tolerant to a particular group of people (such as lesbian and gay populations) than other neighborhoods, while later gentrifiers may be more economically motivated.

While these issues of diversity are important, Brown-Saracino (2009, 2007, 2004) suggests a different approach to gentrifiers. She argues that gentrifiers fit into three categories based on their ideologies surrounding gentrification and how they define themselves as gentrifiers: 1) *Pioneers* who ruthlessly retake space from the others. 2) *Social homesteaders* "who engage in transformation of poor and working-class neighborhoods to serve middle-class purposes," (2009:10) but do so cautiously because they are also attracted to the idea of living in a neighborhood that is diverse and affordable. 3) *Social preservationists* who "engage in a set of political, symbolic, and

private practices to maintain the authenticity of their place of residence, primarily by working to prevent old-timers' displacement" (2009:9). Interestingly in her discussion regarding this last point she notes that in three out of her four studies these "old timers" belong to a racial or ethnic group—they are Portuguese fisherman, Swedish immigrants, or Asian merchants. Brown-Saracino's typology of gentrifiers is useful to explore the social dynamics in HJS. I contend that the old-timers are arguably the Latino population and that gentrification is, at least in part, reflective of a social preservationist model.

AUTHENTICITY, PRESERVATION, AND BRANDING

The unifying theme in the gentrification literature regarding authenticity, preservation, and branding, that at the onset will seem contradictory, is that valuing what is old and authentic is often not aimed at the preservation of people. The literature finds that historic preservation, and branding the image of a place as authentic, is largely meant to attract gentrifiers and the middle class back to urban places. While this is the overriding theme, Brown-Saracino (2009, 2007, 2004) does find that social preservationists are interested in preserving people over places. However, even she is not certain these acts can be successful.

Authenticity

Through my research it became obvious that authenticity[1] is a primary concern within the neighborhood. Residents and business owners worry that this new place-identity under the name of Boston's Latin Quarter will create something artificial. Others worry that if Latinos are entirely displaced from the neighborhood, this authentic Latino

[1] When discussing authenticity I would like to point out that it is an imagined concept. However, as Grazian (2003) writes, it does "exist as a social fact" (p. 16). Authenticity, in this respect, is a conceptual belief, that society at least to some degree buys into and is influenced by.

enclave will be destroyed. Zukin (2010) observes that the term authenticity "has crept into popular language in the past few years" (p. xi). Increasingly, it is seen as beneficial to claim authenticity in both the sense that a place is historical and traditional, as well as the sense that it is "unique, historically new, innovative and creative" (p. xi). Cities market themselves as "authentic" because people increasingly travel searching for authentic tastes, experiences, and smells (*also* Judd 2003). Gentrifiers move to places they identify as authentic (Brown-Saracino 2009, 2007, 2004; Zukin 2010). Clearly there is a strong drive for authenticity, but why?

Grazian (2003) contends that the search for authenticity is a reaction to the "global commodification of popular culture" that creates "an even stronger desire among many consumers for that which seems *un*commercial and therefore less affected by the strong hand of the marketplace" (p. 7). Grazian argues that authenticity "is always manufactured: like life itself, it is a grand performance, and while some performances may be more convincing than others, its status as a contrivance hardly changes as a result" (p. 11). Images of authenticity are based on stereotypes about how places should "look and feel" rather than on the reality that real people do not act in patterned ways.

Boyer (1992), notes that manufactured "authentic" places, such as façade style reconstructions of Main Street, are attractive to tourists because they invoke a feeling of nostalgia—" a sweet sadness generated by a feeling that something is lacking in the present, a longing to experience traces of an authentic, supposedly more fulfilling past, a desire to repossess and reexperience something untouched by the ravages of time" (p. 201). She believes that people find fulfillment in these commodified, privatized, and gentrified places, even though they are, to her mind, poor representations of reality.

While many people enjoy the safety of the manufactured tourist centers, Judd (2003) shows that increasingly visitors are breaking out of the usual manufactured tourist bubbles in downtown cities in the hopes of finding more "authentic" neighborhoods. Hoffman (2003) similarly demonstrates that "diversity increasingly is something that can be marketed" (p. 97), pulling people to neighborhoods like Harlem. These adventurous tourists want to experience more authentic heritage sites that break out of the traditional white-dominated places. Small (2004) describes the choice to live in these places as based on a deliberate wish to "live in an integrated city neighborhood, to escape the suburban upbringing that their parents had foisted on them a generation earlier" (p. 101).

Zukin (2010) sees that authenticity is about more than gaining a sense of nostalgia about less commercialized and manufactured times. She argues that the search for authenticity is motivated by people searching for a sense of real connection to a place, writing: "Though we think authenticity refers to a neighborhood's innate qualities, it really expresses our own anxieties about how places change" (p. 220). In this sense authenticity is about a need to feel that those places and neighbors that are here today will be here tomorrow. Authenticity is about the search for a place that will be invested with the same sets of meaning over time. This is impossible, since each social actor in the neighborhood has his or her own image of when and how the neighborhood was authentic. Moreover, in Zukin's opinion, the presence of gentrifiers in these neighborhoods will, by their own consumptive practices, eventually set into motion homogenizing forces that recreate these places into white urban neighborhoods.

Brown-Saracino's (2009) description of social preservationists also suggests that the desire for authenticity is rooted in both nostalgia and the desire for stability over time.

She finds that social preservationists "express nostalgia for 'traditional' community rooted in fear of the constant evolution of space," that is, they worry further gentrification will destroy authenticity. However at the same time "social preservation is not an effort to return to an earlier era. Rather, it is an effort to prevent change, to freeze a place before gentrification alters it" (pp. 152-53). In this sense, authenticity represents a desire to experience a unique temporal moment in the process of gentrification, in which neighborhoods are multicultural and socioeconomically diverse.

While gentrifiers may want authenticity for all these reasons, and more, what does authenticity actually mean for communities? Can places be frozen in time, and remain untouched by commodification and gentrification? Scholars are generally much less optimistic about this prospect.

As discussed earlier, Zukin (2010) believes that even gentrifiers attracted to the idea of living in an authentic place will ultimately change that place to the point that authenticity will be lost. Zukin sees authenticity as a tool. She contends that any group that identifies a neighborhood as authentic is making a claim that they know "how best to represent its 'authentic' character. Whether members of this group are rappers or gentrifiers, their ability to represent the streets gives them a right to claim power over them" (p. 244). Gentrifiers think that because they recognize a neighborhood as authentic, they have a right to control and manipulate the image it will have in the future. Zukin argues, "this right, though, is often limited to preserving the *look* and the *experience* of authenticity rather than preserving the community that lives there" (p. 244). They might save the historic buildings and symbols of "authentic" community, but rarely do they preserve the people who built, inhabited, and created the authentic place.

Preserving an image rather than real people is increasingly noted in contemporary scholarship on historic preservation.

While Zukin is largely cynical, she expresses hope that authenticity could be used to prevent this displacement if it results in policies that focus on protecting people. She explains:

> Authenticity is nearly always used as a lever of cultural power for a group to claim space and take it away from others without direct confrontation, with the help of the state and elected officials and the persuasion of the media and consumer culture. We can turn this lever in the direction of democracy, however, by creating new forms of public-private stewardship that give residents, workers, and small business-owners, as well as buildings and districts, a right to put down roots and remain in place. This would strike a balance between a city's origins and its new beginnings; this would restore a city's soul. (P. 246)

Zukin advocates for policies such as governmental regulations on neighborhood redevelopment that attempt to preserve people rather than places. She feels that the old-timers in neighborhoods give the place authenticity and roots. There is some political support for preserving people, such as increased affordable housing specifically reserved for these old-timers. Maly (2005) in his study of multicultural neighborhoods finds that there is empirical evidence that affordable housing may allow neighborhoods to remain more ethnically, racially, and socioeconomically integrated over time. While these processes are happening in HJS, the organization I study is approaching the problem of gentrification from a different angle—branding, marketing and commercial preservation.

Historic Preservation

Zukin argues that this ideology that gentrifiers know what is best for neighborhoods is supported and funded by the public and private sectors. Real estate developers, urban planners, and the private sectors ultimately legitimize and support gentrification. After all it increases the "value" of these neighborhood and fills the city

coffers. She points out that all cities currently seem to be pursuing this "same modern, creative image" (p. 231) to brand themselves, claiming authenticity, even though every place is laying claim to the same thing. These planners also support gentrification through heritage and historic preservation efforts. These preservation agendas are meant to attract both visitors and the middle class, allowing cities to market themselves as unique places.

There are a number of studies that show that historic preservation often results in inauthentic representations and the commodification of places, rather than the preservation of people. Sorkin (1992) states that historic preservation within cities most often focuses on "the physical remains of the historical city" rather than "the human *ecologies* that produced or inhabit them" (p. xiv). This is similar to Zukin's findings—preservation is about physical structures rather than people. While cities find the idea of historic preservation beneficial, this is mostly because they see an opportunity "to capitalize on heritage tourism and nostalgia for the past" (Kelleher 2004:12).

Boyer (1992), in her analysis of a historic preservation plan of a waterfront landscape, finds that cities are increasingly aware of the benefits of marketing historic places. She notes that every town or neighborhood is resurrecting the idea of "Main Street" so that visitors and gentrifiers alike can come to "graze." They, argues Boyer, "are celebrating the consumption of place and architecture, and the taste of history and food" (p. 189). In other words these "historic" places are simply representations that have been commodified. Zukin (2010) contends that this results in urban areas shifting from centers of production to centers of consumption. Consequently, cities become more excited by the prospect of marketing their "authentic" representation of urban life, hoping to fill the economic void that occurs as cities lose industry. Planners and politicians

become less focused on preserving the actual people who inhabit these spaces. Focusing on an imagined past to be consumed creates the need to market these constructed places. This transition from preserving people to preserving "authentic places" becomes a marketing strategy instead of a survival strategy.

Branding

In my study, Boston's Latin Quarter is not only an effort to preserve the identity of the neighborhood, but to "brand" it as a Latino place. *Brand* is a term borrowed from strategic marketing, meaning to associate a product with specific, controlled imagery and thereby shape public perceptions. While urban branding is not directly part of the gentrification literature, it is related in similar ways to historic preservation. Greenberg (2008) in her study on the branding of New York City explains that in the 1960s "branding moved from the corporate to the urban realm." New York City hoped to use branding to counteract the image of the city as a dangerous place, instead marketing itself so that "the name of the city alone would conjure up a series of images and feelings, and with them an impression of value" (p. 34). Specifically, Greenberg argues that in NYC branding was an effort to bring the white middle class back into a place that was imagined as being lost to a "growing concentration of blacks and Latinos in American inner-cities" (p. 25). Branding, like historic preservation, is meant to gentrify urban landscapes.

Creating Effective Preservation?

In this thesis I show that BLQ is not only an attempt to attract middle-class visitors who fled the cities, but also to preserve the current character of the neighborhood. The Latin Quarter project tries to use branding to preserve the Latino businesses and

define the neighborhood as Latino, even as that identity is threatened by gentrification. In Chapter 5 I will ask: Can branding be used for the preservation of people?

RACE, CLASS, AND THE AMERICAN DREAM

While preservation and authenticity are important debates surrounding gentrification, a critical and overlooked aspect is that these debates are based on assumptions of class and race. In order to understand my findings, there is key scholarship that illustrates some of the social dynamics that frame whether or not particular people are seen as respectable and worth preserving in the face of gentrification. These social forces are wrapped up in complex hierarchies of class and race.

Who Is Worth Preserving?

Brown-Saracino (2009; 2007 2004) points out that there are certain groups that become the focus of social preservationist movements because gentrifiers identify admirable characteristics in these people they deem worth preserving. She perceives that social preservationists, gentrifiers, identify "old-timers" in a neighborhood as valuable because they see these people as more "authentic" than themselves. In her description of old timers she notes some specific characteristics that are worth mentioning: "social preservationists appreciate those who appear autonomous: who seem to live a 'simple' life and depend on their own labor, land, bodies, families, and local networks" (2007:446). She observes that social preservationists define old-timers as possessing "qualities they associate with real community and that they believe they do not personally possess: independence, tradition, and a place-based way of life" (2009:153). These people are not only seen as having long-lasting ties to the community, but are seen as

living in more traditional, and arguably anti-modern ways. They are the farmers or the merchants.

It is not a new idea that ethnic groups are often perceived as traditional or even backwards. What is key to this project is how painting a group as non-modern is attractive and desirable. Jan Lin (1998), in his study of Chinatowns, writes that outsiders often view the residents as "unassimilated immigrants" (p. 1) who live "in the past…[and] are a group maladjusted to modernity" (p. 3). While outsiders may not necessarily see this as a positive trait, he points out that Chinatowns continue to draw tourists suggesting that there is some attraction to these "anti-modern" worlds. Di Leonardo (1998) similarly notes that:

> At the end of the last century, members of the American bourgeoisie made …widespread efforts to escape modernity through immersion in the lives of those others considered organically whole by virtue of their distance, in time and/or space, from the etiolated [whitened] world of Western logic and progress. (P. 3)

Social preservationists are not only attracted to old-timers because they are seen as more authentic, but because that authenticity is perceived as being in resistance to modernity. This is in accord with Brown-Saracino's (2004) realization that social preservationists use the idea of the old-timer as a reminder that there exists an alternative to their fast-paced professional lives. However, this anti-modern obsession also has racial undertones labeling these groups as backward and incapable of modernization. While this is seen as virtuous, it still can be used to keep these groups in a relatively marginalized position.

Old-Timers and the American Dream

While I do think that part of the attraction to Latinos is that they are somehow viewed as more traditional and more authentic, I argue that increasingly Latinos are living representations of success in the United States. In other words they are achieving

the American Dream, and reaffirming the belief that anything is possible in the United States. While Brown-Saracino does not map this definition of the authentic old-timer onto the American Dream, in this paper I argue that the two concepts are linked.

Hochschild (1995) defines the American Dream as "not merely the right to get rich, but rather the promise that all Americans have a reasonable chance to achieve success as they define it—material or otherwise—through their own efforts, and to attain virtue and fulfillment through success" (p. xi). Under Brown-Saracino's definition of an authentic old-timer is language that suggests that old-timers are those marginal people who achieve, at least in the eyes of the white population, the American Dream—they are self-sufficient and hard working. Their success at building lives for themselves, situated in place, is framed as tied to their work ethic and commitment to their families.

Model Minorities

I suggest, based on my research, that there is a dynamic underneath the selection of the authentic old-timer in multicultural neighborhoods, and the exclusion of other minority groups from preservation efforts, that is very telling about how the dominant society sees itself or wants to see itself. Brown-Saracino (2009) points out that in all of the neighborhoods she studied, not a single one of them focused their preservation efforts on black residents. As noted earlier, she believes that the selection of the virtuous ethnic group has to do with characteristics—namely autonomy, traditional values, place-based identity, and work ethic. Of course many African American residents are also highly religious, family oriented, and hard-working. There are also many Latinos in the neighborhood who do not fulfill these values either. There are many negative stereotypes of Latinos as lazy, social welfare dependent and that may include the images of pimps,

drug-dealers, and gang-members (Bender, 2003). What happens when people generalize a different image of a group that has been historically marginalized, a picture of hard work and success?

Asian Americans, as a whole, are such a minority. Claire Jean Kim (1999) shows that Asian Americans can be understood as having a position in the social hierarchy of racial groups that is "triangulated" vis-à-vis whites and blacks: while they are imagined as superior to blacks, they are also seen as more foreign and less capable of assimilating into American culture. Today, this triangulation plays out under the model minority myth, which claims that Asians' unique "cultural values of diligence, family solidarity, respect for education, and self-sufficiency have propelled" Asian Americans to "notable success" (p. 118). Kim argues that this model minority myth is often used to justify political agendas against affirmative action and other social welfare programs aimed at assisting black people. "If Asian Americans can make it, why can't blacks?" (p. 118). She argues that the fact that Asians are seen as definitively foreign also helps perpetuate this myth. If "Asian Americans are too busy getting and making money to worry about politics" (p. 118), then they are not a threat to the current status quo of the white hegemony. Interestingly, as Kim points out, when African Americans are politically involved their demand for recognition and rights are rarely seen as attributes of hard work; instead it is seen as complaining or wanting "a hand-out" —the antithesis of hard work. In this way blacks are kept positioned at the bottom of the social hierarchy. So what about Latinos? Kim (2001) admits that Latinos do not have a definitive place in this hierarchy. My thesis explore how, within this community, Latinos are the model minority.

Viability of Integration in Multicultural Spaces

Multiculturalism is still not theoretically resolved in the gentrification and spatial redefinition literature. An underlying debate in the gentrification literature is the question of whether or not neighborhoods can be multicultural places. Can gentrifying neighborhoods remain integrated? Or is integration simply a passing stage? How is diversity now understood as something marketable (Hoffman 2003)? While not specifically targeting gentrification, Maly (2005), in a study of three multiethnic and multiracial neighborhoods, believes that integrated neighborhoods can be sustainable and viable. Within these successfully integrated neighborhoods there exist organizations that work to maintain a positive image of the area by staving off "residential and commercial decline through image maintenance and physical improvement" (p. 218). While these efforts may only result in further gentrification and increased displacement, he points out that advocates in these neighborhoods also "toiled to provide low-income residents with affordable housing" (p. 218). Maly observes that immigrants often make it more likely for declining areas in cities to remain integrated, diverse neighborhoods, because they revive commercial districts and bring vibrancy back into urban neighborhoods.

While Maly is optimistic about the viability of integrated neighborhood, he admits that a mixture of classes within a neighborhood can make integration more difficult. There is an assumption "that integration is okay as long as non-whites accept white middle-class culture. Such a view creates division, resentment, and a diminished desire for integration" (p. 227). Moreover, he did not find a single neighborhood that was integrated without the presence of a larger third group such as Latinos or Asians. This suggests "that the color line between blacks and whites remains as relevant as ever in

U.S. culture housing markets" (p. 231). Therefore, it seems that immigrant groups such as Latinos or Asians can facilitate the production of multicultural communities that is not possible between just blacks and whites. I will explore this issue through an analysis of the public housing development, Bromley Heath, which is imagined to be the base of most of the black population in HJS. This development is understood as a problematic area that makes the marketing of this neighborhood more difficult. The dynamic between Bromley Heath and the rest of the HJS community reveals interesting issues of class and race.

Public Housing and Defended Places

Vale's (2002) study of Boston public housing contends that "public housing projects link geography to group identity." Vale writes, "when asked to describe the neighborhood where they live, many of the public housing resident interviewed...did not name (or draw) anything outside the boundaries of the housing development" (p. 15). In other words, public housing creates a very insular identity among its residents. My study findings suggest that residents outside the boundaries of public housing do the same. Thus both groups are marking off space and carving out places side by side. Both public housing residents and outsiders understand these distinct spaces and are clear about the boundaries between them and the rest of the community. Suttles (1972) explains that urban neighborhoods "need not necessarily correspond closely with the actual physical structure. The discrepancy is often quite apparent when residents give discrete boundaries for a neighborhood or area of usage despite there being no sharp disparities between such adjacent spaces" (p. 22). Instead, he argues, people define boundaries based on complex

understandings of the neighborhood. Moreover, they will develop mechanisms of social control to restrict the movement of antagonistic groups as a way to avoid conflict.

Suttles's work on the ways groups defend their spaces in the neighborhood is useful for thinking about the relations between HJS and Bromley Heath. As described by Suttles, Bromley Heath can be thought of as a defended neighborhood: a "residential group which seals itself off through efforts of delinquent gangs, by restrictive covenant, by sharp boundaries or by a forbidding reputation" (p. 21). Public housing, as areas that are often defended by gangs, and even as Vale points out physical barriers, are understood within neighborhoods to be distinct places where outsiders are not guaranteed safety. Similarly, Suttles shows that people within these places form a strong sense of social cohesion due to their "common plight" (p. 35). This only increases feelings of difference between insiders and outsiders.

Mario Small's (2004) study of another public housing development in Boston offers some important insights for understanding community relations in HJS. Small's development is physically very different from the high-rise dominated structure of Bromley Heath and is a highly concentrated Puerto Rican development. It suffers from the same sorts of social isolation described above. Small notes that many people were attracted to the surrounding neighborhood because of its diversity. As part of his analysis he asks why there is so little interaction between residents in the neighborhood and in public housing. He points out that there are no physical barriers or markers to hinder interaction. Small posits that scholars need to pay attention to the "particular combination of spatial, racial, and class configuration" and how this is mapped onto the geographic space as a form of "invisible fence" (p. 104). He explains that these invisible fences are

stable over time and are made more durable through “the architectural design of the two groups’ sets of houses and by the clear designation of the poor groups’ sets of residences as subsidized” (p. 105). This limits interactions between people across these invisible borders. Small argues that gentrification is a process that blurs borders, forcing a renegotiation of markers that segregate neighborhoods. When borders are well understood and unchanging, even if imaginary, they are not generally crossed.

Vale (2002) provides an important element that helps explain why Bromley Heath is excluded from Boston’s Latin Quarter. He illustrates that public housing residents are stigmatized in American society because these projects have come to be viewed as “a repository for the nations’ ‘problem people.’” Even if only a small percentage commit crimes, residents as a whole are painted as involved in illegal or nefarious behaviors. Consequently, public housing residents are labeled as “the undeserving poor” (p. 14).

Vale highlights another important aspect of this phenomenon. Within public housing, stigma is not placed directly on individuals, but on a place. Vale writes, “in the course of a single generation, the people and the places that were once touted as the unblemished alternative to the slum-dweller and the slum, themselves became the most publicly vilified objects of disdain” (p. 14). Given these dynamics of soiled and stigmatized identities associated with public housing it makes some sense why the community distances itself from Bromley Heath as it tries to redefine itself and its image as Boston’s Latin Quarter. Why advertise what is considered shameful?

LATINOS

One aspect that makes my study unique is that I am examining a neighborhood where Latinos are chosen as the group that should be preserved. Latinos, by their very

nature, complicate the situation because they are a socially constructed ethnic group that does not easily fit into current racial categories. First I will briefly define the term *Latino*, then my own use of the term, then how it complicates preservation and rebranding.

The Latino/Hispanic Question

Underneath the name Boston's Latin Quarter is a conscious choice not to focus on the Caribbean flavor already in the business district, nor target a particular group of nationals (such as Dominican or Puerto Rican). Instead the board in charge of selecting this name, chose to treat Latino identity within a pan-ethnic frame. They also made a decision to sanitize the term *Latino* even more by using *Latin* as the descriptor.

Latino identity informs my analysis throughout, but labels used to describe groups are socially constructed and can be problematic as diversity within groups tends to be erased. First, note that the terms *Latino* or *Hispanic* only have meaning "in reference to the U.S. experience. Outside of the United States, we don't speak of Latinos; we speak of Mexicans, Cubans, Puerto Ricans, and so forth" (Suárez-Orozco and Páez 2002:4). . Dávila (2001) argues the Latino identity has largely been defined by advertisers in their efforts to reach out to Spanish-speaking populations. In marketing, says Dávila, Latinos are often seen as one homogenous group. Tying Spanish-speaking populations to the terms Hispanic and Latino glosses over a great deal of diversity. Hernandez-Truyol (1998) observes that these umbrella identifiers make it appear as if Latinos do not also belong to other racial groups. She writes, "the myth tells Latinas/os: you are not white, not black, not Asian, not Indian. The reality is Latinas/os can be all of the above" (p. 27). Similarly, Oboler (1998) points out that these umbrella terms lump millions of people who are very different into a single "'ethnic' category," covering up "their varied racial,

class, linguistic and gender experiences" (p. 3). Incorrectly, Latinos who immigrated recently are assumed to identify with Latinos born and raised in the U.S. Wealthy property-owning Latinos who came to the United States legally are assumed to identify with working-class temporary migrants; Latinos from Argentina are assumed to identify with Dominicans. This great diversity has led some scholars to conclude that the umbrella terms for Latinos should be rejected altogether. Gimenez (1996) believes that these terms add "nothing to knowledge," but "strengthens racist stereotypes" (p. 225).

However, other authors such as Orquendo (1998) point out that the Latino community shares some commonalities—a history of colonization and the Spanish language. Padilla (1985) in his study of Mexican-Americans and Puerto Ricans in Chicago demonstrates that pan-ethnic identification can prove advantageous politically. However, he warns that such communal ties may not be lasting.

The second major question regarding the Latino/Hispanic question is whether these terms actually make sense. Literally defined, the terms Latino and Hispanic are quite similar. Orquendo (1998) explains that *Hispanic* refers to the people from the nations that were part of the Spanish colonial project. The term *Latino,* which is short for "latinoamericano," is even broader, referring "to the people who come from the territory in the Americas colonized by Latin nations, such as Portugal, Spain, and France, whose languages are derived from Latin" (p. 62). Therefore, while Hispanic would not include Brazilians and Haitians, Latino officially would. Despite the official meanings of the terms, Orquendo contends that in every day usage the terms are exactly the same—referring to people from Spanish-speaking nations in Central and South America and the Caribbean. One important difference, however, is that Hispanic as defined by the U.S.

Census includes Spaniards. This inclusion of Europeans is problematic for scholars seeking to study the descendents of colonized subjects (Oboler 1998).

While the term Hispanic may be consistent with the official language of the U.S. Government, a number of scholars prefer Latino (Oboler 1998). Orquendo (1998) explains that the common reason for this is because Hispanic "is linked to the brutal Spanish colonization of America" (p. 62). However, this argument is somewhat unfounded. Both Latino and Hispanic are tied to these countries' colonial pasts, and neither terms takes into account the African or Indigenous heritage of many Latin nations. Despite this, Orquendo argues that Latino is still preferred, He contends that the term "came from the community" not from non-Latinos and that the label Latino "invites re-thinking and re-defining [of] what membership in this community is all about" (p. 63).

I will most often use the term Latino for two reasons: 1) it is the term I grew up with and am most comfortable with, and 2) it is reflective of the name "Boston's Latin Quarter." Despite my own use of a pan-ethnic identifier, the Latino people I studied may not have self-identified this way. In fact, they reflected much of the diversity that the term Latino conceals. They hail from the Caribbean as well as Central and South America. Some were quite wealthy while others were not. They spoke varying fluencies of English and Spanish. Many identified themselves by their national origins while others self-identified as Latino, Hispanic, or even Spanish (but not from Spain). Some saw themselves as primarily American, others closely identified with their country of origin, while others blended these two. Some interacted regularly with people from all over Latin America, sometimes even marrying a Latino from a different country of origin, while others primarily interacted with Latinos from their own country of origin.

Under Social Preservation, What Are Latinos?

In HJS the fact that *Latino* is a socially constructed category complicates the project of preserving an authentic Latino old-timer within the neighborhood, In the case of HJS, the representation of what an authentic Latin Quarter should look, smell, and taste like is not the same to all people operating in the community. In creating the Latin Quarter, HJSMS is not simply creating an authentic image of an existing group. Instead, they must accomplish the more difficult task of continuing the creation of a new group identity that absorbs many of these contradictions without restricting other more nationalist identities. To some extent, the groundwork for this has been laid with all the previous attempts to define Latinos as a distinct ethnic group. In fact, my own research finds that there appears to be a general acceptance of the concept of Latino. Respondents understood the term, and whether they used it or not, only one expressed disapproval of its use. Therefore, in this paper, I will argue that from the perspective of Latinos the Latino/Hispanic question and the creation of pan-ethnic alliances are not the primary debate, although still important one.

Latino people also complicate understandings of racial hierarchies because they challenge the black-white binary. One might think that Latinos, who can be black and/or white racially, could have a unique position bridging the gap between white and black residents. However, if Latinos are the model minority, there is no advantage to acknowledging their black identity. This is supported by the literature that explains that Latinos generally work to create an image of themselves as non-black and hold stereotypically negative images of black people (McClain et al. 2008; Duany 1998). For example, the main Spanish-speaking group in HJS is the Dominicans, who, before

entering the United States, did not operate under the same black-white binary present in this country (Duany, 1998). While many Americans would classify Dominicans as black because of their dark skin tone, they "tend to perceive themselves as white" (p. 148). Duany also explains that because many Dominican enclaves are close to African American communities, "most Dominicans strive to distance themselves culturally from African Americans by speaking Spanish, dancing the Merengue, rejecting black hairstyles and speech patterns, and associating primarily with other Latinos" (p. 162). Implicit in their cultural understanding of themselves, Dominicans create social distance from black populations in an effort to escape the prejudice that comes with being black in the United States. In this sense, their Latino identity becomes safer than a black identity.

NEXT STEPS

Through the case study of HJS this thesis will pull together these theoretical considerations, showing how they interact with one another during the creation of Boston's Latin Quarter in this gentrifying and multicultural neighborhood. In Chapter 5 I will show that while the organization that came up with the name is trying to use preservation and branding to preserve the Latino population, these tools, as products and byproducts of capitalism, guide them in a direction that will only further gentrify the neighborhood. In Chapter 6 I will show that Brown-Saracino's typology for gentrifiers is a useful model, but that social preservationists are not the only residents who use authenticity to support their agenda, and that the concept of authenticity is much more complex because it is understood in different ways by different actors. Finally, In Chapter 7, I will bring race and class to the table, arguing that the selection of the authentic old-

timer is actually about the creation of a model minority within this community. The American Dream is used to defend this newly created racial/ethnic hierarchy.