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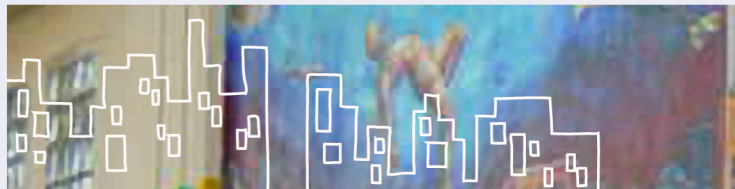
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Marketing Whiteness: Geographies of Colorblind Liberalism

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This paper examines how liberal, upper middle-class homeowners in the San Francisco Bay Area racially define and defend their neighborhoods. Based on an ethnographic study of neighborhood organizing over a one-year period, I show how homeowners simultaneously protect their identity as non-racist, liberal and open and act to exclude racial “others” through a gendered logic of caring for community. They are able to do so, I argue, only because their neighborhood is segregated, allowing them to use geographical references as a stand-in for race. Thus they are able to simultaneously critique (sometimes quite vociferously) those who target particular racial groups, while unproblematically identifying problems such as violence and sexual predation with particular geographies—geographies that are highly racialized. A localized conception of inclusive citizenship, rooted in the defense and nurturance of children, allows these exclusionary actions to be justified as not only “not racist” but as the ethical and moral duty of mothers, community members, and responsible citizens.

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The Bay Area's surface cosmopolitanism covers a basic racial provincialism that has been increasingly difficult to camouflage.
(Scott 1966)

Introduction

One evening in August 2004, armed robbers struck La Tienda Supermercado in Parkside, California¹ (see Appendix A for timeline). Redevelopment had forced La Tienda's recent relocation five blocks from East Arboles' Gin Alley neighborhood to The Alders neighborhood in nearby Parkside. In relocating, La Tienda crossed a boundary—between cities, between neighborhoods, but most importantly, between people—that separated those who worked in the Alders neighborhood from those who lived in it. While this border was marked by no wall nor gate and zigzagged haphazardly across an otherwise coherent geographic space, it starkly divided the upper middle class, mostly White² Alders neighborhood from the mostly Latino and poor “Gin Alley” neighborhood.

News of the robbery did not make the local papers the following morning. Instead, it spread through word of mouth from nearby business owners to their customers, from neighbor to neighbor, and among the various activist groups organized to improve and maintain the neighborhood. Two groups in particular, one that had been organized to ensure that La Tienda “served the surrounding community” and one that targeted “cut through traffic,” took special interest in this crime—the third of its kind since La Tienda moved to this location three years prior. Both groups were already concerned about La Tienda and its impact on the neighborhood prior to the robbery and members of both took this robbery as one more indication that La

¹ All names of people, businesses, neighborhoods, and cities are pseudonyms.

² I capitalize White to mark it as a socially constructed racial category not a natural characteristic of phenotype.

Tienda Supermercado and its clientele did not belong in the Alders neighborhood. The market's move and subsequent robbery were catalysts for a flurry of organizing that sheds light on the nature and meaning of segregated space in the post-civil rights era.

The Alders residents were not "racists" in the classic sense. In general, they were politically liberal supporters of civil rights and advocates for environmental and human rights. Yet, beneath these outward (and often deeply held) stances, they collectively acted as a segregated White community to target, label, exclude and control Latinos and other poor people of color. In this paper, I will argue that, in liberal communities, the inscription of race onto place via segregation enables racism to be re-coded via a gendered logic of caring for community. This re-coding takes place through three distinct but related processes. The first involves the inscription of race onto place via both the material practices of border guarding and the ideological work of re-crafting racialized into geographic conflicts. The second is a collective disciplining of discourse to vet racist language and mask the appearance of racism. The last is the development of a gendered ethic of community and caring that allows for a localized construction of citizenship rooted in the defense and nurturance of children. These practices are at once material and ideological and taken together help produce a field in which it is ethically not only possible, but desirable for liberals to reproduce racial segregation.

Theoretical Frameworks

Colorblind Borders?

Urban scholarship based largely on Los Angeles has focused scathingly on the checkpoints, gated communities, and residents-only spaces that fracture the racial geography of

that city (Davis 1990, 2001; Maher 2003, 2004; Flusty and Dear 1999). Much of this scholarship has appeared as a rallying cry against racial exclusion and the privatization of public space. These works highlight borders that visibly mark a racial order rooted in segregation and White supremacy, much the way “whites only” signs did during Jim Crow (Davis 2001). As overt displays of racial and class power, exclusion and nationalism, they are potent symbols of the viciousness with which the defense of White space continues to fragment the U.S.

In the more “liberal” San Francisco Bay Area, however, gates and walls rarely mark the edges of neighborhoods. Nonetheless, a checkerboard geography of race and class segregation and inequality coats the Bay Area metropolitan region (Lopez 2001). Here, instead of an overt politics of bigotry and nationalism, “colorblindness” and “multiculturalism” dominate public discourse. The “soft borders³” that edge even the most liberal cities in the Bay, however, are no more “natural” than the highly visible checkpoints scattered across Los Angeles (Sugrue 2008).

“White neighborhoods” in the Bay Area were created, as in most suburbs and cities, through mechanisms of racial control: neighborhood covenants, residential codes, real estate steering, building associations, highway and waterway construction, school zoning and siting, and “redevelopment” (Hise 2004). And even as race has been continually re-worked in the California context (Mexicans become non-White, Japanese become non-White and then honorary Whites, etc) (Ong 2003), the erasure of histories of racism has been as important in creating White neighborhoods as the production of racial difference.

In the Bay Area, the history of race is commonly understood through the lens of the Black civil rights struggle, thus locating racism (and the origins of racial inequality) elsewhere—in the slave states of the south and the ghettos of the industrial North. California’s racial history,

³ I am borrowing this term from international relations where it is used to refer to borders that more easily facilitate movement and interaction between nations (see: Mostov 2008, DeBardelben 2005). Here I use it to indicate the lack of an obvious barricade or checkpoint and thus the relatively more “free” movement of bodies and automobiles.

however, is not only a Black/White story. The Western frontier of the United States reached California 150 years ago, with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. While the Ohlone Indians who the Spanish/Mexican Californios enslaved, Christianized and stole land from were not granted rights in the treaty, the large Californio landholders were—their property, their language and their culture were to be protected and respected. Within 10 years however, most of their land, despite the courts' upholding of their claims, would be lost to White squatters, costly court fees, and mob politics. The Ohlone fared badly under the Spanish, fared worse with the coming of the Western frontier, and were all but exterminated within a few short decades (Hurtado 1988).

This history speaks not only to the ways in which racism in California has historically been “multicultural” but also to the different racisms that have shaped this place. If the frontier (marked by indigeneity or Spanish occupation) constituted the formative racism of the 1850s (Hurtado 1988), and “alien invasion” (by Chinese) immigrants, followed by Japanese internment, marked the first half of the 20th century (Takaki 1993, Lee 2003), internal segregation and differentiation were the keystones of the 1950s as the “ghettos” were forged (Self 2003, Sides 2004). While these previous discourses were openly bigoted and color-conscious, today's racism at once re-invokes the narrative of the frontier and alien invasion, but does so through a “colorblind” and “multicultural” framework in which the dividing lines branded into the social landscape by these previous occupations and enclosures are the pre-given terrain in a politics of difference that neither accounts for nor acknowledges race.

While the existing literature clearly describes the “civic meanness” of White communities within this context (or at least within LA), their paranoid preoccupation with “safety” (even when there is no threat), the thinly veiled racism in their processes of exclusion

and the tactics they use—from resident use fees and park closures to bans on particular colors of house-paints (Davis 2001 Maher 2004, Nicolades and Wiese 2006), it is less clear how more “progressive,” but none-the-less segregated communities might grapple with and enforce/contest racial borders. Do the progressive/liberal suburbs of the San Francisco Bay Area offer some alternative to the willy-nilly fortification of White space that characterizes Orange County? Or do they simply represent spaces in which Whites are assured enough in their status and dominance so as to engage in less overt, and therefore less politically vulnerable, tactics of bordering?

Liberal Colorblindness

“Colorblindness” (Omi and Winant 1994, Bonilla Silva 2003) and “colormuteness” (Pollock 2004) describe ideologies and practices of race that (whether for liberal or conservative ends) refuse to recognize or talk about race. In some cases (as in conservative colorblindness) the notion of “equal opportunity” regardless of color is deployed to dismantle liberal race-conscious compensatory programs such as affirmative action and school desegregation/busing. In other cases, colorblindness is deployed as a tactic for smoothing over racial difference and getting “beyond race” through advancing the assertion that “we are all equal.”⁴

Most studies of colorblindness explain it as an “ideology” (Bonilla-Silva 2003, Omi and Winant 1994) but limit their investigation of colorblindness as a political tactic or strategy to elite actors and politicians or to individual statements and stories. These methods offer only

⁴ In contrast to both these colorblind stances, I argue that race and racism have ongoing, real, structuring material impacts that demand compensatory action, produce conflicts (which must be addressed), and evidence the limits of “liberal” and “conservative” meritocracy, individualism and multiculturalism.

limited glimpses at how colorblindness is deployed, taken-up, learned, and refined in everyday political interaction. Without an understanding of what happens in collectives, we are left with a sense of “racist” or “anti-racist” individuals who freely and unproblematically embrace different ideologies on their own. Bonilla-Silva is insistent that the study of structural racism should not be about “finding good and bad people” and that all ideologies, including colorblindness, are necessarily flexible, internally contradictory and partial. But much of this work lends a coherence to individual positions and identities that implies what Bonilla-Silva and others theoretically work against—the existence of “good” and “bad,” “racist” and “progressive” individuals.

Most liberals, it is argued, deploy colorblindness either out of a sincere attempt to promote equality or out of a commitment to liberal (Kantian, Millsian or Rawlsian) notions of individualism, universalism, and egalitarianism (Omi and Winant, 1994; See Bonilla Silva, 2003, 26 for discussion). McGary describes how in much of liberal philosophy, racism is understood as “a kind of vulgar prejudicial behavior of individual actors” (2009, 10) inconsistent with universalizable notions of morality and justice. Omi and Winant (1994) have also discussed colorblindness as a conservative (and neoconservative and neoliberal) “racial project”—a racial movement that confronts a racial state and, in this confrontation, seeks to produce particular racial meanings. I suggest, however, that colorblindness might be thought of not only as an ideology, but also as a flexible tactic for maintaining racial privilege deployed by Whites across the political spectrum to avert charges of racism while deploying a practical liberalism rooted in group/community rights.

Without dismissing ideological frameworks for understanding liberal and conservative colorblindness, I propose an approach that draws upon Bonilla-Silva’s assertion that the

“ideology” of colorblindness is “rooted in the group-based conditions and experiences of the races” (2003, 10) and that, while racism is often treated as the behavior of irrational and backwards individuals, it is in fact a natural or normal behavior in a racist social system. In order to root racism in a politics of action and meaning-making within a racially structured system, we need to think about racist identities and positions that are fragmented, tactical and incoherent. We cannot understand ideological tactics, such as colorblindness, in terms of individual predilections, but must understand them within the context of “community.”

Caring for Community

Theorists of suburban space have labeled those who designed and organized the suburbs “the community builders,” (Weiss 1987, Fishman 1987) because they were the first to concretely link “community” and community control with economic stability and profits. These early suburban developers recognized that the ability to control who was around you, to shape what happened with and in the other properties in your “neighborhood,” was a critical facet in instilling homeowner confidence and encouraging investment in ownership. A handful of actors—developers, politicians, real estate agents, and subdividers—worked, over the space of 20-40 years, to craft policies of “community control,” first through private deed restrictions, later through the incorporation of these and zoning regulations into public law.

As debates rage over the relevance of place in shaping people, it is often assumed that people are passive in this process, i.e. that a person would move to a place and be transformed by it (see: Escobar 2001, Massey 2004 for critiques). The discussion of community to follow indicates something different. It indicates that places, particularly commodified places such as neighborhoods, represent sets of collective commitments. While people can buy into these

neighborhoods without agreeing to these commitments (although some are sanctioned in law), they will be collectively targeted, disciplined, and made uncomfortable should they violate them. The control of property values (through lot size and other zoning regulations) is perhaps the most effective regulator of these commitments as those who buy into expensive neighborhoods, often at great risk to themselves, have an individual interest that matches the collective interest—the rise of property values.

The liberal ideal of “community,” often contrasted with global, alienating or uncaring capitalism (Putnam 2000), is not merely social or political, but also a deeply economic project aimed at securing and maintaining class privilege. Broadly critiqued for its utopian and exclusionary tendencies, an ideal of “community” has none-the-less formed the bedrock of much politically liberal and even progressive thought over the past few decades. Thus “caring” for community can entail a set of actions that range from purportedly progressive activism to exclude Wal-Mart, fast food chains or BevMo from a particular political geography (a variation on NIMBY politics aimed, in part, at protecting small local businesses, thus also associated with radical traditions of thought such as Import Substitution) to clearly reactionary efforts to gate “communities,” control access, and privatize public space (Joseph, 2002). “Liberal” caring entails framing these efforts at community building and protection in the guise of a commitment to a broader liberal or progressive social cause i.e. limiting corporate power, keeping children healthy, and protecting local/small business.

This liberal model of “caring” for community shapes policy, however, within segregated geographies, and as I will discuss below, caring is only directed at those within the boundaries of the community (“charity” is directed at those outside the community). Despite the cosmopolitan reputation of liberal regions such as the San Francisco Bay Area, segregation levels are high here

as in much of the West. Black/White and Hispanic/White segregation levels are in the 60-70% range in much of the Bay Area, reaching into the 80% range in some cities (Census 2000). A comparison of a map of red and blue political regions with one of segregation also shows that high levels of segregation are commonly present in both liberal and conservative voting regions (politicalmaps.org 2004).

At the time of the civil rights movement, liberals dismantled conservative arguments for “local control,” investing the state with the responsibility of ensuring equal treatment under the law. That politics has been steadily re-vamped into one of “community” and “caring”—a type of identity politics and local utopianism that fails to address, and thus produces and reproduces, structural inequalities—particularly along lines of race and class.

Setting

The two neighborhoods that form the center of this study—The Alders and Gin Alley—compose an area of approximately two square miles (see Figure A). This area is bordered on the west by a creek, on the east by a four-lane highway, and on the north and the south by major thoroughfares. The remnants of the time when this was considered one neighborhood are visibly evident in the street patterns, which still weave relatively fluidly through the neighborhood, and the similarity of the housing construction. Race, language, class, and culture cleave what would otherwise be a unified suburban island. This line between two disparate cities, despite having no

gate, wall or barricade to mark it, effectively creates a “third border”⁵ that divides poor Latinos (and other residents of color) from Whites.

Figure A: Map of the Alders and Gin Alley

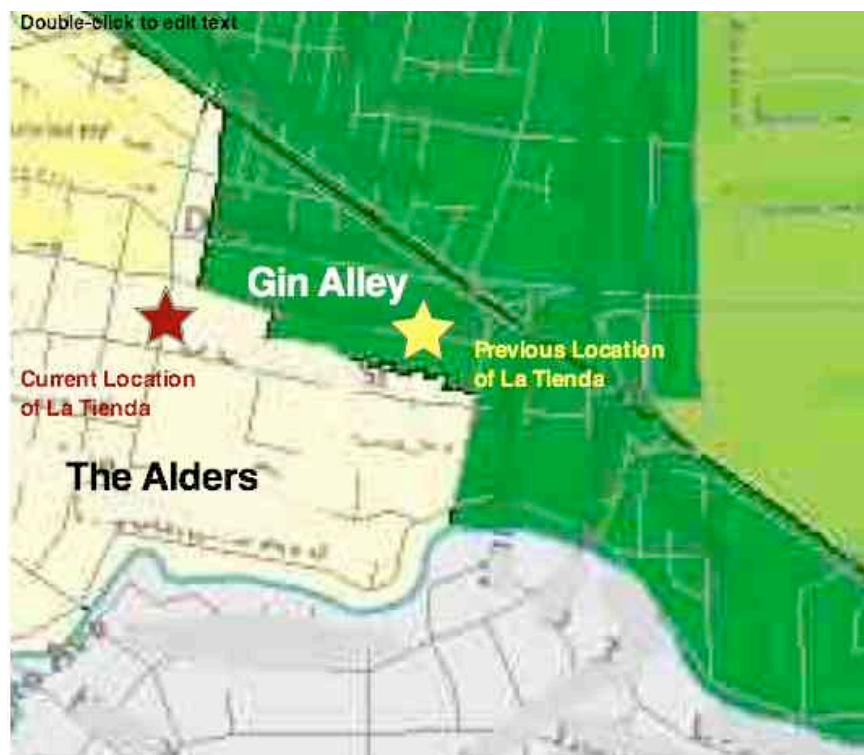


Figure A: This map shows the focus area of the study. The Alders neighborhood is marked with beige/yellow and the Gin Alley neighborhood is the green portion below the freeway (thick black diagonal line). The green and yellow also represent the different cities with yellow areas representing Parkside and those in green, East Arboles. The previous and current locations of La Tienda area are marked with stars.

The less than one square mile area that lies on the East Arboles side of the boundary is informally termed “Gin Alley” and is best described as a high-poverty, high-density community. It has a total population of 3,377 people⁶. Sixty percent self-identify as Hispanic or Latino, 15% are White, 11% are African American, 8% are Pacific Islander (PI), and 2% are Asian

⁵ The first border is the US Mexico border, the second is the ICE checkpoints that dot Los Angeles and San Diego and the third is made by the mechanisms of exclusion and illegalization evidenced wherever, as Anzaldúa (1987, 25) says “the third world grates against the first and bleeds.”

⁶ All data is from the 2000 census. There have been major changes since this time that may have decreased the population of Gin Alley, but the general demographic characteristics of these two communities remain largely similar to their 2000 composition. Whenever possible, block-level data has been used. When this was not available, block group data was used. The Alders is composed of three block groups, while Gin Alley is part of a larger block-group with similar demographics throughout.

American⁷. Fifty percent are foreign born and 33% of the adults between the ages of 18 and 64 identify themselves as speaking English “not well” or “not at all.” The median income for this area is \$36,000.00 and 22% live in poverty (see Table 1).

In contrast, the two square mile area that comprises the neighborhood formally termed “The Alders” is an upper-middle class, low-density suburb. It contains only 2,226 people. Seventy nine percent self-identify as White, 10% are Latino, 7% are Asian, and only 2% are African American. Only 16% of Alders residents are foreign born and over 98% of the adults speak English “well” or “very well.” The median income for this area is \$96,000.00 and only 3% live below the poverty line.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Alders and Gin Alley

	<i>Gin Alley</i>	<i>The Alders</i>
Total Population	3377	2226
Percent White	15%	79%
Percent Latin@	60%	10%
Percent Black	11%	2%
Percent Asian	2%	7%
Percent PI	8%	0%
Percent Foreign Born	50%	16%
Limited English	33%	2%
Median Income	\$36,000	\$96,000
Below Poverty Line	22%	3%

In 2000, downtown Gin Alley was bulldozed as part of a massive redevelopment project. The project displaced over 250 local residents, 50 businesses, and 20 non-profits (City of East Arboles 2003). One of the businesses displaced in this process was La Tienda Supermercado. La Tienda, a small Latino owned and serving supermarket, carries goods from throughout North, Central and South America. Boasting a full meat counter, burrito bar, strong produce section,

⁷ Asian and Pacific Islander are often combined into the category Asian Pacific Islander (API). In this case, however, this is not appropriate as there are very clear distinctions between “Asians,” who generally live in Parkside and Pacific Islanders who largely reside in East Arboles and have very different immigration histories and socioeconomic positions than “Asians” from China, Japan and other industrialized states. The PI numbers are based on the census category “Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islanders Alone” and the Asian numbers are based on the corresponding “Asian” category, which does not include Pacific Islanders.

and wide variety of household items, it also provides services such as check cashing, money order processing, and phone card sales. Because the entire city of East Arboles has been so severely red-lined that they have been unable, for the past 18 years, to secure a full service grocery store, stores like La Tienda provide basic grocer services not only for their Latino neighbors but also for the entire surrounding community.

One year after they were uprooted, La Tienda re-opened, not in East Arboles, which would have required them to move across the freeway losing much of their clientele, but just over the border in Parkside. This location left them within easy walking distance of most of their former clientele and allowed the market to both expand and retain a neighborhood feel as they were snugly nestled within a small shopping strip that constitutes the heart of the Alders neighborhood.

For the first few years in its new location La Tienda maintained a tenuous relationship with its new neighbors in The Alders. Then, in 2003, La Tienda was robbed. Over the next two years it would be the victim of three more robberies, at least two of which were part of a series of robberies that struck Bay Area supermarkets, gas stations, convenience stores and other venues. During this two-year string of robberies, groups of armed, masked men entered and robbed stores up and down the San Francisco Peninsula on at least 36 occasions. These robberies catapulted the market into the center of intense community organizing and debate in The Alders community, amplifying existing community opposition to the market and to “cut through traffic.” After the robberies, intensified organizing focused on curtailing street access to the neighborhood, enhancing surveillance, heightening police presence, and, most prominently, limiting/eliminating check cashing and having the market declared a public nuisance.

Strikingly, this activism, while it invoked a number of common neo-liberal and even neo-conservative themes, such as security and surveillance, occurred on decidedly liberal terms in decidedly liberal terrain. The Alders neighborhood is considered a “radical” (by some accounts) liberal neighborhood in a liberal county. In 2008, with 75% of the county voting for Obama, fully 85% of the Alders precinct voted for Obama. Moreover “liberal” values such as protecting the environment, valuing community over corporate interests, and open participatory governance were at the core of how many neighborhood activists envisioned their fight against La Tienda. Thus, this case is particularly illustrative of how bordering and exclusion are engaged, contested and produced in, by and through liberalism.

Methods

I first learned of the controversy surrounding La Tienda through my mother, who lived near the store and was involved with the Parkside city council around traffic issues. I was interested both as an activist and as an academic in better understanding liberal colorblind racism. I was also interested in understanding the role of borders and the function of different types of borders (Anzaldúa 1987). Having read about the gating of suburban neighborhoods and walling off of public space (Davis 2001, Caldeira 2000), I wanted to understand the difference between these types of gating and the subtler, but seemingly no less effective borders I witnessed in this neighborhood. Lastly, I had an interest in popular education and the notions of community and dialogue as part of an organizing process. The Alders organizing looked to be a particular variant of a “community-based” process (Freire 1970, Cooke and Kothari 2001).

I began engaging as a researcher and collecting ethnographic data soon after the August 2004 robbery and continued doing so for one year. I attended all subsequent neighborhood meetings (five in total) and counter-organizing meetings (one) and recorded these whenever feasible. Two of these were city council meetings, each attended by over 100 residents of the Alders neighborhood, the market owners, and other concerned citizens (including other check cashers and those who opposed gating). Three meetings were neighborhood “safety” meetings, two of which were formal city meetings, although not held in council chambers, and the other of which was organized by Alders residents at a local coffee shop. Each of these meetings included over 60 Alders residents but they differed in composition with the later meeting primarily composed of residents who directly opposed the market. All of these meetings lasted over an hour with the longest lasting over three hours. The “counter-meeting” was a small affair, in a resident’s apartment, composed of three people, all of them renters, who objected to the tone of the organizing and planned to speak in favor of the market and against racism at a council meeting.

I also joined the neighborhood e-mail lists (three in total, with over 120 members of the neighborhood included) where much of the organizing surrounding the market was taking place. In times of heavy e-mail traffic (immediately after a robbery or before or after a significant meeting) there could be as many as ten posts to each of these lists in a single day with almost all of them focused on the market—over 50 a week during a busy week. I began “hanging out” at the market and nearby businesses and engaging residents of the neighborhood in informal and formal interviews/conversations about the market. In total I conducted 11 formal interviews in the Alders neighborhood (three with business owners, seven with residents, and one with a city official). These provided some background context and individual perspective on the community

meetings and e-mail lists that were the core of my data. I also endeavored, though it was not the focus of my study, to obtain the perspectives of and background on the market owners and customers. I interviewed the owner and the CFO of the market and two neighborhood activists from East Arboles, and I maintained two regular “informants” who lived just on the “other side” of the border and helped me get a sense for how information was being communicated and alternative perspectives on the market and its use, position and operation.

I conducted this research from a position deeply embedded within the Alders community (as a daughter, a former and current resident, a White, middle class, college educated, “liberal” woman) and deeply critical of the situation (as a struggling anti-racist, socialist, anti-colonial activist). I initially clung (perhaps out of nervousness) to a “fly on the wall” methodology. Despite framing my study as “participant” observation (acknowledging that I was a participant in this context), I attempted to approach this context from a classical anthropological position of “outside” observer and classifier of culture (see: Evans-Pritchard 1976, Glesne and Peshkin 1992). At the first “community meeting” about the market I arrived late and took a spot on the floor (practically under a table), where I could scribble, unobserved, in my notebook, avoiding engagement. At the second “community meeting” I took a seat amidst the White crowd arranged in rows of seats, using only a low profile tape recorder, not a notebook, so as to “blend in.” It was at this meeting, however, that it became evident to me that by “blending in” I was, in fact, joining the majority of White residents who remained silent as thinly veiled racial attacks were made against the only Latinos in the room—the market owners. At the third meeting, a council meeting at which neighborhood activists hoped to have the market shut down, I explicitly rejected my silent (though clearly not actually silent by virtue of my race and body) position and gave the lone speech in defense of the market, landing myself a mention in the local news

account of the meeting (the text of my speech to council is included as Appendix B of this paper).

Once I “spoke,” my position as a researcher changed dramatically. The market owners, who had shunned my previous attempts at contact, approached me to thank me for what I had said and invited me to the market to talk and to review video footage of the robbery. Neighborhood activists expressed surprise that I took the positions I did given that I was my mother’s daughter (they expected me to align with the pro-traffic regulation crowd as they believed she did). White “liberal” residents began to approach me to defend themselves as “not-racist” in response to my accusations, and members of the city council began contacting me to review drafts of the proposed ordinance. At the following community meeting, I spoke again, but this time, cowed by the council’s efforts to include me (or perhaps by the way in which an extreme response had been foregone), I, like many in the neighborhood, said that I appreciated the council’s decision to keep the market and check cashing, and I said nothing against the ordinance they passed subjecting the market to neighborhood control. Instead I suggested anti-racist measures at future meetings and in the neighborhood more broadly, which included bilingual interpretation, outreach to East Arboles residents and anti-racism training for neighborhood watch members and police.

My data analysis focused on looking for discourses of race and racism, as well as discourses and practices of exclusion. As I coded the interview transcripts, my field notes and transcripts of community meetings, and posts from the email lists, I identified three tendencies that allow White liberal actors to perpetuate racialized space without abandoning their commitment to liberal ideals and civil rights. The first is the inscription of race onto place, by which I mean the naturalization of geographies forged through racial discrimination and the

imputation of these places (and the people who reside in them) with characteristics that, were they attributed to race groups, would be clearly discriminatory. The second is disciplined colorblindness, by which I refer to the imperative to silence racist comments and disparage “racists” while pursuing actions that have racially disparate impacts as they work through racially privileged geographies. Lastly, I identify an ethic of “caring for community” in which the protection of White women and children becomes deeply tied to the protection of property values and the imperative to “self”-defense at any cost. These three factors essentially point toward an identity-politics of Whiteness, rooted in place, in which the individual is made responsible *within* a system of collective organization and investment. Such a characterization stands somewhat at odds with the focus on the individual characteristically associated with liberalism and in doing so works in concert with other critical race scholarship to unsettle the notion that “group rights” are something that are applied to “minorities” while “individual rights” characterize the “normal” American political ethos.

The Inscription of Race Onto Space

Having bulletproof glass in a neighborhood market, you’re right, that is not what I want my neighborhood to be like, this is Parkside... The reason we paid the money we paid is because it is situated in *Parkside* and there are expectations you have when you shell out those bucks to live in Parkside, and La Tienda was *not* my expectation!” (Parkside Resident, 2005 Neighborhood Meeting)

The most strident faction organizing against La Tienda was the group who asserted that this market did not belong in “our neighborhood.” These people asserted their arguments on two grounds: 1) the need to “protect” the community and 2) the need for the market to “serve” the community. Those who sought to “protect” their community argued that the market brought “cut through traffic,” “undesirable elements,” “crimes of opportunity,” littering, public urination, cat calls, fast cars, loud music, pay-phone-using-drug-dealers, and a wealth of “code violations” to

the neighborhood. Those who argued that the market did not “serve” their community objected to the preponderance of Latin American goods in the market and the lack of items they desired such as diet Coke with lime, brie cheese, baguettes, European newspapers, and organic milk. These two arguments merged around services such as jewelry sales, hypothetical (because no such thing was ever considered) pornography sales⁸, and, particularly, check cashing and money order services which were largely understood as both *not serving* and *not safe*.

I will address these twin imperatives (protect and serve) later in this paper. Here I highlight the production of “our community” upon which they depend. When La Tienda moved, it moved only five blocks. In its previous location it sat directly in front of an apartment complex housing people of color, most of them Latino, and was surrounded, on at least three sides, by a similar demographic. For many of these residents, many of whom did not own cars, La Tienda was and continued to be a source of staple food products and basic groceries. When Alders residents referred to “our community,” they by-and-large referred to a neighborhood that stopped abruptly at the East Arboles border. City residence, race, class, language and culture, not geographic proximity or topography, defined this neighborhood. This exclusion from “our neighborhood” of those who were so immediately proximate depended not just upon the city boundary (which was significant in determining where political action should be targeted, but across which Alders residents had no trouble attempting influence), but upon a set of binary opposites that contrasted “over there” to “here,” essentially producing East Arboles as the “constitutive outside” (Butler 1993) of the Alders—that which is “different” and excluded and thus helps us define who “we” are.

⁸ While challenging the legitimacy of check-cashing as a “standard activity of markets” and thus legal within the neighborhood code, residents began to throw hypotheticals at the city attorney (who was defending the market): “Would you let them stay open until midnight?” “Would you let them sell pornography?” The market had never sold or proposed selling pornography or staying open until midnight.

Those who argued for the removal of La Tienda, the closure of street access, and the elimination of check-cashing often spoke of East Arboles as a scourge, a disease, or a predator in both their e-mail and public remarks. One particularly vocal resident, who had galvanized a wide swath of the neighborhood in support of resident control of “traffic calming” measures, compared the market to a nodule of a metastasized cancer, represented by the whole of East Arboles:

The [council] majority have sat idly back while East Arboles progressively encroaches on our neighborhood -- bringing with it the crime endemic to that city.... Restricting our demands to a request that the police bring the La Tienda robbers to justice is akin to arguing that removal of a single nodule of a metastasized cancer will cure the patient. (Parkside Resident, Posted to Community E-Mail List, April 2005)

While this resident’s disdain for East Arboles was widely understood by many in the neighborhood as evidence of his race and class prejudice, he often asserted that his objections were not racial, but to the “crime that is endemic” to East Arboles as well as the “failed development projects” represented by corporate office towers and the high-rise hotel.

Many in the neighborhood objected to the “racism” in these comments (which did not explicitly reference race)—presumably making the inference that in talking about “endemic crime” and “cancer” and linking these to a very clearly racialized geography, their author was being racist. When, however, the derogation of East Arboles was less clear, both residents and city officials quickly identified East Arboles as unsafe or threatening. The police chief, in a public meeting, responded to one woman’s worries about driving in East Arboles by asserting the safety of the neighborhood and then recommending protective measures which would be unheard of in a “safe” place—such as not looking at anybody:

I can tell you that 60% of our police force is in East Arboles. Violent crime and narcotic crimes are our number one priority. Overall the neighborhood is safe. When you drive through, drive straight in and straight out, go directly to your destination and lock your doors. That neighborhood is not unsafe. It’s unsafe for criminals. (Police Chief, Neighborhood Meeting, April 2005)

The inscription of race onto place makes it possible for a police chief to advise a nearly all-White audience to lock their doors, not look at anyone and go straight to their destination in a neighborhood populated almost entirely by people of color—an act which enforces and inscribes race prejudice—at the same time as “colorblind” sensibilities would explicitly prevent him from warning Whites from looking at “Blacks” or “Mexicans” or “Those People.”

Disciplined Colorblindness

During the one-year term that I followed the controversy over the market, race was rarely mentioned in public contexts, yet most of the participants I interviewed identified certain speakers and certain comments as “racist.” These accusations were never made publicly, but a few times in public contexts, people objected to the tenor of the debate, to an “us and them mentality” or to efforts to exclude people from or “wall off” the community. While individuals’ unwillingness to use racial terms or frame their arguments racially may have stemmed from a genuine desire not to be or not to appear racist, the result was a slippery terrain, wherein many indicated they felt race was a motivating factor for some actions, and that actions would have racial impact, but they could not be pinned, nor effectively pin others as racist.

Moreover, as these debates progressed, the instances that appeared most effective in calling into question the racial motivations and impact of the debates, were those in which someone made a comment which appeared to many to be racist. The broader set of actions under consideration—removing check-cashing, removing the market, requiring the market to implement expensive security measures, and even putting up street barriers, were not in and of themselves understood as racist, though they would have clear racial impact. The actors involved seemed only to recognize racism when arguments were framed in ways that appeared to

be racially motivated. Yet even then, the slipperiness of the language used allowed for or caused those who identified racism to doubt themselves and backtrack on their claims.

In private, every person I interviewed (note that my sample was skewed toward those who defended the market) at some point indicated that certain residents were “racist” or racially motivated. A business owner on the same strip as the market said, “That one woman was just plain racist,” referring to Ms. Edwards, a woman who was one of the most virulent commentators. Ms. Lawton, a young woman who lives directly behind the market was more muted in her response, “I don’t know if it’s true, but I think some people are racist. And I, I heard comments that alluded to us versus them.” A third interviewee, a woman who lives around the corner from the market explained, “I had to leave because it was so horrible, I just couldn’t listen anymore, I almost stood up and told everybody how racist they were being, I’m glad I didn’t.” The hesitancy expressed by this last woman toward levying a charge of racism was expressed, at some point, by almost all interviewees. In order to make them less identifiable, I am not labeling my interviewees’ race or ethnicity, but it is noteworthy that residents of color were no more willing to call their neighbors racist than White residents.

Residents were able to identify the tenor of the “us” and “them” divisions mentioned in community meetings. Ms. Lawton described them as follows: “Us, I think when they’re saying us and, it’s kind of rude, but I think they’re thinking of the, the middle-class neighbors that live here, that, like White middle class neighbors.” Later, I asked this same interviewee to read a recently published newspaper article. Reading from the paper, she quoted the meeting organizer saying “no racial fear came up at all,” then immediately stopped reading and turned to me, “Okay, that’s her interpretation, I thought there was some racial fear.”

Me: Where did you see it?

Ms. Lawton: That us versus them thing. But, here's a comment [in the newspaper] that it really doesn't belong in the neighborhood, it belongs on La Calle [a street in East Arboles]. I know who wrote, who said that.

Me: You do.

Ms. Lawton: Yeah

Me: And do you see that as a racial comment?

Ms. Lawton: A bit I think

Me: Yeah?

Ms. Lawton: Yeah. No, ah, definitely her, her point is, it's a big market, it's getting a lot of traffic, our neighborhood can't support that and that size market shouldn't be here. Okay.

Here Ms. Lawton, knowing the woman who made the comment about the market not belonging in the neighborhood, identified her comment as racial. Upon immediate reflection, however, Ms. Lawton produced a rationalization for how the comment was, in fact, non racial. It was only the use of "us and them" language that she was willing to continue to identify as racial.

Ms. Wood, who was one of the few people to challenge the racial undertones of the debates on the e-mail forum, was much more assertive in her objection to the "racism" within the group. She attended the first meeting but said she barely noticed that the market was an issue although it was one of the primary agenda items. At the second meeting, however, "the racial stuff started coming up and then it was like, wait a minute and that really surprised me." Still, while Ms. Wood was able to identify racism in the comments made at the second meeting, her perceptions of what a racist looked like interfered somewhat with her ability to identify her neighbors as racist over the long-term. Her stereotypes about racists were evident in her comments about one of the most strident opponents of the market, "I turned around really quickly because I hate the blonde woman [Ms. Edwards]. She's such a racist pig that I thought, 'She has to be over 60,' but I turned around and thought, 'Oh my God, she's younger than I am.'"

While the second meeting was heated and informal, and Ms. Edwards was dressed casually in jeans and a bright pink t-shirt, hair down and undone, the following meeting was noticeably different. This meeting was in the city council chambers and people gave carefully

practiced two-minute presentations, some of them using power points. They were well researched and full of statistical information. Most expressed support, even love, for the market, but claimed that, given the history of violence at that site, it was unsafe for it to remain in the neighborhood. Ms. Wood had filled out a speaker card and was ready to speak yet instead she gave her time to someone else. When I asked at the end why she didn't speak she said, "They weren't at all like I thought they were, I thought they were all monsters, but they were just nice normal people." At this meeting, Ms. Edwards had a carefully crafted, modest, suburban look, and a new well-styled haircut. She did not appear the unmannered bigot Ms. Wood had believed her to be at previous meetings.

While the argument that those who advocated closing the market were racist or racially motivated was only made in private, some comments were made in public meetings and forums that hinted at this charge. In public forums, these comments were only made when direct or indirect reference to the race and ethnicity of those involved with the market was made. Toward the end of the second meeting a man suggested that some kind of immigration enforcement could be used to shut down the market's check cashing business. A woman quickly picked up on this and responded, "I'm very uncomfortable with this us versus them mentality, I have to say, because we, if we talk about these people and I, whatever your stance on immigration just be aware that the restaurants that you patronize in this area...those restaurants run on illegals...and if you say that it's not a neighborhood market because it's serving these people, you know, Hispanics, or whatever...you better be equally comfortable with drawing that line in the other direction" (referring to the wealthier community to the west). While this did not constitute a direct charge of racism, it was the only public statement made by a neighborhood resident that indicated race was a factor in others' objections to the market.

Two city officials also hinted, publicly, at the racial (or classed) motivations of the residents who objected to the market. One, the city manager, consistently invoked the equal protection clause and state and federal legislation to indicate that actions being proposed by neighborhood residents were illegal.

We don't differentiate whether you sell Chinese food, whether you sell Mexican food, whether you sell jewelry in that Latino...in the store...We'd be violating all kinds of state and federal laws if we were regulating a business on the basis of, you know, where their clients were coming from...you just, you can't regulate businesses and uses that way. I mean, I understand the concern of the neighborhood, and I mean, I would probably have the exact same concerns, but we're limited in terms of what we can do legally. (City Manager, January 2005, Community Meeting)

He opens by asserting the incapacity of the city to regulate a business on the basis of their ethnic or racial composition or that of their clientele. This argument is a direct response to those who have claimed that the market brings “undesirable elements” or “crimes of opportunity” to the neighborhood, arguments identified as “racist” by many neighborhood residents. At first, it seems as if he is invoking the legacy of civil rights, acknowledging that residents' comments, which contain no explicit racial language, are racially motivated, and decrying the validity of their calls for action. He also, however, acknowledges and legitimizes the comments made by neighbors, “I would probably have the exact same concerns,” and by presenting civil rights legislation as a *legal* obstacle, it is not clear whether his primary concern is upholding the intent of civil rights legislation or protecting the city from legal troubles.

Another approach taken by city officials was that pursued by the mayor who, instead of invoking the need for cross-community understanding or tolerance, argued that the community's concerns were unnecessary because the demographics of the neighborhood were changing in their favor:

If you still think check cashing's an issue, what I'm saying is that this store will not, in time, be a center for check-cashing because the businesses are all changing in this area and the demographics of the grocery store... When it was Gin Alley and we heard machine guns all the time. Just as that transition has occurred very quickly, I think you're going to see a lot of changes occur in the very near future. (Mayor, January 2005, Community Meeting)

When she spoke of the demographics changing she referred explicitly to the redevelopment project that displaced many residents of color and businesses owned by people of color. While she did not explicitly state that Latinos would no longer be patronizing the area, her meaning was evident as it had already been made clear that the primary patrons of the check-cashing services were Latino.

Another example of the re-crafting of legal language to appear race-neutral occurred at the end of the debate when the city council, despite their previous statements that it would be illegal to do so, prepared to draft an urgency ordinance regulating check cashing within the city and imposing expensive security measures upon check-cashers. In May of 2005 the city manager circulated a draft of this ordinance. The ordinance specified that: “beginning in June of 2004 a series of 13 commercial armed robberies occurred in Parkside. Thirty eight percent or five of the 13 robberies in Parkside occurred at small Latino-owned markets that offer check cashing services.” The ordinance then went on to stipulate that all check-cashers would henceforth be licensed by the city and would have to apply yearly for a permit which the police chief may approve or deny “as the Chief deems necessary to secure the health, safety, morals, comfort and general welfare of the persons residing or working in the neighborhood.” This ordinance, which mentioned that the check-cashers in question were Latino-owned businesses, was circulated amongst a small pool of residents for review. I was forwarded a copy of the ordinance by one of these residents.

A resident responded quickly to this draft ordinance with the following comment: “Latino-owned is irrelevant to the discussion in my opinion and is a racial designation. As such, it has no place in this document.” The city manager wrote an embarrassed apology to this resident and removed the word Latino-owned from the ordinance. “Latino-owned,” however,

made it much easier to identify the racial impact of this ordinance, which overwhelmingly impacted Latino grocers. The remainder of the ordinance remained intact, leaving a Latino-owned and Latino-serving business service subject to the “morals, comfort and general welfare” of the surrounding, majority-White residents.

An Ethic of Care

I have tried to make clear that bigoted forms of racism were not the norm throughout the debate over the market; indeed these are condemned within the neighborhood. I have attempted to show that the historic and continued discussion of a normative “us” is as, if not more, significant than the construction of a normative “them” in the production of segregated space; lastly, I want to argue that the production of White space occurs in and through an ethic of “caring” that functions through a place-based, but also a raced and gendered construction of community.

In the early part of the debates over the market, I noticed a lack of any apparent care or concern over the market having been robbed. Indeed, there was little, if any expression of empathy early in the debates for the employee who had been beaten or the market owners and their losses⁹. This lack of care is in stark contrast to the high levels of concern that are shown for residents whose houses are robbed or that would presumably be shown for other, more

⁹ The question of care for the market arose more explicitly during the second meeting when the Market’s CFO, attempting to illustrate the seriousness with which the market took the robberies, said to one of the residents, “And I agree, it’s horrible that [the robbery] was in your backyard, but at the same time, that was in our home.” She responded snidely, “Well, it wasn’t your home. You probably weren’t even here.” He replied, “Every one of our employees was in the building.” To which she said, “Yeah, and it’s a blessing and we should all be lucky that nothing happened.” This attempt to evoke the empathy of local residents was curtly rejected. At an earlier point in this same meeting a resident said “I’m sorry this happened,” addressing the CFO, and another resident concurred, but it was not clear if “I’m sorry this happened *to you*” was implied or the more generic “this is a regrettable situation.” Later, in a city council meeting, a resident expressed empathy for an employee but portrayed this employee’s fate as the result of the market’s negligence, setting up the community (in trying to force the market into enhanced security measures) as the caring agent: “I spoke to someone who was working in the store,” she said, “a cousin of the owner, who was thrown to the floor, knifed and held at gunpoint. I am shocked that the owner would let an employee and his family be treated like that without putting in greater security measures.”

established businesses, including those owned by (but not primarily serving) people of color should they have been robbed.

“Caring” is in sharp contrast to “charity.” Caring occurs within the neighborhood; charity outside. Charity is directed elsewhere, often at East Arboles or overseas. Caring encompasses the relation among neighbors. It is the sense of collective responsibility Alders residents feel and it is embodied in maintaining property values and the character, appearance and identity of the neighborhood. Outsiders, particularly those from East Arboles, were understood as a threat because they “don’t care about our community.” While such sentiment is often expressed in moralistic and racialized terms, it is also underlain by a fundamental assumption of self-interest in caring. Residents of the Alders understand that, in fundamental ways, their actions are shaped by their economic investment in this neighborhood and their dependence upon one another. This creates a type of internal discipline toward collective neighborhood responsibility. When a business, like La Tienda, pulls in outsiders, particularly racial outsiders, the residents’ powers of mutual discipline are rendered ineffectual and residents have no mechanism except the police through which to ensure compliance with their norms. Tightly linked to concerns about property and safety, the collective identity of the neighborhood also has embedded within it conceptions of territorial control and who and what belongs within that territory. The presence of the market forced different facets of the neighborhood identity into conflict with one another and with individual identities that did not clearly fit within the “us” that was articulated.

Identity was a clear concern for some of those who spoke out publicly at the second meeting about the market. This concern was often articulated specifically in relation to property

values and was presented less as something neighbors were directly concerned about having for their own aesthetic or personal benefit, but as a worry over how the area would be perceived:

A couple of years back you held a neighborhood meeting on creating an identity to this neighborhood um, I, and, I'm worried now that we, our identity is that there's, when this hits the papers that there's armed men in the neighborhood robbing, and I think that affects the businesses and it affects the homeowners and, so I'm wondering how we're going to have a positive identity to this neighborhood? (Resident, January 2005, Community Meeting)

While many of the concerns addressed in this meeting were specific to residents' fears about personal safety, many others, including this one, highlight the importance of not only being, but also appearing, crime-free for property and business owners. Residents worried that "when this hits the papers," in other words, when potential shoppers, buyers and investors begin to hear about it, the economic potential of the area would be damaged.

Respondents to this comment argued that the identity of the neighborhood could be seen in the unity present in the room. "This is it right here, I mean [a lot of cries of 'yeah'], I think that by us banding together right now, I mean, this is great," one man replied and was echoed by others. The mayor echoed these sentiments, stating that "we are a very unified neighborhood and it is greatly to our credit," but she also expressed support for the idea of a more clearly articulated identity. She identified a new sign for the business strip, new landscaping, and improved traffic flow as part of this process. The social definition of identity, in which a specific group of persons comes together to work on common goals, and the physical aesthetic element intertwined in many of the other debates about La Tienda; issues such as openness and inclusivity interacted with notions of safety and community control. Yet these elements were never wholly divorced from the value of property.

In direct response to the initial comments about neighborhood identity, one man pointed out that the store had had "four robberies in sixteen months but all the property values have continued to climb." He was quickly rebuked, however, by business owners who said that they

had heard customers say they no longer wanted to patronize the area because of the market. One business owner argued, “I’m just two and a half years here and all these bullet-proof glass and all the armed people around here it’s going to kill my business.” Business owners, like new property-owners and those who depend upon rental property, are more subject to immediate fluctuations in the neighborhood perception, and as these actors began to feel threatened they articulated their concerns with increasing vehemence.

Scholars have pointed to the historical development of the suburbs as linked to a particular classed and gendered construction of womanhood (Wright 1985, Marsh 1990). The suburbs were at once a place for the work and containment of women—both in the home. The “safety” and “security” of (White) women and children—who were, historically, the property of men—were linked to the production of property value through logics of “protection” from racialized and classed others.

It was not necessarily only men who sought power through “protection.” McClintock (1995), for example, has argued that colonial women were instrumental in shaping a politics of racial exclusion in the colonies as they sought to both distinguish themselves from racial and class others and secure power. In the Alders, it is hardly possible to see the mothers who organized against the market as meekly protected by men—or to see, as some have suggested, these suburbs as a feminized space in contrast to the masculinized, phallic space of the capitalist city (see Massey 2004, Saegert 1980 for discussions of feminized and masculinized space). Yet the call for the second meeting, written by a woman, was a call to the men for help:

Yep, La Tienda Market got robbed again! ... So here are my questions: When is the market going to be held responsible now that we have established a trend of their store being a target to be robbed? What is their obligation to us as neighbors? ... You guys, we need more from our community! We need somebody who is going to hold the City and the Market accountable. Any volunteers.....? Husbands? Please help!
(Female Parkside Resident, E-mail List, January 2005)

Not only do these comments highlight the way in which the tone of this second meeting, a “holding to account,” differed dramatically from that of the first, they also reveal the escalating role of gender in the conflict.

Women initiated and led the fight against La Tienda, and while they did so in the name of their own safety and that of their children, the imperative of men protecting women and children has also been vital to the ethic of “care” that allows residents to profit off their collective property—the neighborhood. The role of women and mothers as homemakers in this area of very high property values cannot be overemphasized. The women who form the Alders mothers group were almost all active career women before they became mothers; many of them now stay at home and have taken on a new, but equally laborious task of carving out both a “safe” space for their children—not only physically but also for their development—and building and beautifying their property. It was recently estimated that the value of a stay-at-home mom in this area is over \$140,000.00 (salary.com 2006), that value doesn’t include these women’s role in producing a sellable neighborhood identity—an entity that adds substantially to family wealth during a booming property market where rising equity on a home can double a family’s annual income¹⁰.

The portrayal of women as the “stable and functioning center,” a nostalgic “home” and refuge for men after their labors of production, has been critiqued both for the ways in which it delegitimizes women’s role in the labor market and for the ways in which it reinforces territorialized notions of space and conquest (Massey 2004). Yet this critique relies on a limited conception of capital in which the “male” space, the phallic space defined by high-rises and highways, is seen as the privileged space of capital. In the context of the Alders neighborhood—

¹⁰ Even during the subprime crisis, property values were stable in The Alders.

the space that connects the private life of home to a wider sphere of social relations (Hise 2004)—these housewives and mothers become active agents in the production of capital. The call to husbands for help in this context has a double meaning. First, it reiterates the productive work of these mothers. Secondly, it hints at the ways in which the protection of White women (as racialized property) is bound up with the protection of racialized space (McClintock 1995). In this sense, the ethical duties of caring for community and caring for women and children become linked to those of “protection,” not only of these things, but also of neighborhood identity, and by extension property, from racialized others.

Conclusion

In certain ways we might see the resolution of the market debate in the Alders as a true liberal victory. The market remained in its location and continued to offer check cashing (with a permit), residents were appeased by the safety measures enforced by the council including a time-lock safe, a fence (put up illegally by the market), the bullet proof glass, and a security guard. Market security improved dramatically, whether as a result of the new safety measures or the end of the Bay Area robbery spree and to date, five years later, there have been no more robberies of the market. Meanwhile La Tienda continues in business.

Through an elaborate and engaged process in which they both confronted and worked with the city, the police and the market, residents were able to “do something,” able to act politically and, from their perspective, solve a problem and exert control in their neighborhood. They presented their neighborhood as a “community” with a specific and defined set of cultural needs that were being injured by the alien cultural presence of the market and the threat of violence they attributed to its presence. They did so through the means of legal threat, public

protest, dialogue, and media attention. They did so, moreover, through a disciplined colorblindness (and class politeness), thinly veiled at times in crude geographical elitism, that allowed the communication of “difference” with minimal vulnerability to charges of racism.

The “colorblind” legislation that saved the market is colorblind only because of collective, self-conscious action to make it so. While the law, theoretically, applies to all markets, Latinos, because of their social circumstances, are those most likely to be using check-cashing services in this area, and Latino markets are those most likely to offer them. Regulating businesses that are operated by or serve particular racial groups has a long history in California reaching back to bans on Chinese laundries (Takaki 1993).

There is, however, an even larger point here. Liberal, and even progressive, politics have undergone a change in the past 40 years owing to the rise of colorblind ideologies. This is part of a broader retreat from universalist rights and programs. The result is a politics of community activism directed at keeping Wal-Mart out or limiting development—a sort of nostalgic, small landholding anti-corporatist politics that smacks more of elitism and small-town nostalgia than truly progressive social change. Check-cashing fell under attack as “exploitive” in this case only after those using it were deemed undesirable—and deemed so because La Tienda had been victimized by multiple robberies.

One can hardly say such a politics of cultural protectionism and intense localism is limited to Whites. We might, however, say, that it is alarming to find it here, in a highly educated cosmopolitan population—for such politics of cultural protectionism and isolationism are generally attributed to racial minorities and the poor, who are said to be bound to place in a way the elite have escaped. Scholars of globalization have implied that modern globalizing forces are met with anti-modern and backwards reaction (Kaplan 2000, Friedman 2000). I would

argue, however, that this study demonstrates the ways in which globalizing forces (Silicon Valley's upper-middle class) are vigilant in protecting culture and place in the face of what they perceive as threats to their (often recently acquired) traditions and investment.

The runaway housing market, replete with large loans and large profits, creates a form of social discipline that may be otherwise unattainable in, for example, rental economies. The economic interests of the individual are tied irrevocably to those of the group (the neighborhood) and those group desires, needs and demands take on decidedly illiberal forms—expressed, ironically, through the language of individual rights—as they seek to assert collective power over what is, essentially, common space.

Appendix A: Timeline of Events Surrounding La Tienda Market

1998	East Arboles council approves office, hotel and retail project for Gin Alley. Alders residents sue to block development.
1999	Lawsuit to block development defeated
April 2000	Bulldozing of “Gin Alley” begins
March 2001	La Tienda opens for business in Parkside
May 2003	Meeting held w/ market re: items neighbors would like
September 2003	La Tienda Robbed
June 2004	La Tienda Robbed: First commercial robbery at La Tienda directly attributed to a larger, Bay Area wide robbery wave.
August 2004	La Tienda Robbed
September 2004	Alders Safety Meeting at Nearby Offices
Mid-January 2005	La Tienda Robbed
Late January 2005	Neighborhood Meeting at Coffee Shop about La Tienda
Jan-Apr 2005	La Tienda installs digital video, orders bullet proof glass, and hires security guard for afternoons and evenings
Mid-April 2005	La Tienda Robbed
Late April 2005	Alders residents stage protest in front of La Tienda (15-50 residents in attendance)
Late April 2005	Counter-organizing meeting held at resident’s apartment.
Late April 2005	Alders residents organize to “crash” open forum at city council meeting
Early May 2005	Special session of Parkside city council held to discuss La Tienda. Procedure begun to have check cashing declared a public nuisance, regulatory guidelines governing check-cashing drafted, zoning ordinance considered, neighborhood watch to be re-instated.

Appendix B: First Speech to City Council

My name is Rebecca Alexander and I live at 400 Middle Avenue. I have lived in the Alders all my life and I know that my neighbors are mostly good people. These are people who bring flowers to their neighbors, take pains to patronize local businesses, and hold block parties. They are people who highly value community. Yet, despite the care and concern they show with each other, this same generosity has never been extended to La Tienda.

The Alders neighborhood has not, as a whole, welcomed La Tienda. Complaints about this market began the day they moved in and have continued in the form of petitions to get their use permits renewed [sic], individual complaints to store tellers and managers, and letters to the city. Many of these complaints have targeted the market's clientele specifically as being not from our community, being "undesirable elements," or not caring about our neighborhood. These claims have been made despite the fact that very few of our neighbors have actually spoken to or taken the time to get to know much of this clientele. These views *do not* represent the views of all the neighbors in the Alders. Many residents, even some of those who are most upset about the robberies, appreciate the market and welcome it into our community.

What has been most upsetting about watching this debate is that, because the market has largely been treated as an outsider, organizing efforts have been directed less at their protection than at their removal. This is a tactic that forestalls constructive action to deal with the real issue, which is crime and neighborhood safety. It is a tactic that is not only harmful to La Tienda and its users but limits our ability to secure buy-in and support from either of those parties. Why would people care about our neighborhood when we treat them with such disrespect?

Had those who have been organizing against crime treated La Tienda and its clientele as if they were valuable members of our community they would have implored the city to take more concerted action to protect the market, making sure that intensive police effort and resources were targeted specifically at the perpetrators of the robberies and not at the Alders residents or our nearby neighbors in East Arboles.

The city attorney's comments in January at the Alders community meeting that "it would violate all kinds of state law and federal laws if we were regulating a business on the basis of, you know, where their clients are coming from" as well as the mayor's comments, speaking as a citizen, that "this store will not, in time be a center for check-cashing because the businesses are all changing in this area and the demographics of the grocery store will change" seem to indicate that members of the city government are aware that some of the action against the market has targeted the market's clientele because of their race, their class, or the location of their home. This is not acceptable.

What do I suggest the city do about this situation? First, the staff report presented by the city recommends the re-initiation of a neighborhood watch program. I think this is a good idea. But, the attitudes many neighbors have show toward the market's users indicate that anti-racism

training and effective criminal identification techniques must be employed before citizens take any role in policing this neighborhood. Second, the city is considering regulating check-cashing. Many of the measures proposed such as better lighting and security practices seem both reasonable and important. I would ask that the city a) not take the extreme action of shutting down check-cashing at this location or throughout the city of Parkside and b) make sure the measures requested are reasonable such that non-compliance with unreasonable measures cannot be leveraged by those who dislike the market to drive it out.

Lastly, I would implore the city and the citizens to actively resist the ideology that says that this city is a private good that should only be enjoyed by those who live within its territory, whether this ideology rears its head in the form of suggestions that others should not be allowed to use our streets, or in the argument that those who work in our community and live on our borders should not have places to shop and conduct business in our community. We live in a nation and a world, not just a neighborhood or a city. We have made a commitment to care for each other, to treat each other with equality and respect, and to share the vast pool of resources we are so privileged to have. I know that my neighbors are frightened and I know that the city feels threatened, that fear cannot distract us from upholding basic principals of equity and fairness. It may take some extra effort, but the residents of the Alders have shown that they have the drive and the will to get something accomplished once they set their minds to it. Let's just make sure that we are accomplishing the right thing.

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