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Los Angeles

From *El Nuevo Despertar* to Nonprofit:
Changes in Puerto Rican Community Organizations in New York City since 1980

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
in Political Science

by

Parissa Majdi Clark

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science

University of California, Los Angeles, 2014

Professor Mark Q. Sawyer, Chair

During the early 1970's, Puerto Rican grassroots activism in U.S. communities reached its height on the heels of the civil rights movement and after widespread migration to the U.S. from Puerto Rico. By 1980, many of these groups became financially insolvent or their volunteer base shrank drastically due to decreasing public funds and widespread demographic changes within Puerto Rican communities. This dissertation asks the following questions: how did these groups negotiate citizenship rights in terms of identity, place, and institutional proximity? What role do factors such as race, gender, local politics, philanthropic support, and congressional representation play in these organizations' bids for success? This study analyzes two case study groups from the Puerto Rican civil rights era in New York City, The United Bronx Parents and Aspira, through original fieldwork consisting of extensive archival content analysis of organizational records and correspondence as well as oral interviews with organizational staff and leadership past and present.

The overarching goal of these inquiries is to explain the consequences and strategies that have come out of non-profit corporate and philanthropic modeling among Puerto Rican organizations since 1980 and the implications of these changes on political identity and the process of expanding civil rights in American politics. The project also investigates the intricacies of the *El Nuevo Despertar*, or late era of the Puerto Rican movement; most notably the strong presence of female leadership among grassroots organizations. This study documents the significant shift in demographics and public funding after the dissipation of war on poverty programs which Puerto Rican organizations in New York each handled differently and with vastly different outcomes. These organizational choices are of much interest in the general arena of Latinos, political inclusion, and community/ nonprofit work today.

Theories utilized in discussion include citizenship, formal and informal political institutions, the politics of place, racial solidarity, Puerto Rican nationalism, and Latino nonprofit organizational culture. These themes specific to the Puerto Rican community extend to general discussions of the Latino political and economic middle class as a growing stake holder in New York City and across the United States. This topic is of much interest in political science and ethnic studies today as the political challenges facing Latino representation in the private and public sectors are garnering vast public attention. Understanding the Puerto Rican experience across the canvass of exclusive American democracy broadens traditional notions of politics and participation and expands the concept of citizenship from a static set of privileges to a dynamic process of negotiation.

The dissertation of Parissa Majdi Clark is approved.

Raymond A. Rocco

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For all of my family across states, borders, and time.

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Introduction: Puerto Rican Political Identity Politics and Migration

“If you asked me, ‘What was the most important and impacting work that you have ever done? I would reply, ‘The founding of ASPIRA.’ ASPIRA occupies a very special place in my heart. Trying to tell the story will be very difficult. Don Miguel de Unamuno, the Spanish philosopher and novelist, once said that a sheet of paper is dead and incapable of transmitting the emotions one wishes to convey. My words are clumsy in English and may be unable to capture the feelings that I wish to transmit. I will try, however.”¹

-Dr. Antonia Pantoja, founder of ASPIRA

Antonia Pantoja notes in her memoirs that the path to establishing a successful community organization, including the cultural transition from Puerto Rico to New York, was not an easy one. She writes of her initial journey from the island to the U.S. being wrought with the pain of racial segregation of 1940’s America, explaining that she and her sister and other migrant travelers were relegated to the back of U.S. trains, busses, and restaurants due to their race, something that “although in Puerto Rico we knew that race was a source of problems, [but] we were never denied entry or were separated by race” adding that “this was the United States of America, and we four Puerto Ricans were being initiated into U.S. racism” (Pantoja 2002, 53, 55). Upon their arrival in New York City, new dynamics of class and gender emerged as the women were not greeted by relatives or friends and were faced with navigating the city alone as young women, concerned not only with racism but also the classist perception of being “*jíbaras*,” a colloquial term that can refer to rural, or “backwards” Puerto Ricans. She founded Aspira, an educational advocacy organization aimed at uplifting and mentoring Puerto Rican Youth, in 1961 to alleviate and eliminate the discrimination that she faced.

Evelina López Antonetty arrived in the U.S. the day that her youngest sister, Elba, was born in 1933. She was 11 years old and traveling live with her aunt in Spanish Harlem as the first

¹ From *memoir of a Visionary: Antonia Pantoja* (2002), her autobiography published before her death in 2007 (93).

of four sisters who would eventually do the same. Her aunt Vicenta, an activist in her own right, worked to organize the Puerto Rican vote for the congressional and mayoral campaigns of Vito Marcantonio², an Italian American socialist born and raised in Harlem. Evelina came to be known as “The Hell Lady of the Bronx” because of her talents as an outspoken community organizer, breaking in to the local political scene through having worked with the unions and the Lindsay mayoral administration in her early adult life. Like Antonia Pantoja, Antonetty cut her political teeth through the experience of labor organizing in industrial New York. She is described on the United Bronx Parents website, her advocacy organization founded in 1965 to help parents navigate the corrupt public education system in the South Bronx, in the following manner:

Independence and self-determination; these were the precepts Evelina dreamed of for her community and for her beloved island. She was a moving force behind the Comité Lares in the U.N. celebrating the Island’s uprising against Spain while demanding the inclusion of Puerto Rico on the agenda of the General Assembly. She lobbied for the release of the five Puerto Rican nationalists and rejoiced in tears of joy upon their release. Her passion for freedom notwithstanding, she managed to work within the system. She broke bread with every minority group member and institutional policy maker, bringing down the barriers of fear, race and intergenerational confusion³.

These two groundbreaking women are among dozens of female Puerto Rican activists who, after migrating to the U.S. to find economic depression and social repression, became political leaders of the War on Poverty campaigns of the civil rights era. Often propelled into activism through their experiences as head of household laborers, these women were on the front

² Marcantonio, an Italian-American labor Party congressman, garnered much support from the Puerto Rican community during his campaign for New York City mayor in 1949. Antonetty herself participated in this campaign as a teenager.

³ http://019cdc7.netsolhost.com/ubpwp/?page_id=9 Accessed 8/9/14

lines of the Puerto Rican civil rights movement that burst into action in the 1960's and reached a late pinnacle in the 1970's, known as *El Nuevo Despertar*⁴, or the new awakening. The complex legacies of women such as Pantoja and Antonetty wrought with the intersections of race, class, and gender echo through the streets of Harlem and the Bronx through old and new iterations of exclusion and activism. Today, in a changing global economy and with ongoing poverty rates of Puerto Ricans in the U.S. and Puerto Rico as a whole, their organizations have run drastically different life courses since their founding in the 1960's. This study will analyze how Aspira and the United Bronx Parents came to be politically, the canvas of their political thought, and how they have changed as Latino nonprofit organizations over the years into the present day. This will be done via the theoretical framework of citizenship as a process of negotiation that marginalized groups embark upon in various respects; here, through community activism.

I became interested in Puerto Rican grassroots organizations in New York City as a young bilingual history teacher in the South Bronx and Harlem in 2003. A Puerto Rican raised in California far from any diasporic stronghold, I marveled at the impact that Puerto Rican migrants had had on the city and its institutions. I became curious as to why so many Puerto Ricans were leaving New York City and state in recent droves and witnessed new populations of Latino immigrants from the Dominican Republic and Mexico enroll in my classes. My curiosity peaked with the phenomenon that many of these new students would initially say that they were Puerto Rican, coached by their parents and neighbors, to supposedly avoid any clashes for being new on the block despite the simultaneously decreasing Puerto Rican population.

That there existed decades old Puerto Rican grassroots organizations in New York such as Aspira and the United Bronx Parents was also astounding to me. I came to learn that each

⁴ Andres Torres (1998) characterizes *El Nuevo Despertar* as a "late spike" in Puerto Rican activism as compared to the African American Civil Rights Movement well rooted in socialist and other activities dating back to the 1930's and 40's.

group had struggled with its identity as individual Puerto Rican migrants had upon arrival in New York which was reflected in the organizational choices made by each. In its initial inception, Aspira NY juggled issues of not only the identity of itself and its members, but the organizational task of remaining largely community-based while courting much needed mainstream political institutions. Aspira directors and organizational records speak of a “lack of clear ideology” and the decreasing availability of funds after 1982⁵ which, as I will show, led to a drastic change in identity from nationalist “Puerto Rican” to the pan-ethnic moniker “Latino”⁶. Conversely, the United Bronx Parents never felt the pressure to identify pan-ethnically and instead struggled with securing public funding as a multiservice organization. These changes and challenges reflect the potentially different courses that the negotiation of inclusion can take.

These negotiations are rooted in the demographic changes occurring in New York and other large East coast cities with high concentrations of Puerto Ricans as more Latino immigrants from various countries in Latin America begin to arrive at this time as a result of the 1965 amendments to the Immigration and Nationalities Act. American cities such as New York, Boston, and Philadelphia, where previously the Latino population consisted of Puerto Ricans and a small number of Cubans, changed drastically between 1970 and 2004 when numbers of Central American immigrants grew from 113,913 to 2,836,362⁷ per decade and the Mexican born population in the U.S. grew⁸ from under one million to roughly 11 million. The new

⁵ Aspira organizational records, Archives of The Puerto Rican Diaspora. Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños, Hunter College, CUNY

⁶ Following Linda Alcoff’s (2005) work, this term refers to “people from an entire continent, sub-continent, and several large islands, with diverse racial, national, ethnic, religious, and linguistic aspects to their identity” (22).

⁷ U.S. Bureau of the Census 2000 and the American Community Survey.

⁸ Data for 1950 to 1990, excluding 1940 and 1950 are from: Campbell J. Gibson and Emily Lennon, “Historical Census Statistics on the Foreign-born Population of the United States: 1850-1990” US Census Bureau, Population

heterogenous identity of previously homogenous Puerto Rican communities caused many service organizations to reexamine their mission statements and goals having grown out of the Puerto Rican civil rights movement,

As overall Latino demographics changed, so did demographics among Puerto Ricans themselves as many Puerto Ricans began to leave large urban centers for the suburbs and peripheral cities⁹. For example, in 1980, Puerto Ricans in New York City comprised 42.7% of the total U.S. Puerto Rican population; by 1990 this number was 32.8% and by 2000 23.1% (Acosta- Belén and Santiago 2006, 96). New York being the largest concentration of Puerto Ricans in the U.S. since the postwar migration, these statistics show a large migration of Puerto Ricans away from concentrated centers, while new Latino immigrants such as Dominicans, Mexicans, and South Americans are also moving to places where Puerto Ricans were or currently are¹⁰. The result of these dual patterns of movement, Latino and Puerto Rican, has resulted in several organizational changes among Puerto Rican groups to reflect the demographics of their changing communities. These changes are seen via a shift from Puerto Rican to pan-ethnic Latino mission statements among older groups from the 1960's and 1970's such as Aspira and the United Bronx Parents (UBP) that were able to survive into the contemporary era.

Division, Working Paper No. 29, February 1999. Data for 2009 are from MPI analysis of data from the US Census Bureau's 2009 American Community Survey.

⁹ Return migration to Puerto Rico was also significant during this time, but has always remained a staple element of Puerto Rican "circular" migration, as regular return rates to the island suggest that Puerto Ricans have been able to effectively move between island and mainland in intervals via the *guagua aérea*, or "air bus."

¹⁰ Today, the Puerto Rican community has dispersed significantly from concentrated New York and Chicago to places like Orlando, Florida, Springfield, Massachusetts, Buffalo, New York, and other midsize American cities (Acosta- Belén and Santiago 2006, 94)

Aspira, operating under a funding deficit by the late 1970's¹¹, ultimately decided to cater broadly to "Hispanic" youth and thus qualify itself for more lucrative corporate funding because of its new inclusive mission statement. By contrast, the UBP had little to no plans then or today to cultivate private funding partnerships and relied heavily on local grants. As a result, Aspira was successfully able to move out of debt by 1988 through funding secured from entities such as AT&T, Chase Manhattan Bank, Coca-Cola, I.B.M., Phillip Morris, Inc. and others¹². This shift came to imply much more than secure funding as it marks a move from Puerto Rican notions of second class citizenship¹³ and bids for full inclusion to republican civic duty. "Civic duty" here refers to the concept of citizen responsibility that arises when rights are conferred under the following circumstances: resources, engagement, networks, issues, and generations (Verba, Scholzman, and Brady 1995). It will be explored in this study how and if Aspira reached this threshold and the reasons why the UBP did not and the political implications for communities of color struggling to gain access to full citizenship rights from the margins.

These traditional ideas of citizenship as civic duty and citizen responsibility are hinged on the need to serve underprivileged communities, as opposed to empowering marginalized individuals to take action as was the case during *El Nuevo Despertar*. It is this rhetoric that emerges among Aspira following their choice to follow the corporate model, despite the ongoing

¹¹ This funding deficit can also be attributed to the end of widespread supporting and funding for Lyndon Johnson's "War on Poverty," from which many civil rights era community groups were born.

¹² I should note here that this study is not aimed at attacking the necessity of community organizations to court corporations in order to survive which is a feature of most if not all non-profit groups in the contemporary era. Instead, I am interested in explaining what effects this shift had on the subjective political identities and activities of Puerto Rican youth, women, and men.

¹³ Referring to the general experience of de jure citizenship being trumped by the discriminatory effects of de facto citizenship in society, as explained by various authors (Oboler 1995; De Genova and Ramos-Zayas 2003; Alcoff 2006; Bosniak 2006).

disenfranchisement of the Puerto Rican community and the coloniality¹⁴ of the island of Puerto Rico as a U.S. territory. Antonia Pantoja writes of early ASPIRA that an important feature of the organization was:

The need to establish an institution that would insure that the youth of our community would be educated to acquire the knowledge and skills available to achieve their maximum potential. We also hoped to insure that they could occupy positions at all levels of the institutions of the society and earn a living, but also to contribute to the needs of their family, their community, and the total society.
(Pantoja 2002, 107)

This statement acknowledges mainstream political institutions which today could include large corporations and political entities, but more importantly, it speaks to the possibility that without Aspira's services, Puerto Rican youth would not be allowed or enabled to serve as full members of American society. This is evidenced by the mentioning of "earning a living," which was during the period of *El Nuevo Despertar* a tenuous if not impossible feat for Puerto Rican migrants because of their marginal citizenship.

While Aspira actively voices this hope for full inclusion, the United Bronx Parents remains rooted in the language of day to day survival and service providing. Evelina Antonetty wrote the following in a report to the New York Civil Rights Commission in the 1970's:

"You have to understand the total and crushing impact of being burried [sic] in a structure in which you do not share and in which you are told in every subtle and gross way that you can not and will not share. The leaders are white, the books are white, the television is white... So long as Puerto Ricans accepted their sub-standards quietly, people managed to go their blind and erratic way telling all kinds of tales about their good relations with the 'spicks.' And then the last 3 or 4 years broke upon them and they are surprised!"¹⁵

¹⁴ Coloniality refers to the constant conditions that affect the subjectivity of formerly colonized, but not yet "post" colonial political entities (Mignolo 2000).

¹⁵Report to The Civil Rights Commission.. Hunter College *Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños*, United Bronx Parents Collection Box 4, Folder 5.

Today, The United Bronx Parents and Aspira both state that their primary goal is to enhance the quality of life of Latinos and those in need. Without mention of the Puerto Rican community or its institutional inequality, these types of generic mission statements tell a much deeper story as to how grassroots organizations of color have managed to keep their doors open without exclusive government funds¹⁶ and as the demographics in their regions begin to change rapidly. From this history, this dissertation asks: how have notions of Puerto Rican political identity in the U.S. changed since the Civil Rights era? What is the current status of Puerto Rican citizenship in U.S. society? How can the history of Latino nonprofit organizations shed light on race and ethnicity politics? These questions will be answered by triangulating historical and contemporary analysis of Aspira and the United Bronx Parents via political theory, organizational archives, and oral interviews.

Historical Context

To fully grasp what is at stake when discussing citizenship and coloniality in the Puerto Rican context, it is necessary to give a brief overview of Puerto Rico's relationship with the United States in the last century. Puerto Rico became a possession of the United States on December 10, 1898 via the Treaty of Paris which resolved the Spanish-American War and ceded the remnant colonies of the declining Spanish Empire to the United States. It is often believed that there were little or no efforts at the time advocating Puerto Rican independence from Spain unlike Cuba whose movement for autonomy was burgeoning. However, this perception of Puerto Rican resistance to sovereignty would carry resonance throughout the 20th century as status

¹⁶ Referring to the voluminous financial support made available by the Johnson administration during the War on Poverty era, to be discussed further in chapter 2.

referenda would perpetually fail to resolve Puerto Rico's colonial status well into the 21st. The Treaty of Paris assigned the task of sorting the legal status of the island's people and their political relationship to the United States to Congress once procedures for the exchange of goods and currency were created. In 1900, the Foraker Act organized a Puerto Rican civilian government, replacing the existing military government, and it established Puerto Rico as a non-foreign entity to avoid tariffs on Puerto Rican goods (Ayala and Bernabe 2007). The Puerto Rican people, however, would remain citizen-less non-Americans until the passage of the 1917 Jones Act which conferred to them American citizenship at the height of World War I.

Puerto Ricans today are U.S. citizens by birth and the island is still categorized as a territory/commonwealth of the United States¹⁷. Puerto Rico, while home to over 4 million U.S. citizens, contributes no electoral votes to U.S. presidential elections and has no congressional representation in Washington. Puerto Ricans pay federal payroll taxes and some federal income tax, though fiscal benefits are disproportionately issued to the island in some cases such as Medicare. This disparity between taxation and representation became a heightened issue by the early 1970's when over 800,000 Puerto Ricans after World War II migrated to the Eastern and Midwest United States and experienced harsh racial discrimination in their search for employment and access to education, housing, and other public services (Acosta Belen and Santiago 2006).

Due to the continued liminal political status of Puerto Rico, scholars have reinforced the classification of the island determined in the historical Insular Cases of the U.S. Supreme Court

¹⁷ U.S. citizenship is conferred to Puerto Ricans regardless of where they are born. The U.S. government's terminology "territory" and "commonwealth" have fluctuated over time, but no political changes have resulted in the usages of various terms. Puerto Rico has been dubbed both a U.S. territory and a commonwealth- legally defined as an associated state of the U.S. that holds a degree of political autonomy while a territory is an associated state without such degree of autonomy. (http://charma.uprm.edu/~angel/Puerto_Rico/reporte_status.pdf). Both legal terms are used intermittently to describe the political entity of Puerto Rico, though recently a Task Force of the George W. Bush administration emphasized a shift from commonwealth status to that of territory.

as “foreign in a domestic sense” (Duany 2002). Aside from three inconclusive status referenda held between 1967 and 1998¹⁸ (authorized by the U.S. Congress) to resolve the status issue, little resolution or fanfare surrounds the Puerto Rican modern colony question. With an equal number of Puerto Ricans living in the U.S. as on the island today, the political shortcomings located on the island are becoming overshadowed by American citizenship claims from within the U.S. These claims and the overall nature of Puerto Ricans’ American citizenship point to fissures that reveal larger theoretical concepts of solidarity, resistance, and exclusion.

Puerto Ricans’ status as colonial or foreign citizens is a constant canvas upon which migrants paint their political location in the U.S. It has been explained by prominent Puerto Rican literary and social critic Jose Luis González that Puerto Rico itself is a “four storeyed country,” which refers to the various cultural periods of Puerto Rican identity formation which includes *criollo* post-Colombian mixed heritage, 19th century European heritages, American influence, and the Puerto Rican/American mix via migration. Gonzalez’ four storeys give dimension to the notion of the Puerto Rican migrant whose historical and colonial past is ever present in her everyday struggles for social, economic, and political inclusion in the United States. If we add a temporal element to this image and also consider the “drama” of citizenship as termed by Holston and Appadurai (1998) to refer to the constant negotiation process that citizenship rights and status require, we then have a five storied country, adding a storey to represent the great post world war II migration of Puerto Ricans to the U.S.

¹⁸ The first three referenda held in 1967 and 1993 garnered more than 70% voter turnout on the island but the status quo/commonwealth option was victorious in each vote. In 1998 a fourth option, “none of the above” was added to the voting options which narrowly defeated statehood with 50.3% of the vote versus 46.49%. The status quo option which won 48.6% of the vote in 1993 prior to the “none of the above” addition obtained less than 1% of the vote in 1998, suggesting that most Puerto Ricans favor a status resolution that is somewhere in between statehood and free association. Independence only garnered 4% of the vote at its electoral height in 1993.

Scope and Methodology

This project seeks to chronicle the political nature of the fifth and possibly sixth storeys of Puerto Rican identity that have been built since 1970 which include the characteristics of identity politics in the post civil rights, post-IRCA, and supposedly “post-race” eras. The effects that the first four storeys of history and politics have had on the nature of Puerto Rican citizenship are vast as has been documented here; the next two storeys will certainly create a fuller picture of how racial projects of whiteness and second class citizenship persist for new immigrant groups and what new effects take root for previous groups such as Puerto Ricans. In addition, these multiple storeys are in a constant process of negotiation as their edificial stability is constantly threatened by centuries old racial projects which deem Puerto Rico and its diaspora unfit for American membership. Thus, in this project citizenship itself is both a set of social, political and cultural rights but also the process by which outsiders attempt to obtain these rights.

The theoretical grounding of this work first traces historically and politically how Puerto Ricans came to be colonial subjects of the United States and how racial projects of the 19th and 20th century, which include U.S. capitalist expansionism, have rendered Puerto Ricans a racialized group and their citizenship status second class. It is from this theoretical understanding of racialized citizenship that I then analyze and create a schema for the mass political movements of the civil rights era in which thousands of Puerto Rican migrants participated to demand that the state correct the word “second” to “first” class. In this era, Puerto Rican migrants renounced their second class treatment and, like their black, Native American, and Chicano counterparts, demanded full citizenship rights. I argue that the negotiation of Puerto Rican citizenship rights in the U.S. in the latter half of the 20th century was defined by race, class, urban poverty and

persisting coloniality. The remainder of this project traces how this intricate combination of factors has changed over time and how Puerto Rican political identity and citizenship claims operate today.

The fieldwork component of this dissertation then surveys through archives and interviews how civil rights era Puerto Rican organizations, once voicing demands for equal political rights, have shifted their rhetoric to one of civic duty. As opposed to the second class location of the civil rights era, Puerto Rican organizations seem to have shifted to a middle class, pan-Latino rhetoric that posits Puerto Ricans as uncontested full citizens of the U.S., despite the island's colonial status. I interviewed leaders and members of the organizations *Aspira* and *United Bronx Parents* who have respectively taken very different approaches in the direction of their political identity- the latter as a Latino nonprofit organization dedicated to using citizenship as a privilege to help the less fortunate, and the former a Puerto Rican grassroots organization concerned about the status of the island and its people, now expanding to serve new immigrant groups. These two approaches reflect two prominent phases of Puerto Rican iterations of citizenship from within the U.S. and the reasons for their divergence shows the factors that influence changes in political identity among racialized groups in the U.S.

My findings indicate that factors that influenced the organizational choices of each group are not unlike those factors outlined by Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) on civic duty and include considerations of identity and experiences of discrimination, place, and proximity to institutions or networks. These factors together determine whether or not grassroots organizations can remain financially solvent and also the direction of their mission statements, which are related.

Chapter Outline

This dissertation essentially explores what has happened to the Puerto Rican community in New York City and the status of Puerto Ricans in the U.S. since the civil rights era. It asks: how did groups from *El Nuevo Despertar* strategically manage to survive? How did identity, place, and institutions play a role in this process? These inquiries advance scholarship in Political Science by expanding the growing field of race and ethnicity politics, namely Latino politics, and by reframing traditional definitions of the political and citizenship rights. Scholars in many fields will find this research useful as it bridges themes in politics, ethnic studies, women's studies, public policy, history, and even business and nonprofit studies.

Chapter one crafts a theoretical framework that draws upon literature in race and ethnicity politics, social movements, and Puerto Rican studies (Ramos-Zayas 2003, 2011; Duany 2002; Thomas 2010) from which to examine organizational change across the decades. This framework will posit the concepts of identity (including race, gender, class and ethnicity), place (intricacies of New York City politics), and relationships with formal and informal political institutions such as Congress or philanthropic entities to show how they influence the ability of Puerto Rican grassroots organizations to remain solvent or not. This success is predicated on the ability of groups to negotiate their citizenship rights following Stasiulis and Bakan (2003), Young (2003) and Holston and Appadurai (1998), which frames citizenship as both a set of rights to be gained as well as a process of making demands or negotiating.

Chapter two investigates the legacy and motivations for the Puerto Rican civil Rights movement in the 1960's and 1970's (Torres and Velásquez 1998; Cruz 2003; Sánchez Korrol 2005). I will survey the various activities of the Puerto Rican civil rights movement, including the backgrounds of my two case study organizations, *Aspira* and the *United Bronx Parents*, both

centered on education and founded in the early 1960's by Puerto Rican migrant women. This history will be analyzed in the frame of citizenship claims made at the time.

Once a survey of citizenship claims of the 1960's and 70's has been established, I will test my theory of identity, place and institutions in chapter 3 using two case study organizations to learn the nature of how those claims have changed. Using archival data from news and correspondence letters from both organizations obtained from the Puerto Rican Studies center at Hunter College in New York, I am able to explain why Aspira has come to be the third most prominent Latino nonprofit organization in the U.S. today having spread to over 8 other states outside of New York while the United Bronx Parents has suffered financial hardship, organizational and logistical challenges and has this year been subsumed under another nonprofit organization.

Chapter 4 examines interview data that I obtained in 2011 and 2012 via interviews with Aspira and United Bronx Parents leadership, membership, and staff. Using this data I am able to explain the role that identity, place, and institutions play in negotiating citizenship rights not only in these two organizations but in Latino philanthropy as a whole in New York. This discussion is crucial when looking forward to the nature of Latino nonprofits today given the vast range of diversity among Latinos in the U.S. as well as the growing Latino middle class and political power base. Overall conclusions about the meaning of Puerto Rican identity in the face of new pan-ethnic identifications will be explored here as Aspira and the UBP themselves have adjusted their platforms and missions statements to reflect this new post 1980 *Latinidad*.

The epilogue to this study discusses the contemporary status of Aspira and the UBP and attempts to characterize them as “neoliberal Latino nonprofits,” because of the overwhelming influence of the private market on their well being. This section also identifies avenues for future

research in the sparse literature on Latinos and philanthropy. By examining how access is gained, albeit slowly, by marginal groups such as Puerto Ricans and Latinos as a whole, much can be learned about future generations of immigrants struggling to find a subjective voice in the United States.

Chapter 1: The Negotiation of Puerto Rican Citizenship

As previously stated, this study first grounds itself in how historically and politically Puerto Ricans have come to be second class citizens of the United States and how, as a group, they have attempted to negotiate this status despite enduring coloniality¹⁹. It is necessary to engage in a theoretical examination of how racialization²⁰ operates in 20th century America beginning in 1898 with the American acquisition of Puerto Rico and how these events have formed notions of Puerto Rican political identity and citizenship rights. Once this trajectory has been clearly delineated, chapter two will then explain how Puerto Rican migrants in the U.S. became poised during the civil rights era to negotiate full citizenship rights and how race, place and institutions factored into decisions made by collective community organizations.

It will be necessary to explain why citizenship in this case must be viewed as both a noun, a set of rights, *and* a verb as a process of negotiation. I draw on work from citizenship theorists to argue that the legacy of coloniality determines the course of negotiated citizenship and that for Puerto Ricans community organizations several factors such as place and institutions were key in gaining political power in the city of New York. Therefore, it will also be important to discuss how immigrant groups in the city of New York have historically negotiated citizenship rights and what unique characteristics of the city's political landscape contribute to this process. Finally, this chapter will conclude with a discussion of the relationship between negotiated citizenship and grassroots organizations in general, highlighting the main argument that

¹⁹ To restate, coloniality here refers to Mignolo's (2000) definition of the coloniality of power, where eurocentricism originating from initial contact with the "other" in the age of formal colonialism continues to shape the relationship between formerly colonized peoples and European institutions and entities as epistemologically conflicted and tinged with the residue of that initially imposed power matrix (17).

²⁰ Racialization refers to the experience of historical marginalization on racial grounds on behalf of the state. See Goldberg (2002).

organizational culture was pivotal in civil rights negotiations and the strengths and weaknesses of this trait given that Puerto Ricans did not fully achieve access to first class citizenship. This will set the stage for chapter two's inquiry as to why some civil rights organizations such as one case study organization in this project, *Aspira*, saw high levels of success at the negotiating table while some such as the second case study organization in this project, the *United Bronx Parents*, did not. I argue that the terms of negotiation centered around race, place, institutional proximity and status account for these outcome differences.

By analyzing the conditions of Puerto Rican migration to the United States, three themes of identity, place, and institutional proximity determine the extent of exclusion or inclusion in both formal and informal political institutions. These particular themes sprout from general discussions of what universal citizenship entails in pluralist societies including rights, access, and a certain degree of moral or civic duty²¹. There emerges a “tension between claims to universalism and the tendency towards exclusion and inequality based on the value accorded to a certain type of ideal citizen; examples of which manifest primarily in the three areas stated above (Stasiulis and Bakan 2003, 13). Upon entry to the United States both in 1898 and after physically arriving on the mainland, Puerto Ricans become deemed “unfit” as American citizens which renders debates of the extent of Puerto Rican U.S. citizenship less relevant compared to how Puerto Rican political organizations have attempted to negotiate the extension of rights among the marginalized. This process has been affected first by initial racial and colonial categorization which I widely call identity, organizational proximity to formal and informal institutions of power, and finally the politics of place- in this case, New York City.

²¹ I refer broadly to citizenship as a whole concept as extrapolated by numerous scholars such as Marshall (1964), Almond and Verba (1989), and Shklar (1991).

I will frame these three themes of identity, institutions, and place through the theory of negotiated citizenship to form the generalizable hypothesis that identity, place and institutional proximity determine how citizenship rights will be negotiated and implemented among new immigrant groups. This re-positing makes discussions of race and context in American political development pivotal to understanding how immigrant groups will fare in American society as political actors. Further, it identifies which factors are key in determining successful and even unsuccessful outcomes among community organizations which can be useful in a variety of cases.

Negotiated Citizenship

Citizenship as a point of entry to discussions of American race and ethnicity politics has taken many forms from high theoretical discussions of inclusion and exclusion (Mills 1997) to ideas of reform in how rights are conferred (Fraser 2010). Scholars such as Shklar (1991) have argued that inclusion in the American citizenship canvas is marred and the would-be citizen deemed “unfit” due to “economic dependence, race, and gender, which are all socially created or hereditary conditions” and that fitness can be linked to economic mobility (8). Bosniak (2006) posits that exclusion and the subsequent condition of “alienage” is not easily remedied as it is historically rooted in legal precedents based on race and discrimination. Iris Marion Young (2000) contends that a deliberative model of democracy where citizens “operate by looking for what they have in common, seeking similarities among themselves” can bring about a renewed sense of civic duty and common good which can transcend the margins of inclusion and exclusion (81). All of these approaches are reflected in the case of Puerto Ricans in the U.S.

during the civil rights era, recognizing their historical and legal oppression, positioning themselves to gain some semblance of political and economic capital, and today transitioning from a rhetoric of second class citizenship to Young's deliberative model focusing on civic responsibility and the common good. How that transition occurred is the focus of this study and beckons the use of citizenship as an ongoing negotiation, not a fixed condition or set of rights.

Theorizing citizenship as a process of negotiation has been done in various contexts involving migrants and the overall elements of globalization. As previously mentioned, Holston and Appadurai (1998) explain that substantive citizenship, that is civil, socioeconomic, and cultural rights, tend to be the prime battleground for gaining inclusion in societies like the United States, rendering formal membership to the nation-state somewhat obsolete. Under this view, "formal membership in the nation-state is increasingly neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for substantive citizenship" which for Puerto Ricans fits almost perfectly since they are formal citizens of the nation-state yet do not enjoy the privileges and rights of full citizens (4). They also explain that the "right of return" or the notion that the coerced migrant may one day return to their homeland also diminishes the importance of the formal rites of citizenship.

Therefore, the frame of negotiated citizenship devalues the role of possessing concrete citizenship rights in favor of the ability to negotiate those rights because contemporary powers are not interested in vesting certain groups with traditional citizenship privileges due to the ongoing agenda of the racial state²². Stasiulis and Bakan (2003) explain that while the traditional rights of citizenship have typically offered hope and solace to new immigrants, that in the age of

²² Following Goldberg (2002), the state has an interest in constructing a narrative of social homogeneity in order to consolidate and maintain its power. Particularly useful is Goldberg's marriage of political institutions and laws with the social construction of race, stating that "for modernity generally, and in the nineteenth century in particular, heterogeneity was... taken to inject into the safety and stability of the known, predictable, and controllable worlds elements of the unknown, the unpredictable, the uncontrollable," which shows that racialized laws and institutions were employed by the modern nation state in an attempt to control and unknown element of society, that of the other (2002, 23).

modern international migration, “democracy, community, human rights, and identity are under relentless siege” as “invidious distinctions made between migrants in migration policies, which are based on North-South relations, their class positions, race/ethnicity, gender, or other markers of differences including disability and sexual orientation, are reproduced through a hierarchy of citizenship statuses” (11-12). The authors do not dismiss the promise of citizenship rights as outdated as Holston and Appadurai suggest, but rather the second stage in a process first determined by migrants’ political identity and status as colonial, racialized subjects. Newcomers are first deemed worthy of inclusion or exclusion based on the above identity factors. What happens next is the framework advocated here- a process of negotiation among the marginalized for expanded access to citizenship rights.

Combining this idea of negotiated citizenship with three key characteristics of the marginalized group itself allows for a textured discussion of immigrant bids for inclusion throughout history. First, race and racialization itself- how notions of race surrounding Puerto Ricans since Puerto Rico became a part of the United States have survived, also referred to as coloniality, into the contemporary era causing a perpetual otherness or exclusion from American citizenship rights and practices. Second, the idea of place which operates in two ways to determine the level of negotiation that Puerto Ricans as an ethnic group holding U.S. citizenship can make. Place is first determined by a particular history of migration acting as the memory of migration from Puerto Rico to the U.S. as well as the common notions of the myth of return²³. Upon arrival or establishment of migratory patterns, place then takes on the role of the new communities and their political environments in which the migrants find themselves in as

²³ This is not necessarily mythical in the case of Puerto Ricans as circular, or back and forth migration, is quite common as found by Duany (2002). He argues that while traditional literature on migration views movement as a one time occurrence, in the case of the “nation on the move” as he refers to Puerto Ricans and implies of other Caribbean immigrants, that circular migration since the beginning of the twentieth century has become a survival strategy.

political actors. Third, the proximity of groups either as formal or informal grassroots entities to established institutions of government, the private sector, education, and other grassroots or nonprofit organizations plays a pivotal role in explaining how citizenship rights are obtained by marginalized groups. Together, race, place, and institutions determine how the negotiation of citizenship rights will materialize in the case of Puerto Ricans in New York City, but possibly other marginalized groups.

Liminality and Citizenship

The difference is that all those other groups were not “citizens” of the United States. You can never underestimate that dynamic. It’s a totally different mindset... people who come from other national groups that come here they come as immigrants, it’s a different experience. They have to apply for citizenship, it’s a choice they make. Puerto Ricans- their elected officials said we don’t want citizenship, it was forced on them anyways. That’s a historical difference, even though it was 1917 the law that made us US citizens, it’s that far away from being a hundred years and we’re still talking about it. That’s a very different reality than other people have because they made a choice and they said You know what, I wanna go over there. Here’s it’s like Ay, me voy pa’ ya porque aquí las cosas están malas and I’m a citizen, why not?²⁴

-Delia Salazar²⁵, former Aspira staff member and friend of Antonia Pantoja

“I’m a citizen, why not” versus “I’m a citizen and I’m entitled” are located in two very different spaces in the American political imaginary. The above interviewee, Delia, a Puerto

²⁴ Interview Conducted with Delia Salazar (name changed) at the NY Department for the Aging on September 15, 2011 by Principal Investigator Parissa Majdi Clark.

²⁵ I have noted where the names have been changed to protect the confidentiality of interview participants solely at my own discretion. All participants willingly agreed to disclose their thoughts and real names though it is this principal investigator’s choice to obscure names at times to protect their opinions. Unless noted, all names remain true.

Rican activist of more than forty years in Losaida²⁶ (the lower east side of Manhattan) describes Puerto Rican citizenship using language that speaks of coercion and reluctance insofar as Puerto Rican migrants do not willingly choose to come to the United States, but are forced to leave the island due to economic hardship²⁷. In addition, Delia also captures the sentiment of “El Grito de Lares” or the rebellion for Puerto Rican independence that took place in 1868 against the Spanish authorities in the small western-central town of Lares. It is commonly believed that Puerto Rico did not have a strong independence movement such as that of Cuba or Haiti, a very pro-American view akin to the “bloodless conquest” that was also assumed after the U.S. Mexico War in 1848 (Gómez 2007). What the tone of reluctance when talking about Puerto Ricans as U.S. citizens shows is that Puerto Rican citizens were never consulted nor did they ask to be made American citizens. Delia’s words make it clear that this aspect of coloniality, or the lasting effects of the United States’ patriarchal hold on Puerto Rico and its people for over a century, is still prevalent in political actors’ hearts and minds. This makes an examination of race and the liminality that it brings in the case of Puerto Rican migration an important theoretical consideration.

Along with reluctance, coercion can be detected in Delia’s comments above which points towards American policies implemented on the island once the terrain and its people were formally conferred to the U.S. as its property. The first American policies to take effect in Puerto Rico were economic and sought to dismantle Spanish era Hacienda plantation economy that produced tobacco and sugar. This added to economic hardship on the island which began with the Great Depression and continued with aggressive postwar industrialization bids on the island that began in 1947 with Operation Bootstrap. Under this series of initiatives, the United States

²⁶ Losaida is a “Spanglish” rendition of “The Lower East Side,” and it also plays on the heavily Afro-Puerto Rican coastal town of Loíza.

fully obliterated the agricultural subsistence of the past in favor of expand industrial growth by producing new goods such as pharmaceuticals and medical equipment. Simultaneously, the U.S. had an interest in showcasing Puerto Rico as an island of capitalist harmony²⁸ in the face of Puerto Rico's Cuban neighbors who became a threat to the United States following the Cuban Revolution in 1959.

It is across this backdrop that mass Puerto Rican migration to the U.S. occurs when by 1960 hundreds of thousands of citizen migrants had arrived in the contiguous United States seeking work. Despite Operation Bootstrap's bids for economic development, the undermining of the local plantation economy combined with ongoing economic depression since the late 1920's caused unemployment on the island to remain constantly high. Puerto Rican migration was not only coerced economically, but also politically as the Puerto Rican Migration Division Office, established in 1948, was responsible for advertising opportunity in New York City and arranging for travel and lodging for new migrants. This along with other mechanisms being exacted upon the island to serve U.S. interests resulted in the conference of U.S. citizenship being wrought with reluctance and coercion.

Reciprocity is assumed in most citizenship literature though its absence in the contractual relationship between citizens and states is not often discussed (Mills 1997). Here, citizens of any polity desire membership and in return are bestowed with various rights and privileges although this contract can be severely manipulated to serve the interests of those in power (ibid). Mills argues that it is race and race alone that determines one's incorporation or misincorporation into the nation state polity, despite desire or reciprocity. That is, migrant laborers who desire membership and contribute economically to the nation-state will still be denied full citizenship

²⁸ This harmony led to draconian programs on the island aimed at lowering unemployment and population statistics such as the Migration Division's encouragement of migration to the U.S. and the mandatory sterilization of women on the island.

rights based on the fact that racially- as Puerto Ricans, blacks, Mexicans, Filipinos, etc.- they do not fit the criteria of citizenship, or “common knowledge” to again cite Haney- López.

However, some theorists argue that it is not simply race that determines the terms of one’s citizenship. Kivisto and Faist (2009) explain that while one’s identity proves vital in the probability that an individual will be included in the polity or not, what distinguishes full citizenship from second class citizenship, or formal and substantive citizenship, is the ability to fully participate in the political process (16). They explain that there exists a dialectic of inclusion and exclusion whereby the “fault lines used to define the boundaries of inclusion versus exclusion have historically been based on three major social divisions: class, gender, and race” (17). Yet studies of race and ethnicity politics have repeatedly shown that political participation is not just a matter of suffrage due to the racial projects perpetually enacted by the state against “alien” citizens and others.

From this the idea of otherness, the four storied Puerto Rican citizen reemerges as Puerto Ricans reluctantly and through American coercion carry with them several previous levels of conquest and racialization as a historically colonized people. This idea of identity “baggage” of sorts has been iterated in studies of otherness and post-colonialism that generally seek to reconcile the colonial past with the supposedly democratic future. Most salient for the purposes of this study is the coloniality of power paradigm which finds a way to incorporate centuries of colonially imposed identity hierarchies with the modern citizens subjects of democratic polities that wield them. This intermingling of coloniality and identity is the centerpiece of the coloniality of power, which asserts that coloniality is the residual power structure that was initially implemented at the moment of contact between Europe and the Americas and manifests on the following four main axes:

1. The classification of people according to race, gender, class, sexuality, etc.
2. The creation of institutional structures that uphold these classifications
3. The allocation of spaces to uphold the goals of coloniality
4. An epistemological perspective from which to articulate this matrix of power and from which new knowledge production could be channeled
(Mignolo citing Quijano 2000, 17).

It must be noted however that this paradigm, while incredibly useful in its ability to include all aspects of social and legal identities, is criticized for being too broad and for its universalist rejection of western epistemology (Martín Alcoff 2006). However, in this inquiry of Puerto Rican citizenship and how it can be classified in the case of migrants to the United States, coloniality is the racial, class, gender, sexuality, religious, and other identity divisions often drawn by rigid notions of social value that Puerto Ricans have been subjected to via two empires- Spain and the United States. Therefore, it is with this background, this sixth storey, that Puerto Ricans come to the American negotiating table, hesitantly, to discuss rights and privileges of their American citizenship. And it is with this baggage that they have been continuously denied inclusion to membership rights and privileges, most often on the basis of race, but frequently due to the amalgamation that can be liminal otherness.

What occurs subsequently is the process of negotiating storied coloniality with political power, whether power on the most basic level of human rights or power in terms of voting and influence in the political system. The actual process of obtaining access to the political system via voting and demanding access to basic human rights such as housing, food, healthcare, and education works together with the four storeyed “fault lines” of racial, class, and gender identity to make citizenship represent both a noun- the citizen- as well as a verb- *being* a citizen. Therefore, to accurately portray the meaning and history of Puerto Rican citizenship in the United States, citizenship must be understood as representing an identity of coloniality which is

inherently brought to the membership table where this citizen typology then *negotiates* a vast gamut of political rights. This project will refer to this version of citizenship- as an identity *and* as an act of negotiation- as *liminal* citizenship, using the anthropological term *liminality* to describe both the process *and* the identity of ritual partakers seeking to both resolve social status *and* engage as a community in rites of passage. Citizenship in this sense is both about the individual's identity as well as the community's status through a negotiation of rights or status.

Theorizing citizenship as a process of negotiation has been done in various contexts involving migrants and the overall elements of globalization. As previously mentioned, Holston and Appadurai (1998) explain that substantive citizenship, that is civil, socioeconomic, and cultural rights, is the prime battleground for gaining inclusion in societies like the United States, rendering formal membership to the nation-state somewhat obsolete. Under this view, “formal membership in the nation-state is increasingly neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for substantive citizenship” which for Puerto Ricans fits almost perfectly since they are formal citizens of the nation-state yet do not enjoy the privileges and rights of full citizens (4). They also explain that the “right of return” or the notion that the coerced migrant may one day return to their homeland also diminishes the importance of the formal rites of citizenship. While this idea is attractive and explains many aspects of the Puerto Rican migrant's case, it still does not account for why Puerto Rican citizenship differs from the second class status of other marginalized groups of color within the United States.

*Liminality*²⁹ is a term used often in social science literature to refer to ambiguous statuses of the inbetween. Yet liminality is seldom linked to the anthropological methodology that the

²⁹ I will often use liminality as a proxy for the entirety of ritual process, which encompasses three stages, of which liminality is only the second. I do this because in studying inbetween groups, liminality is often the political stage in which they dwell under status quo conditions not yet re-aggregated.

term originated from which has largely been abandoned by contemporary anthropologists and various social scientists alike. Liminality comes from the ritual process method of anthropology that became popularized during the post processual period during the 1960's. Victor Turner (1969), who developed the ritual process framework, believed that looking at the ritual acts³⁰ of groups allowed anthropologists to see that they are “something more than ‘grotesque’ reflections or expressions of economic, political, and social relationships; rather [they can] be seen as decisive keys to the understanding of how people think and feel about those relationships, and about the natural and social environments in which they operate” (6). This speaks directly to identity politics³¹, as many scholars have argued that there exist political spaces of *infrapolitics* where the seemingly rote and monotone acts of daily life are in fact political in nature (Scott 1990, Kelley 1996). Here, these basic political acts which will be looked at in two Nuyorican community organizations, Aspira and the Unted Bronx Parents, are actually bids for citizenship rights. While Aspira and the UBP's after school tutoring and HIV treatment programs are not often viewed in this way, this book argues that these are the actions of liminal citizens.

Liminality represents the second stage in the ritual process which seeks to re-structure social conditions by its end stage. Ritual process is thus anti-structural in nature given that in resolving ambiguous identities through political acts, old ones are subsequently destroyed. This occurs in three stages as actors³² separate from status quo identities and conditions and liminally come together in what Turner calls a state of *communitas*. This is an egalitarian political status as

³⁰ Ritual here understood as micropolitical activities that seek to resolve ambiguous identities

³¹ Here, understood as collective assertions, rather than government assignments, of identity which express the freedom of subjectivity on the part of the group or individual. This freedom is suppressed by structural forces that maintain sociopolitical power, as will be seen. The objective here is to develop a framework that allows this oppressed subjectivity, what is commonly referred to as “the voice of the subaltern” to “speak.”

³² in Turner's case, members of the Ndembu tribe in central Africa, here I refer to political actors

everyone in the groups identifies and is identified as liminal, thus existing neither here nor there but inbetween. By entering this space, participants hope to re-aggregate in the form of a new society or state with altered power structures after having resolved the ambiguity of identity through political action. It is this third stage that is obviously the most elusive and therefore only seldom seen in political science in the form of social movements and major legislative and regime changes and is the final outcome of a process of negotiated citizenship. Although this final stage has arguably not been realized before by groups such as Puerto Ricans, examining their political undertakings as informed by their position as *liminal* and *colonial* citizens may help to explain the perpetuation of inequalities among Puerto Ricans and other groups of second class citizens.

Puerto Rican Racialization and Coloniality

With clarity on the negotiation and resolution of the liminal citizen's status, it is necessary to fully investigate why Puerto Rican citizenship rights must be negotiated in the first place. José Luis González (1980), Puerto Rican essayist and prominent nationalist of the commonwealth era, attempts to describe Puerto Rican identity and the politics that compose its formation through a series of dichotomies: oppressor and oppressed, elite and non-elite, jíbaro and campesino³³. He goes on to explain that these multiple dichotomies became further “storeyed” or layered as Puerto Rican “nation-building” progressed in the 1950's and 60's and as Puerto Ricans began to migrate to the United States. It is from this lens that I analyze Puerto

³³ For González, the term *jíbaro* is used differently than its conventional populist mode in Puerto Rico referring to country folks. Rather, he distinguishes that *campesinos* are Puerto Rican white peasants while *jíbaros* are in fact black, racially marking class when discussing Puerto Rican nationalist identity and culture.

Rican identity politics- as a set of historical events and phenotypic/social markers that greatly determine the sociopolitical life chances of Puerto Rican migrants in the U.S.

Michael Kenny (2004) is helpful in clarifying the broad spectrum of what identity politics can mean. He describes the relationship between identity and politics as “a collective description of those social forces which have tried to politicize cleavages once regarded as arbitrary and nonpolitical” (Kenny 2004, 3) which sets the parameters of identity politics as intersectional and influential in nontraditional political spheres such as community organizations. This idea helps develop the theoretical framework of this study by showing that various collective identity forces such as race, class, gender, ethnicity, and the ever-elusive Puerto Rican nationalism operate in aggregate to along with two other forces- space and institutions- to have a significant effect on how citizenship rights can be negotiated, successfully or unsuccessfully.

With specificity to Puerto Rican political identity and how it has influenced spaces of nontraditional politics, José Cruz’s (1998) work investigates the civil rights era successful mobilization (negotiation) of Puerto Ricans in community and formal political spaces in Hartford, Connecticut. He explains that ethnic awareness directly translated to “power awareness” as grassroots efforts eventually led to the first Puerto Rican mayor of a major U.S. city years later³⁴. Cruz’s argument shows that civil rights era “ethnic” organizing which highlighted inequality and disadvantage promoted political mobilization through ideas of empowerment (1998, 12). Using this as a cue, identity politics for Puerto Ricans then will be rooted in narratives of struggle and inequality as a major factor that promotes grassroots political change.

³⁴ Eddie Perez was elected mayor of Hartford, following decades of strong grassroots organizing to place a Puerto Rican in high office there, in 2001. Cruz’s book largely predates this election but describes the ground forces which paved the way for this event.

This history of inequality must be touched on briefly before other factors affecting political mobilization are discussed (namely, space and institutional proximity). This brief discussion of Puerto Rican coloniality and racialization since 1898 will also set up how racial inequality has developed another dimension of Puerto Rican political identity- that of second class citizenship. It is this narrative of second class citizenship stemming from Puerto Rican historical iterations of identity which include race, class and gender that form the basis, following Cruz and Kenny, of civil rights era identity politics negotiations for enhanced access to citizenship rights on behalf of war on poverty era community organizations.

Puerto Rican identity politics are inextricably linked with double imperial rule over the course of 500 years. The policies and practices of the Spanish and Americans have resulted in a complex amalgam of racial hierarchy and white supremacy that render Puerto Rican bids for formal and substantive citizenship rights one fraught with contention and rejection by the state. It is generally accepted by scholars of Puerto Rican and Latino/Latin American studies that, as Puerto Rican nationalists aptly noted during the 1930's independence movements: "Puerto Ricans' U.S. citizenship... imposed on Puerto Ricans without their consent, signi(fies) the hypocrisies of a democratic nation that had ruled the island as an imperial power since 1898" (Thomas 2010, 34). Puerto Rican citizenship is inevitably tied to 19th and early 20th century notions of racial hierarchy, as full citizenship is solely extended to white, European, Christian, land owning men.

Whiteness in the early 20th century becomes somewhat blurred as immigration trends produced various targets of racism such as Asians, Jewish, Italian, and Irish immigrants. As noted by legal scholar Ian Haney- López, race and citizenship in the latter half of the 20th century as defined by U.S. courts is predicated on two rationales: common knowledge and scientific

evidence (1996, 5). Dozens of racial prerequisite cases during this time sought to apply these conventionalities of scientific racism and stereotypes to various otherized groups including Filipinos, Chinese, Hawaiians, Japanese, Mexicans, and Native Americans. The requisite of common knowledge will be immensely important in tracing citizenship claims and denials of Puerto Ricans over time because it most commonly takes root in stereotypes of the other.

These notions tie into the project of U.S. expansionism as a white nation building exercise while the racialized subjects displaced by these conquests were left marginalized. Haney- López (1996) argues that in the 20th century there exist more legal justifications for whiteness which can be viewed as a new technology to oppose abolitionist attitudes and the application of liberal democratic values after the U.S. civil war. Comparisons between the Jim Crow South and Puerto Rico were common at the turn of the century because of the despised experiments in southern democracy: “If the disenfranchisement of the Negro illiterates of the Union can be justified, the same in Porto Rico can be defended on equally good grounds” again, the words of Davis (Ayala and Bernabe 2007, 31). Therefore, Puerto Ricans enter the arena of U.S. citizenship during a time when the primary racial project of the time is denial of citizenship rights through whiteness claims.

The deployment of whiteness by the state as a means to prevent the extension of full citizenship to the colonized subjects of U.S. expansionism of the era is the preeminent racial project that forms the Puerto Rican experience in the U.S. Following Omi and Winant (1994), “A racial project is simultaneously an interpretation, representation, or explanation of racial dynamics, and an effort to reorganize and redistribute resources along particular racial lines,” which precisely explains the massive restructuring that Puerto Rican society underwent in 1898 as a result of U.S. interests in the island as a strategic military outpost and economic booster. In

other words, the spoils of Puerto Rico and other formerly Spanish colonies was not only a final denial of power to the dying Spanish empire, but a bid for an immediate installation of “free trade” between the U.S. and Latin America (Ayala and Bernabe 33). The U.S., experiencing tremendous agricultural growth at the turn of the 20th century, sought to expand its escalation with the addition of tobacco, coffee, and sugar plantations. By 1930, almost 95% of Puerto Rico’s external trade was with the United States; the island would be governed by a U.S. appointed governor until 1952, upholding classic principles of Manifest Destiny expansionism that presumed that natives of the rich, “virgin” land were unfit to tend it.

Second Class Citizenship

From this historical foundation we can better understand how Puerto Rican migrants to the U.S. after World War II engaged in what has been called by Holston and Appadurai (1998) the “drama of citizenship.” This refers to the negotiation process that immigrants are forced to navigate upon arrival in the United States as racialized non-members of society often dubbed foreign and illegal for their lack of power. The Puerto Rican case warrants particular attention to how this drama unfolds because although the Puerto Rican experience of migration to the U.S. is not unlike that of other immigrants, they are uniquely legal U.S. citizens upon arrival. Therefore, how Puerto Rican migrants negotiate between what Ramos-Zayas (2003) calls “delinquent” or racialized second class citizenship and grassroots demands for social justice is predicated on the colonial status of the Puerto Rican body itself.

Racialized citizenship begins for Puerto Ricans in 1898 but persists well into the 21st century as trends in immigration to the U.S. have caused the expansion of American racial

projects to various racialized groups. Although the project may shift according to common knowledge and the degree and presence of coloniality, it still adheres to the valence of the other as a foreign and thus racial entity upon which racialized citizenship will be exacted. This formula exists today in debates about Latino immigrants as dangerous criminals, illegal, unworthy of American jobs and services, and generally foreign and unable to wield the privileges associated with American democracy.

Economic expansion did not run parallel to the expansion of American citizenship rights in this era, which were reserved for a select portion of the population as racist justifications for exclusion of Puerto Ricans in the American democratic project were plentiful. These racist denials of citizenry and essential personhood were also fresh in the American political imaginary, given the recent project of reconstruction in the American south which gave rise to informal modes of discrimination and denial of rights such as Jim Crow Laws. Ayala and Bernabe (2007) explain that the year Puerto Rico was acquired by the United States was a part of the same decade “that witnessed the consolidation of Jim Crow in the South, a process that should not be overlooked when examining U.S. colonial policy” (30). This era of racial ordering and modernity led to the mass racialization of Puerto Rican “citizens” as backward, uncivilized and unworthy U.S. subjects, a label that would carry on throughout the 20th century well into the 21st. Stereotypes of the island as “overpopulated” and Puerto Rican women as overly-fertile would lead to massive sterilization projects implemented by the U.S. military and charitable organizations on the island³⁵. The combination of Puerto Ricans in the American imaginary as voluminous, unemployed, lazy, and linguistically and culturally foreign would haunt Puerto

³⁵ By 1965, one third of ever-married women on the island, mostly under the age of 25, had been sterilized (Presser 1980, 20). This also ties into the second component of Ian Haney López’s schema for denial of citizenship rights-scientific evidence. Laura Briggs (2002) also explains that the gendered aspects of expansionism give rise to a perverse branch of eugenics targeting poor Puerto Rican women as insurrectionists and the ultimate “other.”

Rican bids for inclusion in American political, economic, and social life into the contemporary period.

Whiteness as “common knowledge,” following Haney- López, manifests in the form of socially constructed stereotypes of the other and are reinforced by the perpetual territorial status of the island. These two mechanisms together constitute the racial project of Puerto Rican otherness upheld by the U.S. state. State directives used to reserve citizenship privileges for the elite are not uncommon in political history as David Goldberg (2002) discusses in *The Racial State*. For Goldberg, the “elite” in any given state has always been racially constructed and has usually been predicated on race which for him is synonymous with otherness because “to begin with, in modernity what is invested with racial meaning, what becomes increasingly racially conceived, is the threat, the external, the unknown, the outside” (2002, 23). Because the state is a racial one that is predicated upon projects that aims to maintain an archaic semblance of homogeneity (Anglos in the U.S. case), citizenship is inextricably linked to race in that citizenship is a badge worn by the other denoting social exclusion (Goldberg 2002, 10).

It is a unique combination of socially constructed and reinforced stereotypes along with the territorial seizure of the island of Puerto Rico that constitutes the racial project enacted by the U.S. in 1898. Puerto Ricans, U.S. citizens by birth since 1917³⁶, are seldom discussed in the racial prerequisite cases of the early 20th century, bringing to light the territorial component of Puerto Rican citizenship because Puerto Rico is a U.S. colony. This makes the denial of Puerto Rican rights an act of racialized second class citizenship as well as colonial subject-dom on the basis that the U.S. is in possession of the Puerto Rican homeland. It has been concluded by scholars such as Ramon Grosfoguel (2003) that Puerto Ricans as colonial subjects are relegated

³⁶ See the recent research of Dr. Charles Venator Santiago (2006) on the insular cases which posits that territorial status and citizenship were wrought with much change and confusion from the outset of their introduction in 1898 and implementation years later.

to a different realm of membership which he calls the “ethno-nation,” or an imagined community, because full access to U.S. citizenship rights is denied on the basis of race while racial solidarity fortifies a Puerto Rican national identity. It is this departure point that allows the particularities of Puerto Rican racialized citizenship to shape and inflect the collective experience of Puerto Rican political identity and activism in the U.S. upon migration. It is also this historical baggage that sets the tone of negotiation for expanded citizenship rights and roles.

Notions of citizenship both marginalize Puerto Ricans from the American citizenry and reinforce Puerto Rican-ness, which begs investigation into how notions of citizenship have changed in the post civil rights era and in the era of mass pan-Latino immigration to the U.S. As Puerto Ricans neither have sovereign rule over the island of Puerto Rico nor are they considered white, they have since 1898 experienced a racialized citizenship that posits them as perpetual foreigners in their own land. Ramos-Zayas classifies this brand of citizenship as “delinquent,” claiming that Puerto Rican foreignness is predicated on ascriptive inequality. For Ramos-Zayas, this “delinquent citizenship” manifests contemporarily as Puerto Ricans are framed as enemies of the state, both because of legacies of past Puerto Rican nationalist involvements of the civil rights era and Puerto Ricans viewed as illegal others in a pan-Latino racialization bid. “Delinquent Citizenship” ultimately stems from historic constructions since 1898 of Puerto Ricans as incapable of self government and morally and culturally deficient from the rampant Social Darwinist perspective popular at the time (Ayala and Bernabe 2007, 32). Evidence of these racist views held by American officials towards the newly acquired Puerto Rico and its people are plentiful as the military governor of Puerto Rico from 1899-1900 George W. Davis wrote “ The vast majority of these people are no more fit to take part in self-government than our

reservation Indians... they certainly are far inferior... only a few steps removed from a primitive state of nature” (ibid).

These stereotypes, or common knowledge, mirror the century long iterations of Puerto Rican foreignness -as “lazy” for high unemployment rates as well as “criminal” and “ignorant” for violence and the unresolved status question of the island dominate discussions of Puerto Rican political determination. They have manifested in various forms for both Puerto Ricans and other Latino immigrants in the last fifty years in debates such as those over Spanish language usage in government venues and schools as well as negative perceptions of dependence on the welfare state. Puerto Ricans, like the Latino immigrant groups that would follow in their footsteps, are an unauthorized other, despite legal citizenship, and do not have the right or, borrowing from Ramos-Zayas (2003), do not *deserve* to claim public assistance or assert linguistic preferences. Therefore, the concept of illegality will be pivotal in discussing the contemporary forms of Puerto Rican second class citizenship amidst the landscape of Latino and other immigrant diversity in the U.S. post 1965. The sociopolitical distinctions between who is legally white has contemporary ramifications as to who is considered legal, safe, or permitted to be an American citizen. Again, the ascriptive nature of citizenship has much to do with public opinion and stereotypes of racial groups and the needs of the nation state to control this population via racial projects.

Those deemed undeserving, illegal, or unsafe subsequently dwell in a state of second class marginal citizenship. Falguni Sheth (2009) refers to these historically racialized populations as “the unruly” who are both undesired and simultaneously needed by the state to define its own national identity. That is, whiteness and its nation of belonging citizens are defined by distinguishing who does not belong. Returning to the conception of the racial state, Sheth argues

that the category of unruly can often be “intuited” or “felt” rather than seen or perceived because the intuition is one of danger, which explains the often intangible and fleeting definitions and deployments of race in American history (2009, 26). In this way, the unruly are tamed by their perceived (stereotypes, returning to Haney- López) irrationality and inadequacy, which become naturalized in political values, laws and practices. This cycle has been exhausted in the case of Puerto Ricans which begs inquiry into what shifts the taming of the unruly via racial projects and common knowledge justifications have occurred since the pinnacle moment of Puerto Rican civil rights.

New York City and the Politics of Place

Puerto Rican migration to New York in the post World War II era arrives at an historic era in which migrants combine the various “storeys” of racialization and identity to the experience of being an immigrant in America at the cusp of the civil rights movement. The 19th century colonial relationship between the United States and Puerto Rico can be characterized as standard of the colonial political economy including U.S. mandates to transform the Puerto Rican agricultural sector to suit American economic needs and to form a relationship of dependency between the island and Puerto Rico. This tyrannical relationship sets the precedent for U.S. state and Puerto Rican subject relations and the foundation for Puerto Rican claims of grievance against their citizenship rights amidst the backdrop of New York City immigrant politics which plays an intricate role in this process.

In 1934, President Roosevelt appointed Carlos Chardón, chancellor of the University of Puerto Rico, to develop a plan to address the island's economic crisis which had been ongoing since the formal colonial era and the onset of the Great Depression³⁷. What resulted was a partially implemented Chardón Plan, the precursor to the 1947 free trade agreement Operation Bootstrap. The highly racist Chardón Plan viewed Puerto Rican poverty not as a consequence of the global depression, but rather as a result of a culture of "land maladjustment" remaining from Spanish³⁸ colonial structures (Pérez 2004, 38). In addition, perceived overpopulation combined with unemployment were to be addressed via a planned, state sponsored out migration and birth control plan on the island. In 1949 with the first election of a democratic Puerto Rican governor, *Partido Popular Democrático*³⁹ candidate Luis Muñoz Marín, Operation Serenity was simultaneously enacted to maintain the vestigial colonial economic policies being implemented

³⁷ Until the Great Depression, these bids included massive sugar interests in Puerto Rico causing the lifting of all tariffs on Puerto Rican sugar going into the United States, a classic prelude to free trade in the Americas in the 20th century (Ayala and Bernabe 2007, 35). In the aftermath of the Great Depression, Puerto Ricans suffered widespread unemployment and exacerbated hunger and poverty as a result of the homogenized agricultural landscape of the island forced by U.S. powers. Whereas coffee, tobacco, sugar, and small subsistence crops were more abundant before the U.S. takeover, by 1929 sugar predominated Puerto Rican haciendas and farmers and their families had little else to sustain themselves when sugar's market price crashed.

³⁸ Racialized perceptions of Puerto Ricans by the Americans include the notion of racial impurity resulting in centuries of Spanish colonialism and racial intermixing, causing Puerto Ricans to be considered racial others based on the Jim Crow South's "one drop rule" prevalent in American society at the time. However, also prevalent in how Puerto Ricans came to be perceived racially by the Americans is the idea of the Black Legend, formulated by Spain's economic rivals in the early 18th century as a response to Spain's refusal to relinquish its slave driving colonies in the abolition era (De Guzmán 2005). Under this stereotype, Spaniards and their colonies were viewed as a part of a lazy, hot tempered, degenerate race and were thus excluded from Western Europe's image of the white citizen.

³⁹ The *Partido Popular Democrático* (PPD) is one of three political parties in Puerto Rico along with the Partido Nuevo Progresista (PNP) and the Partido Independentista Puertorriqueño (PIP). Each is distinguished by their particular stance on Puerto Rican status question as Muñoz Marín and the PPD ushered in an era of support for the commonwealth (today known as the "free associated state," no different from territorial status) while the PNP supports statehood and the PIP advocates Puerto Rican independence.

on the island by upholding populist, nationalist images⁴⁰ of *Puertorriqueñidad* among those who did not migrate from the island.

Sociologist César Ayala (1999) confirms that government sponsored out migration as well as intense changes in the economy and labor force of Puerto Rico caused widespread Puerto Rican migration to the United States in the 1950s. Operation Bootstrap, a series of neoliberal policies endorsed by the U.S., was initiated by the Industrial Incentives Act passed by the Puerto Rican legislature⁴¹ that exempted U.S. corporations from paying income, property, or other taxes on the island (Ayala and Bernabe 2007, 189). These bids can be viewed as the testing ground for offshore corporate profiteering as Puerto Rico's diversity of agricultural resources slowly became subject to economic modification according to U.S. market mandates. Also in 1947, the Bureau of Employment and Migration was established to manage Puerto Rican migration to the mainland. While this chain of events appears to be rooted in the actions of the Puerto Rican people, they are in fact the products of political engineering along racial and economic lines among U.S. power holders and Puerto Rican elites because "by establishing institutions such as the Bureau of Employment and Migration in New York and eventually in Chicago (1949) and other U.S. cities, the Puerto Rican government actively encouraged migration to the mainland by facilitating settlement and employment thus laying the groundwork for subsequent chain migration" (Pérez 2004, 46).

⁴⁰ Often, these images were purported by the media such as local Puerto Rican newspaper *El Mundo* which "painted an idyllic portrait of the harmonious marriage between progress and tradition" including the image of the *jibaro* or Puerto Rican worker of the land (always a light skinned man to promote Puerto Rican identity as more European than African and the worker as male not female) still intact and thriving despite increasing industrialization (Pérez 2004, 58).

⁴¹ Puerto Rico elects its own local congress, governor, and mayor but does not hold congressional or gubernatorial representation in Washington D.C.

This forced migration ultimately displaced Puerto Ricans who came to the U.S. in search of employment only to find a struggling postindustrial economy and highly marginalized and segregated U.S. ghettos⁴². As Puerto Ricans were not able to find employment and struggled to subsist in the U.S., many turned to government assistance through welfare programs, giving rise to the stereotype of the “ ‘welfare dependent’ Puerto Rican... a persistent racialized stigma that distinguishes Puerto Ricans from other Latino groups” and “marks Puerto Ricans as a culturally ‘deficient’ group who apparently lack the work ethic and concern for family that are celebrated as good ‘immigrant values’” (De Genova and Ramos-Zayas 2003, 7). It is this marking that has led Puerto Rican citizenship to symbolize exclusion instead of inclusion by the American political system, or what is often referred to as a “second-class citizenship” which is defined by Bosniak (2006) as “a condition in which nominal membership serves to mask the continued exclusion and social domination of historically marginalized groups” (88).

Puerto Rican New York in the 1950’s and 1960’s has been characterized by the unique nature of New York City politics as well as the unprecedented volume of Puerto Rican migrants arriving in the city at the time. Mollenkopf (1999) explains that New York City politics have historically been pro-immigrant as big city political machines have sought immigrant votes as a part of the political process dating back to early 19th century European migration to New York. He writes that “In New York whites must bargain with minorities to form durable electoral majorities” and argues that despite changes in the New York political landscape since civil rights, that this axiom holds largely true as evidenced by even Republican Mayor Rudy

⁴² This migration is often studied from a similar perspective as Massey and Bitterman (1985) who conclude that the dismal postindustrial socioeconomic climate of many American inner cities in the 1960’s and 1970’s was disproportionately experienced by Puerto Ricans (as opposed to other minority groups other than Blacks) because “they are more African than other Hispanic groups” (147). This attribution of race to socioeconomic plight is not false but certainly an essentialized statement of Puerto Rican racial identity and moreover lacks a historical explanation of Puerto Ricans’ relationship to the United States.

Guiliani's support for immigrant access to federal benefits such and promotion of naturalization (Mollenkopf 1999, 413). He reiterates that while no political structure will perfectly accommodate new immigrant groups, that "most important for a group's long term trajectory are its position in the evolving racial and ethnic division of labor and its relationship in the political process" making postwar New York an interesting and unprecedented fit for new Puerto Rican migrants attempting to position themselves at the American bargaining table based on their race, place, and status.

In the context of contemporary immigration to the United States, the neoliberal economic climate can be said to make most immigration "involuntary," rendering Puerto Rican migration to the U.S. and subsequent negotiations of citizenship relevant precursors to the study of immigrant political participation today. The frames used to study the factors that determine how immigrants will develop politically in the U.S. include salient factors such as identity, ties to one's home country, place, and institutions. Michael Jones-Correa (1998) explains of Latino immigrants in general that while most are not citizens and do not participate in formal politics does not mean that they do not participate in some way at all. How Latino immigrants act on their "in-between" political loyalties between homeland and new land determines the outcome of formal and informal bids for increased inclusion (Jones-Correa 1998). The curious question for Puerto Ricans is whether the island of Puerto Rico and the ease of return due to U.S. citizenship complicates or remains consistent with this assertion.

Jones- Correa also notes that place and its reception of immigrants will also affect immigrant political participation at both the formal and informal level. Puerto Rican New York in the 1950's and 1960's has been characterized by the unique nature of New York City politics as well as the unprecedented volume of Puerto Rican migrants arriving in the city at the time. For

Puerto Ricans arriving in New York City in the 1950's and 1960's, a mixed reception awaited them. Mollenkopf (1999) explains that New York City politics have historically been pro-immigrant as big city political machines have sought immigrant votes as a part of the political process dating back to early 19th century European migration to New York. He writes that "In New York whites must bargain with minorities to form durable electoral majorities" and argues that despite changes in the New York political landscape since civil rights, that this axiom holds largely true as evidenced by even Republican Mayor Rudy Guiliani's support for immigrant access to federal benefits such and promotion of naturalization (Mollenkopf 1999, 413). He reiterates that while no political structure will perfectly accommodate new immigrant groups, that "most important for a group's long term trajectory are its position in the evolving racial and ethnic division of labor and its relationship in the political process" making postwar New York an interesting and unprecedented fit for new Puerto Rican migrants attempting to position themselves at the American bargaining table based on their race, place, and status.

However, postwar New York City was not necessarily a welcoming environment to new immigrants as deindustrialization and white flight were creating what is known today as the troubled inner city. Accounting for the mixed messages towards Puerto Rican migrants in postwar New York, Sánchez (2007) describes various "shifts in interests" by the City of New York, including the creation and termination of the Mayor's Committee on Puerto Rican Affairs (MCPRA) (97). Similarly, the New York Housing Authority in the early 1950's sought Puerto Rican tenants while later instituting a quota system to prevent Puerto Ricans from obtaining public housing (ibid). Sánchez argues that this dialectic "dance" of embrace and resistance to new immigrant groups in the U.. is not specific to Puerto Ricans, there are particularities of New

York history and politics that explain many of the push and pull motions toward the city's courting Puerto Ricans as American citizens.

For example, the early 1960's municipal reform movement in New York City, comprised of various projects of urban renewal on the West Side of Manhattan aimed at "slum clearance" and headed by city planner Robert Moses and little to no grassroots voices⁴³, often butted heads with the democratic party machine of mayor Robert Wagner (who eventually broke with the party and joined the reformists in his third term) (Sánchez 2007, 101). Whereas the New York political machines of the 19th and early 20th centuries had always been poised to 'make concessions to important social forces in the city in order to obtain the votes, revenues, credit, and civil harmony that are requisites for gaining and retaining power,' as demonstrated by early 1950's courting of new Puerto Rican migrants, 1960's New York politics marked a new era of urban renewal and the management of immigrant groups as opposed to their accommodation (Sánchez citing Shefter 2007, 101). What resulted were largely neglected urban pockets of Puerto Rican poverty, joblessness, and soon, grassroots demands for improved education and opportunity.

How these demands would be received and/or carried out depended largely on the claimants' location and institutional proximity (to be discussed in the next section). Place in New York City is vast because of the borough system and intricacies of its history as an immigrant receiving city. As Waldinger explains, "The city presents newcomer groups with a segmented , organized for mobilization along ethnic group lines, and a political culture that sanctions, indeed encourages, newcomers to engage in ethnic politics" following the same idea of ethnic

⁴³ Sánchez also writes that during this time tensions between old city machine politics and new reformers were often hinged on who could best represent the residents of New York. Old political entities courting Puerto Ricans could not sway other white counterparts to accept that a Puerto Rican migrant could possibly represent their interests, and so the city gave way to urban renewal movement and abandoned old city politics.

empowerment as Cruz who examined nearby Hartford (1996, 104). Ethnic groups vie for political representation in the fifty one member city council, 59 state senate and congressional seats, and various community boards to foster various grassroots causes (Foner and Frederickson 2004, 9).

In addition, location in New York City, namely proximity to Manhattan as a ground zero for philanthropic and corporate funds, adds another dimension to the importance of place in determining the success of negotiation bids among Puerto Rican organizations. As Hamilton (1979) found among Black grassroots organizational funding in 1960's and 70's New York, "Black politics in New York City since the mid 1960's has become largely and intracommunity struggle for the control of 'soft money, funded programs,' or for specific grant money from federal and philanthropic sources," which are predominately concentrated in Manhattan as opposed to other boroughs and even the remaining tri state region (212). Nepomnyaschy and Kaushal (2009) found that Manhattan residents hold four times more wealth, measured by a debt to asset ratio, than do residents of the Bronx. Not surprisingly, New York City as a whole leads the state in philanthropic spending with totals in 2011 at \$5.4 billion, compared to the cross-river New Jersey city of Newark at \$37.5 million⁴⁴. The politics of place with regard to nonprofit funding will be the subject of further inquiring comparing and contrasting the experiences of Aspira, located in Manhattan, and the United Bronx Parents.

⁴⁴ According to the *Chronicle of Philanthropy's* How America Gives data project, accessed at <http://philanthropy.com/section/How-America-Gives/621/> on December 3, 2012.

Institutional Proximity

I refer to institutions as also being about “status” in determining negotiation latitude which will here be defined as the relationship between the racialized immigrant group and the state’s formal and informal appendages. Status also refers to the territorial status of Puerto Rico and the limited political rights afforded to Puerto Ricans as United States citizens. While Puerto Ricans have held American citizenship by birth since 1917, this status also carries with it a host of U.S. implemented racial and social projects to maximize American economic interests throughout the 20th century. Although status can simply refer to a Puerto Rican organization’s standing with city leaders, boards, or other prominent nonprofits, it also inevitably casts the shadow of racialized citizenship that Puerto Ricans in the United States forever carry. The following section will review prominent literature surrounding each of these three themes to further operationalize race, place and institutions as determining factors of the (in) ability to negotiate citizenship rights.

Puerto Rican migrants’ access to mainstream New York political and social institutions was dictated by the terms of second class citizenship previously outlined. By 1970 the boom of Puerto Rican migrants from the island had mostly settled in New York City where they entered a socioeconomic scene where “displaced island workers were initially lured to New York and other cities by a booming postwar economy and the opportunities it afforded” though they were met by a rapidly depressing industrial economy in U.S. urban centers (Sanchez Korrol 2005, 3). In essence, the push to modernize Puerto Rico, much like the neoliberal push driving urbanization and migration in the global South today, caused massive Puerto Rican migration to the United States, effectively rendering them involuntary migrants according to Edna Bonacich

(1972).⁴⁵ The distinction between voluntary and involuntary migrants is determined by the forces of coercion, in the case of Puerto Rico, early iterations of economic globalization, that cause individuals to follow global markets. It is the state sponsored aspect of Puerto Rican migration based on state sponsored racial projects, to be discussed further, that renders them involuntary migrants, or immigrants with citizenship status.

Institutions such as the migration division and the U.S. state itself as a policy making entity are crucial to understanding the terms under which immigrants will act politically. Janelle Wong (2006) finds that American civic institutions' level of outreach and involvement with to the immigrant community determines how that community will behave politically more so than attitudes or apathy as many studies have previously suggested. She also finds specifically of grassroots organizations that because they "generally lack the resources to engage in mass political mobilization... They rely on *limited mobilization* which involves the recruitment of limited numbers to take part in political action, often relating to a specific issue or concern" (9). In Aspira's case, evidence of limited and mass mobilization is present.

While a wide variety of scholars study different aspects of immigrant identity and politics, here I will limit the discussion to three categories briefly surveyed and argue that identity, place, and institutions all affect how (im) migrant groups come to negotiate citizenship rights. Theorizing citizenship as a process of negotiation has been done in various contexts involving migrants and the overall elements of globalization. Holston and Appadurai (1998) explain that substantive citizenship, that is civil, socioeconomic, and cultural rights, tend to be the prime battleground for gaining inclusion in societies like the United States, rendering formal membership to the nation-state somewhat obsolete. This idea is particularly useful in the Puerto

⁴⁵ It is an important to note that involuntary migrants tend not to incorporate into the "host" society as quickly as voluntary migrants, due to the fact that they cling to the "myth of return" to the home country for a longer period of time (Bonacich 1972).

Rican case since they are formal citizens of the nation-state yet do not enjoy the privileges and rights of full citizens (4).

In post-national understandings of citizenship, the need exists to negotiate the terms of inclusion and basic human rights not necessarily as formal citizens pertaining to a state, but as human migrants requesting and sometimes demanding a certain standard of living (Stasiulis and Bakan 2003). Negotiated citizenship under this view holds that while formal citizenship rights associated with the state exist and are exercised by some parts of the population, for (im)migrants with a colonial and racialized history with the institutions capable of granting access and rights, a process of negotiation apart from formal politics takes place. In the case of Aspira, I argue that Puerto Rican migration and identity along with American institutions of power and the politics of place in New York have all contributed to a process of negotiated citizenship rights which has been particularly successful in bargaining for access to education, employment, and leadership. How each factor works in this process will emerge upon analysis and discussion of the data in later chapters.

Nonprofit Organizations of Color

Finally, in light of this theoretical framework toward understanding the negotiation of citizenship rights among Puerto Rican migrants in New York, it is necessary to also briefly survey the literature that treats the basic history and function of nonprofit and grassroots organizations of color⁴⁶. A wide range of work exists on the inception and recruitment of

⁴⁶ This dissertation does not purport to comprehensively treat the structure and organization of nonprofit organizations in general, but rather locates and includes the perspective of civil rights and War on Poverty era community organizations (see chapter 2).

members among grassroots organizations, yet this range narrows when focused specifically on research that studies organizations of color and immigrant groups (Zwerman 1995; Bielefeld and Murdoch, 1997; Drucker and Drucker 2001; Hung 2007). Of interest to this study are the individual and collective group feelings of identity politics and relative deprivation, in this case, of access to full citizenship rights. It is often cited that nonprofit organizations fill a void in the America government system where policy or the free market fail to provide a good or service (Hung 2007). If this is the case, it can be said that grassroots organizations of color are seeking the power, rights, and access not conferred to them by the state, namely, citizenship.

Upon founding organizations based on these individual motivations, it has been noted that immigrant⁴⁷ organizations can be categorized into four general types: religious, cultural, service, or public interest based (Hung 2007). This study focuses on Aspira and the UBP which are both service organizations, though they have tended to mingle with cultural and public interest organizations throughout their existence and today seek funding via this channel. Some studies have evaluated the ability of nonprofit organizations who consider race as a part of their founding or identity to overcome the structural problems that they propose need solving. In this realm of literature, which remains scant, results are mixed⁴⁸, showing that the process of negotiated citizenship yields widely varying results depending on the factors outlined here: iterations of identity, place, and institutional proximity.

⁴⁷ There exists much debate as to whether or not Puerto Ricans as U.S. citizens can be classified as “immigrants” to the United States (Ramos-Zayas 2003, Flores 2000, Duany 2002). This dissertation will interchangeably use the term migrants and immigrants to highlight the liminality, or inbetweenness, of the Puerto Rican colonial subject (Grosfoguel 2003).

⁴⁸ In the public health sector, studies such as that done by Dressler et. al (2005) analyze whether access to certain types of health care and procedures reduces disparities in health based on race. Other studies investigate the racial diversity of nonprofit organizations given the increasing correlation between corporate giving and nonprofit boards of directors. One example of this type of work is De Vita et. Al’s work (2009) which seeks to understand racial diversity as a whole in California’s nonprofit sector.

Chapter 2: A Historical Schema of Puerto Rican Civil Rights Activism

Puerto Rican migrants in the United States, “legal⁴⁹” U.S. citizens, began making claims of their citizenship rights to the state in the 1930’s as a part of a larger nationalist trend. Thomas’ historical work (2010) shows that depression era economics and the New Deal welfare state spurred Puerto Ricans to articulate a new discourse of rights which “sought to connect their rights in the local and homeland arenas” and thus linking the island of Puerto Rico to the rhetoric of Puerto Rican political identity in the United States (35). Thomas argues that the examination of social history, particularly how Puerto Ricans in the New Deal era negotiated their citizenship rights with the state for the first time, points toward how subsequent activists would act and identify during the civil rights era and beyond. Specifically, Puerto Ricans living in American *colonias* (most notably New York City) decried the perpetual denial of depression relief resources such as food, shelter and financial assistance and attributed this denial to racial discrimination.

This moment of consciousness in the 1930’s that, Thomas argues, can be considered as the early stages of what would soon be a “rights revolution” in the 1960’s and 1970’s. Thomas characterizes the wave of rights claims that brewed in the 1930’s nationalist era “diasporic citizenship” because it built on an initial demand for political representation in the city and freedom from discrimination but later took on a trans-spatial tone as activists used anti-imperialist discourse “for a set of rights that linked local problems to the right of self-determination for Puerto Ricans” (2006, 48). As a result, by the early 1960’s the nationalist

⁴⁹ Following De Genova (2002), legality is a subjective term that embodies both de jure and de facto aspects of citizenship, making racialized subjects capable of being treated as foreign or “illegal” entities despite formal membership status. This scholar acknowledges that the concept of legality is highly debatable in the context of undocumented migrants today as the privilege of holding de jure citizenship is not to be overlooked.

colonias in New York had swollen to vast migrant Barrios of Spanish Harlem, Brooklyn, and the South Bronx and Puerto Rican and activist platforms contained citizenship discourses that included equal rights and access to resources in addition to nationalism and the call for an end to imperialist and capitalist abuses of all people of color. This rhetoric became characteristic of the entire “Third World Left” which spanned the entire United States and as well the diasporas of Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

The development of Puerto Rican citizenship rights claims mirrors the overall politicization of the Third World left as a general movement. Pulido (2006) argues that the activists of color involved in civil rights organizing during the 1960’s and 1970’s first became involved due to an initial awareness of local racial discrimination, much like the New York Puerto Rican nationalists of the New Deal era. However, while these activists began to question the institutions and systemic causes of this discrimination that was more vast than any one city or town, Pulido claims that it was only with the great aperture created by African American civil rights efforts of the 1950’s and 1960’s that grassroots causes reflective of various “diasporic citizenship” claims were able to take wing.

It is in this era of “diasporic citizenship” that Puerto Rican activists skillfully make claims to equal access, rights, *and* the right to a free homeland simultaneously. Claims of this nature alluding to an “imagined community” or homeland were not uncommon at the time and became infused in the language of post-civil rights era citizenship claims made by marginalized groups such as African Americans, Puerto Ricans, and Chicanos. This added a supra-national element of citizenship claims which later would serve as a gateway to transnational and cosmopolitan perspectives of global citizenship began with radical, Third World left notions of the *barrio* and the ghetto as products of colonialism and imperialism. Internal colonialism,

popular among disenfranchised groups in the U.S, during the 1970's, took on a tone of displacement and alienation when explaining the structural causes for second class citizenship and unequal rights on account of race: "The Native American, Afro-American, Puerto Rican, Pilipino, and Asian-American have come to see themselves as distinct from white society and to search for their 'roots' within the domains of the third world from which their ancestors have come" (Bailey and Flores 1973, 149).

Many Puerto Rican activist groups in New York and Chicago vocalized a strong sentiment of homeland very blatantly, despite whether or not they had attachments to political campaigns for the independence of Puerto Rico. For example, *Aspira*, formed in 1961 as an educational advocacy and mentorship group by social worker and Puerto Rican migrant Antonia Pantoja, can be characterized today and at its formation as an apolitical group which has taken no stances on Puerto Rican political campaigns and has focused solely on the educational advancement of Puerto Rican, Latino, and under resourced youth. However, at its founding and somewhat today, *Aspira* has made strong claims to the importance of teaching Puerto Rican history and culture and even incorporated indigenous Puerto Rican cultural elements into its programming⁵⁰. This differs from many black or Chicano groups such as the Black Panther Party and El Centro de Acción Social y Autónomo (CASA) whose respective stances on Black Power and Aztlán⁵¹ do not become linked to status referenda on any physical territory or lands⁵².

⁵⁰ For example, the *areyto*, or a formal ceremony of commitment to the *Aspira* program, was performed among *aspirantes*, or youth members, upon their initiation to the organization. The *areyto* is derived from pre-Colombian Taíno rituals from Borinquen, or the island of Puerto Rico and its people prior to Spanish Conquest in the 16th century (Pantoja 2002, 100).

⁵¹ derived from reclaiming a past of African slavery as well as Aztlán as the historical homeland of the Mexican people past and present

⁵² The Chicano and black homelands of Aztlán and Africa are not overlooked here nor are the legal efforts of Marcus Garvey and Reies Lopez Tijerina to reclaim these homelands, but rather the territorial situation of Puerto Rico is argued here as different because of its contemporary colonial status.

At the height of Puerto Rican migration to the United States in the mid 1960's, an ideological shift occurred that echoed a change of frame evident in many minority groups in the United States- from striving for assimilation to the demand for economic and political rights. This shift has been well documented in a variety of cultural settings, including the Chicano and Black liberation movements of the time. As Muñoz (1989) explains of the Chicano movement, it “shared many of the objectives of the white student movement. But it also reflected other characteristics related to the nature of racial and class oppression experienced by the Mexican American working class” which created a form of cultural nationalism that was an important foundation of Chicano identity (15). This formation of political voice, identity and space also occurred among marginalized and disillusioned Puerto Ricans in New York and Chicago at the same time, making these movements a part of the Third World Left, defined as “organizations that explicitly identified as revolutionary, nationalist, Marxist, Leninist, or Maoist and had a membership of at least half people of color” (Pulido 2006, 5).

The Puerto Rican Left was composed of several island based and U.S. based organizations that each reinforced some variation of Puerto Rican independence alongside the radical transformation of U.S. society. The organizational nucleus of these groups include the Young Lords Party (YLP), the Puerto Rican Socialist Party (PSP), El Comité-MINP (Puerto Rican National Left Movement), the Puerto Rican Student Union (PSRU), the Movement for National Liberation (MLN), the Armed forces for National Liberation (FALN), the Nationalist Party, and the Puerto Rican Independence Party (PIP) (Torres 1998, 5). Each of the groups stressed a unique form of independence and/or structural changes to U.S. society, though it is notable that FALN is the only one of these organizations to employ violent tactics in U.S. soil

and simultaneously maintain the rhetoric of independence and nationalism with Third World solidarity.

Common of most Puerto Rican left groups was discourse which combined nationalism, third world solidarity, armed struggle, and leftist ideology defines the entire Third World left. However, the way in which the Third World Left articulated the intersections of race, gender, class, and nation served as the primary site of departure for many groups with already distinct historical experiences of membership and exclusion (Pulido 2006, 123). Additionally, “activists of color carved a separate space for themselves because of concerns with how the [white] left treated its nonwhite members, despite its commitment to antiracism” making many Third World Left organizations highly aware of intersections of race, class and gender that were informed by exclusion in other political arenas (Pulido 2006, 124).

Analyzing the formation and rhetoric of larger, well- documented groups that were a part of the Third World Left provides useful insight into the specificities of smaller groups’ platforms such as Aspira and the United Bronx Parents. For example, the Young Lords Party, solidified in 1969, is known to have been a part of *El Nuevo Despertar*, or the New Awakening, “a late spike in Puerto Rican radicalism that was fueled in part by the New Left and civil rights and in part by developments in Puerto Rico, where pressure for independence was mounting” (Young 2006, 122). As was the case with FALN, the YLP experienced tensions among island born and U.S. born Puerto Ricans and the various intersectional interests of this highly diverse group. YLP forged these potentially divisive boundaries by issuing its “divided-nation thesis” in which it explained that while Puerto Ricans existed in the United States as a diasporic group (drawing upon the internal colony model), its first priority was Puerto Rican independence (ibid). Ironically, the divided nation thesis and its commitment to local as well as diasporic issues such

as independence were ultimately abandoned in 1971 because of the suspicion that these commitments took the Young Lords too far away from its domestic organizing base in New York⁵³ (Young 2006).

This negotiation of nation, class and race by the YLP predicts some potential problems that the other groups would come to have later in terms of its wide scope and complicated version of Third World solidarity. Because of Puerto Rico's ambiguous political status as a citizen-territory of the United States, allying with island issues such as independence could be seen as a foreign Third World alliance in itself by some, while a domestic connection to the Puerto Rican ethno-nation by others. Often, the Boricua position within the U.S. during *El Nuevo Despertar* was a precarious and ambiguous one that was thrust onto the activist scene with other ideologies of emancipation without resolution of the location of Puerto Rican political identity. Many groups during the course of their lives became forced to make tough ideological decisions as to who and where they would serve as the YLP had done.

Boricua Nationalism

Two prominent symbols of Boricua nationalism emerge during the 1960's and 1970's which despite drastic changes in the nature of radicalism and activism since the civil rights era, continue to be visible today-the Puerto Rican flag and 1930's island nationalist Pedro Albizu Campos. Both of these examples were revised and utilized by Boricua activists to uniquely express Puerto Rican political identity and solidarity. The flag, usually a spatial symbol denoting borders or political boundaries, represents a multi-spatial site of struggle that included not only

⁵³ There existed much tension within the YLP precisely on the issue of U.S. based or island activities as an organizing priority. Fernández (2004) contends that the organization ultimately decided in 1971 to serve the island of Puerto Rico more exclusively, though this year marks the beginning of organizational disarray for the YLP.

the island of Puerto Rico but the inner city barrios of the Bronx, East Harlem, and central Chicago. The legacy of Pedro Albizu Campos' *Puertorriqueñidad* and bids for independence and socialism on the island became extended to represent the black liberation movement as well as the subjection of Afro- Puerto Ricans to the ambiguous American racial hierarchy. This extension was seized upon by groups who sought racial, class, and political liberation of the island.

The nationalism that the Puerto Rican left cited in the U.S. is informed by the experiences of the Puerto Rican diaspora in the United States and is infused by the historical legacy of Puerto Rican nationalists on the island. Ramos- Zayas explains that “The Puerto Rican nation, along with the boundaries and symbols that official national idioms entail, was in dialectical relation with constructions of a Puerto Rican barrio” and that the utility of this nationhood was to provide “activists and residents with the everyday narratives to question the presence of other Latinos, African Americans, and whites in the Puerto Rican barrio-nation” (2003: 3-4).

An important galvanizing symbol of the era was the Puerto Rican flag. Unfurled before the 1954 Puerto Rican nationalists opened fire on Congress, the flag is a seemingly common form of political unification. However, in the case of radical Puerto Rican activism in the U.S., the flag symbolizes more than only the island territory of Puerto Rico, re-invented as a statement of Puerto Rican transnational subjectivity. Arguing that the Puerto Rican flag as used by New Left Puerto Rican activists and artists represents diasporic nationalism defined by migratory flow, Wilkinson (2004) explains that:

“Puerto Rican nationality is thus rendered vis-à-vis the dynamics of Puerto Rican migration and, specifically, migration to the U.S. mainland. As such, Puerto Rican nationality and nationalism operate in relational modes that emphasize the self-positioning and the multiple locations of the Puerto Rican subject within the diaspora. Migratory flow, then, functions as the definitive narrative of the nation” (62-63).

This dynamic form of multi-spatial nationalism attached to symbolic icons such as the Puerto Rican flag or Chicana/o Aztlán⁵⁴ is this not only an assertion of place and self, but are also temporally reflective of political and social battles being waged. While not specifically referencing a political agenda of independence on the island as is the case with Aspira and the United Bronx Parents, the flag is a requisite backdrop for Puerto Rican community organizations (see figures 2.1 and 2.2). Because other Puerto Rican Left groups such as the FALN⁵⁵ and the *Macheteros*⁵⁶ were in fact acting on an agenda of liberation and armed struggle under the same symbolic heading, the flag itself represents the energy and myriad causes of the time.

⁵⁴ The Chicana/o symbol and notion of Aztlán functioned as a galvanizing force akin to Benedict Anderson's assertion that nationalism is derived from an antique remnant of place. While Aztlán can both be argued to be imaginary and real, as mentioned earlier, the Puerto Rican flag directs attention to a concrete political space, the island of Puerto Rico. Still, both ideas function similarly during a time of burgeoning identity politics during the 1960's and 1970's.

⁵⁵ A U.S. based radical group accused of terrorism by the United States for its violent tactics. One member, Oscar López Rivera, remains in prison while all other members have been released on clemency.

⁵⁶ Led by Filiberto Ojeda Rios, the Macheteros were a militant island based Puerto Rican nationalist group said to have been affiliated with the Castro Regime in Cuba and responsible for replicating militant pro- Independence ideology among the Puerto Rican diaspora.

PUERTO RICO TODAY

An Experience



A PRESENTATION BY THE
HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT
PARTICIPANTS OF THE
ASPIRA SUMMER DISCOVERY
TRIP TO PUERTO RICO '83

SUNDAY
NOVEMBER 20, 1983
3:00 P.M.

CORSI HOUSE
307 East 116th Street
New York, New York

PRESENTED BY ASPIRA OF NEW YORK, INC.



ASPIRA 636 414

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⁵⁷ Figure 2.1. Aspira New York flyer for Puerto Rican culture program, Hunter College *Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños*, Aspira Collection Box 36, Folder 14.

La Universidad Urayoan

UNDERGRADUATE CATALOGUE

1975



UBPa_b04-f08

58

⁵⁸ Figure 2.2. United Bronx Parents sister Project, Universidad Urayoan) cultural and vocational education. Hunter College *Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños*, United Bronx Parents Collection Box 4, Folder 8.

Boricua nationalism took several pages from the legacy of nationalism born on the island by the de facto “father” of Puerto Rican independence, Pedro Albizu Campos. Albizu Campos, who emerged as a nationalist during an era when the rhetoric of statehood and commonwealth status for the island was being debated, became an important symbol of Puerto Rican resistance and independence that resonated with contemporary counterparts for independence which most groups during *El Nuevo Despertar* advocated. Albizu was a native of Ponce, the second largest city located in Southern Puerto Rico, born during the waning years of Spanish rule in Puerto Rico. A rigorous student, he gained admission to the University of Vermont and later Harvard University to study engineering. During World War I, Albizu enlisted in the U.S. army and, as was policy at the time toward dark-skinned Puerto Ricans, was sent to serve in a segregated black infantry unit⁵⁹. Decades later when Albizu was incarcerated in the U.S. for sedition and conspiracy, FBI documents would claim that “Albizu Campos, at that time (1917) a firm admirer of our democratic institutions, subsequently became imbued with a deep hatred of the United States, due, chiefly, to his being assigned to a colored officer’s training camp” (Fernandez 1994, 31). However, Fernandez contends that “a man born minutes from the smoke-stack segregation at Guanica never needed to enter the U.S. army to experience hatred rooted in racial or ethnic slurs,” arguing that Albizu’s political education spanned beyond race and class towards ideas of anti-imperialism and counter-hegemony (ibid).

After serving in the war and almost finishing a law degree at Harvard University, Albizu returned to Puerto Rico during a time when independence was burgeoning. From 1898 until

⁵⁹ While Albizu served in a segregated colored officers’ infantry unit, many Puerto Ricans who refused to be labeled as African American served in the historic 65th infantry, an all Puerto Rican set of battalions that voluntarily fought in World War I, II, and the Korean War. Albizu’s choice to serve alongside African Americans can be said to have influenced his view of political violence and racial positioning upon return to Puerto Rico and the U.S. after the war.

1949⁶⁰, Puerto Ricans were not permitted to elect their local governors who were instead selected by the United States Congress. After a series of authoritarian American leaders, the Puerto Rican Nationalist Party was ripe for action and elected Albizu as its vice president in 1924. At this post, he travelled extensively in Latin America seeking support for the Puerto Rican independence movement, garnering support and recognition from prominent Latin Americans such as Chilean poet Gabriela Mistral and later Che Guevara who would years later cite Albizu in his 1964 address to the United Nations. Thus, under Albizu, the nationalist party created a form of Third World solidarity that would appeal to young diasporic Puerto Rican activists decades later. Finally, Albizu's arrests in 1937 and 1950 after the Jayuya Uprising in Puerto Rico led him to spend his final years in a U.S. Federal Penitentiary where he was subjected to grossly illegal and inhumane military tests involving radiation⁶¹.

Clearly, Albizu established a precedent for Puerto Rican activists to draw upon in terms of violent tactics, anti-racism, Third World solidarity, and Puerto Rican liberation. Although civil rights era activists had not been alive during this period of Nationalist Party activities under Albizu, his death in 1965 created a resurgence of his legacy among the U.S. born Puerto Rican precisely during the ideological rise of the Third World Left. During this time, Albizu became “a symbol of unwavering militant opposition to U.S. colonialism” that “could be viewed as Puerto Ricans’ Malcolm X” (Rodriguez-Morazzani 1998, 38).

Thus, using the symbol and legacy of Campos, Puerto Rican activists reinvented Puerto Rican nationalism in a way that not only favored independence for the island but that also

⁶⁰ This changed with the first locally elected Puerto Rican governor, Luis Muñoz Marín, who was democratically elected after legislation passed two years earlier lifted the requirement that U.S. Congress appoint the Puerto Rican governor position.

⁶¹ The United States denied that Albizu was subjected to radiation tests despite his death in prison in 1965. In 1994, under the administration of President [Bill Clinton](#), the [United States Department of Energy](#) disclosed that human radiation experiments had in fact been conducted without consent on prisoners during the 1950s and 1970s. It has been alleged that Pedro Albizu Campos was among the subjects of such experimentation.

encapsulated the lived experiences of Puerto Ricans in the American *barrios*. The power of this reinvention is seen not only in the entire Puerto Rican left active in the 1960's and 1970's who drew upon Albizu's memory to gain momentum, urgency and support. But in this reinvention lies another important paradigm shift- that Puerto Ricans in the U.S. were able to unite as Puerto Ricans living in the U.S. through powerful symbols and iconography that was at once "Puerto Rican and American."

These experiences also carry with them a piercing narrative of American racialization that came to be front and center in this new definition of Puerto Rican nationalism, making Pedro Albizu Campos a symbol of Puerto Rican pride and the cause of the Puerto Rican diasporic community and also a symbol of racial struggle. This reinvention of Puerto Rican nationalism embodies the cultural components of both the United Bronx Parents and Aspira as their beliefs can be characterized in the following way: "Puerto-Ricanness was a consistently configured and reconfigured racial formation that, while specifically related to Chicago as a racially producing urban space, also centered on the diasporic view of nationalism that furthermore implicated Puerto Ricans on the island" (Ramos-Zayas 2003: 173).

History of Aspira and The United Bronx Parents

“We don’t want to have a ‘Grito de Nueva York’. But we are rapidly being pushed into it. But if we have to, we will.”

- Evelina López Antonetty⁶²

In 1961 in New York, a small educational advocacy group was formed out of the Puerto Rican-Hispanic Leadership Forum, calling itself Aspira (Aspire). Its main goal was to empower Puerto Rican youth via mentorship and education to be able to go to college and enjoy greater opportunities than were available in the *barrios* of East Harlem, the South Bronx and Brooklyn. The above quote comes from Aspira’s founder, Dr. Antonia Pantoja, a migrant from the island who arrived to the U.S. in 1944 as a young woman. She obtained work in a New York factory attaching and soldering wires on an assembly line and eventually entered Hunter College to earn a Bachelor’s degree. Aspira, Pantoja’s Manhattan based organization founded in 1961, would come to be known decades later as one of the largest Latino serving nonprofits in the United States with branches in New York, Washington D.C., New Jersey, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Florida, Ohio, and Puerto Rico.

Aspira is the culmination of decades of early citizenship negotiation committees and projects since world war II and stemming from early Puerto Rican political activity since 1898⁶³. The organization grew out of the former Hispanic Young Adult Association (HYAA) active at Hunter College where Pantoja was an undergraduate in the 1950’s. The HYAA and its members were greatly concerned with mitigating the negative stereotypes and images being conveyed

⁶² UBP Report to Civil Rights Commission of New York, year unknown. Archives of the Puerto Rican Diaspora. Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños, Hunter College, CUNY. The Records of United Bronx Parents, Inc. Folder 5.

⁶³ Sanchez (1994) in his article “Puerto Ricans and the Door of Participation in U.S. Politics” follows Puerto Rican political activity in New York since the turn of the 20th century and early migration to the mainland. This activity was often allied with the Cuban independence and other Latino causes though the population of Latinos in the U.S. was small until post world war II Puerto Rican mass migration.

about Puerto Rican immigrants which they felt were not being appropriately handled by the Puerto Rican Migration Division, a Puerto Rican-U.S. intergovernmental entity in charge of advertising employment opportunities to Puerto Ricans on the island to encourage out migration (following the Chardón Plan) (Thomas 2010, 211). In 1956, the Puerto Rican Association for Community Affairs (PRACA), concerned with similar issues facing Puerto Ricans, was born out of the HYAA and asserted a distinctly Puerto Rican, as opposed to Hispanic identity (ibid). As the organization grew and Pantoja and other educated professionals became involved, PRACA increasingly took on a tone of youth and educational advocacy.

By the late 1950's, Pantoja had continued to work with PRACA as well as the Puerto Rican Forum which she came to know at Columbia University where she completed her Master's Degree in Social Work. Here, Pantoja continued to foster professional relationships with the leftist New York elite who advocated the preservation and empowerment of Puerto Rican identity, culture, and rights. According to her memoirs, Pantoja mingled with New York City and Puerto Rico elite such as Joe Morales of the Office of Puerto Rico, Joe Montserrat of the Commonwealth Office, and Dr. Frank Horne affiliated with the John Hay Whitney Foundation (Pantoja 2002). As a graduate student, Pantoja became involved in City development projects concerning Puerto Rican civil Rights such as the New York City Commission on discrimination and inclusion and the Mayor's Project on Puerto Ricans in Bridgeport. Pantoja recalls of this era as a first generation student of higher education and community activist that:

Social Work and education had the objective of separating me from my community and making me a 'professional.' I had to find the way to become agent of change, working in partnership with the community of which I was a member...As a member of the group that had left the island, I knew that we possessed the courage and stamina to leave everything behind and start anew in an unknown land. I knew that we could build new lives in the city while preserving our culture in our institution-building to create our community life. I did not want to see myself in any profession that implied or indicated a separation from my community⁶⁴

A result of wanting to remain true to her commitment⁶⁵ as an authentic community member as well as an advocate and to resist the cultural loss associated with assimilation, Pantoja had envisioned her own organization since the days of the HYAA. In 1961, out of the Puerto Rican Forum and Pantoja's vision of an organization that could be both professional and rooted in the community, she founded *Aspira*, originally a sub-project of the Forum. Quickly gained tax exempt status as its own nonprofit entity and acquiring a building, *Aspira* under Pantoja's executive leadership was established to "organize youth into clubs that would become the vehicles to encourage them to find their identity, learn leadership skills by working on problems that their communities suffered, complete high school, and enter college to pursue a career that would allow them to give back to their community (Pantoja 2002, 95). *Aspira* grew to national visibility by the mid 1960's and began cultivating a pan-Hispanic, large scale philanthropic agenda (see figure 2.3).

⁶⁴ Pantoja 200, 84.

⁶⁵ According to an interview with former *Aspira* member and staffer Delia Salazar (name changed) on September 15, 2011 conducted by Parissa Majdi Clark, Pantoja left *Aspira* of New York in 1969 to pursue other projects having felt that the professional pressures were extremely great and that community involvement and authenticity was not as strong as she had hoped.

Anheuser-Busch renews pledge to ASPIRA

The Anheuser-Busch Companies, Inc., the largest corporate contributor to the ASPIRA Association National Office, has renewed its commitment with a grant of \$30,000. The support from Anheuser-Busch is instrumental in the continuing operations of the ASPIRA Institute for Policy Research. It was a grant from Anheuser-Busch which allowed the Institute to be established in 1986.

"Anheuser-Busch is happy to support such beneficial efforts for education as the ASPIRA Institute for Policy Research," stated Jessie Aguirre, Vice President for Corporate Relations of the company, at the time of the first grant.

Carmen Herrero, Anheuser-Busch's Manager for Corporate Relations, commented at the award of this year's contribution, "The information obtained through ASPIRA's outstanding research department is invaluable. ASPIRA works for all Hispanics when it taps into the mainstream of Hispanic views and concerns. Anheuser-Busch is proud to continue its support of such a worthwhile effort."

In the two and a half years of its existence, the Institute has engaged in a



Carmen Herrero, Manager for Corporate Relations of the Anheuser-Busch Companies, meets with former ASPIRA National Executive Director Juan Rosario and current National Executive Director Janice Petrovich.

number of research projects, has educated legislators on a variety of issues, and has participated in conferences, planning meetings, and research forums with other national and local organizations.

A major accomplishment this year has been the publication of the report, *Northeast Hispanic Needs: A Guide for Action*. This report, distributed to over 1200 Latino and non-Latino leaders in government, corporations, foundations,

educational institutions, and community organizations, has generated a great deal of interest. Newspaper coverage has ranged from *The Boston Globe* in Massachusetts to *El Nuevo Dia* in Puerto Rico.

The Institute has also launched this year a Working Paper series, the first of which, "Hispanics and Philanthropy: Policy Issues to the Year 2000," will be published in the forthcoming book, *The Future of the Nonprofit Sector*.

cont., pg. 6

Public Policy Interns spend third summer in Capital

The ASPIRA Public Policy Leadership Program (APPLP) recently completed its third year, with nine National Interns coming to Washington, D.C. to spend a month learning about federal policy. The APPLP internships are designed to assist youth in observing public policy formulation at a national level, while working with a mentor to broaden their understanding of national politics and their impact on public policy decisions.

The nine interns and their mentors include:

Maribel Falero from Carolina, Puerto Rico, who worked with Diana Torres, Director of Project Blueprint at United Way of America;
Johnny Jaramillo from Albuquerque, New Mexico, who worked with Edward Jurith, Staff Director at the House

Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse and Control;

David Lugardo of Chicago, Illinois, who worked with Vicki Otten, Staff Director at the Senate Judiciary Committee, Subcommittee on the Constitution;

Martha M. Medina of the Bronx, New York, who worked with Ann Rosewater, Staff Director at the House Select Committee on Children, Youth and Families;

Juan Carlos Rodriguez from Miami, Florida, who worked with Virginia Rodriguez, Director of the Office of Public Affairs at *The Washington Post*;
Rebeca Rodriguez from Trenton, New Jersey, who worked with Donna Alvarado, Director of ACTION;
Cesar Santiago from Philadelphia,

Pennsylvania, who worked with Patricia Diaz-Dennis, Commissioner of the Federal Communications Commission;
Jesus Villalobos of Pomona, California, who worked with Marian Rodriguez, Legislative Assistant in the office of U.S. Senator Alan Cranston (D-CA); and

Elena Villareal of Corpus Christi, Texas, who worked with Angel Robles, Equal Employment Opportunity Officer for the American Red Cross.

The National Internships are the culmination of a year of work for these nine high school students. They first began with the program in the fall of 1987. This year's Leadership Seminars allowed 121 students in nine sites--the six ASPIRA Associate offices plus three offices of the LULAC National

cont., pg. 2

⁶⁶ Figure 2.3 Aspira national quarterly newsletter highlighting accomplishments, initiatives, and people of significance. Hunter College *Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños*, Vertical Files.

By contrast, the United Bronx Parents, a multiservice community organization providing basic health and educational services to the South Bronx to this day, was founded in 1964 without elite support or the professional issues experienced by Antonia Pantoja. Evelina López Antonetty, also a female Puerto Rican migrant who arrived in New York as a girl in 1933. Eventually followed by her younger sisters, Antonetty, who died unexpectedly from a heart attack in 1984, has been described as a politically driven, “hell lady” from the Bronx who was able to get things done in her community⁶⁷. The *Grito*⁶⁸ that Antonetty alludes to in this section’s opening quote is a mass uprising in response to burgeoning inequality and the decrease in government funding for social services. Although born in Puerto Rico, the Bronx became home as did many *barrios* for Puerto Rican migrants, rendering their political notions of home as being *aquí y allá*, or both “here and there.” Much like Pantoja, Antonetty established many resources and outlets for Puerto Ricans in New York, although Pantoja expanded her organization based on funding and interest where she was located in Manhattan whereas Antonetty’s South Bronx would go largely unnoticed by government officials and philanthropists to this day⁶⁹.

Today, the United Bronx Parents is comprised of various facilities and programs for day care, substance abuse treatment, affordable housing, HIV/AIDS treatment and counseling, battered women’s housing and services, and general primary health care for low income families. Its mission statement states that it was founded “as an organization of parents and local businesses advocating for improved education for children in the Bronx public schools” and that

⁶⁷ Interview with López Antonetty’s daughter, Lorraine Montenegro, conducted by Parissa Majdi Clark on April 23, 2012.

⁶⁸ The use of the word itself is a reference to *El Grito de Lares*, or the well-known rebellion for Puerto Rican independence that took place in 1868 against Spanish authorities in the small western-central island town of Lares.

⁶⁹ This is changing as the UBP has recently been acquired by the Acacia Network, a conglomerate of Hispanic serving health care nonprofits that is investing in revitalization and expansion in the South Bronx and other parts of New York.

today “provides a concrete range of services to meet the needs of its community”⁷⁰. In the 1970’s, the UBP was known city wide as an organization that empowered parents by educating them on their rights and responsibilities to demand a higher quality of education through seminars, meetings, and flyers (see figure 2.4).

⁷⁰ United Bronx Parents Fact Sheet Rev. 11/17/08.

MEET WITH YOUR PRINCIPAL (3)

KEEP IN MIND:

A POOR PRINCIPAL.....

will try to make you feel stupid
will try to keep putting you off
will try to keep talking so you get nowhere
will make many excuses
will try to brainwash you that everything is good
will tell you he already tried your idea and it
didn't work
will say "you don't understand what I'm up against."

A GOOD PRINCIPAL.....

will be easy to talk to
will listen to you and to students
will welcome your comments, ideas and suggestions
will talk straight to you
will be happy you are interested in the school
will be glad to look at failures and not just successes
will take your observations very seriously
will bring in teachers to meet and talk with you
will work out a plan of action with you
will invite you back to watch how things progress

⁷¹ Figure 2.4. United Bronx Parents Parental "Do's and Don'ts" guide for speaking with school principals effectively. Hunter College *Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños*, United Bronx Parents Collection Box 2, Folder 14.

Antonetty became involved in parent advocacy in New York City schools in her forties, though she was exposed to politics from an early age as she lived with her Aunt upon arrival from Puerto Rico who was involved in local political campaigns such as the mayoral bid of Vito Marcantonio and the organization of hotel workers. In addition, her mother had been active in community politics in Puerto Rico and her grandfather was the longtime mayor of Salinas, Puerto Rico, where the family was from. Evelina attended Public School 103 in East Harlem as a young girl where she developed an immigrant outsider identity and sharpened her strong sense of justice and entitlement, according to interview material from 1975 (Back 2011, 187). An academically astute student, she was able to attend Harlem's Wadleigh High School, a top school in the city. There, Antonetty experienced discrimination as one of few Puerto Rican students and like her African American counterparts was not encouraged to engage in extracurricular activities or apply for college. Antonetty was conferred a honorary doctorate in 1970 from Manhattan College but was never able to engage in undergraduate study in her lifetime.

Despite her experiences with racism in the New York City Public School system, Antonetty was an effective community organizer all of her life. From 1946 to 1956, she worked as an organizer of small businesses with District 65, a militant union. She was instrumental in bringing over 4,000 Spanish speaking members into the union and was mentored by prominent activists during that time (Pérez 2006, 49). After being elected president of the PTA in her son's Bronx school, Antonetty learned firsthand how the broken public school system was under serving Spanish speaking Puerto Rican youth and even committing criminal acts of abuse and neglect. Because Antonetty had worked with unions as well as the Puerto Rican Community Development Project and the Head Start Program, she was aware of the availability of Community Action Program funding under the Office of Economic Opportunity (see next

section) and was “was excited about the prospect of drawing OEO funding to empower Bronx parents with knowledge about their rights and responsibilities” (Back 2011, 193). The UBP was officially incorporated as a recognized nonprofit organization in 1966 with support from a coalition of parents and local businesses.

This tone of urgency and pride was common among Puerto Rican activists in New York during the 1960’s and 70’s and resonates today among Puerto Ricans involved in grassroots community work. It is combined with a sentiment of reluctance when talking about Puerto Ricans as U.S. citizens shows that perpetually seeks to remind audiences Puerto Rican citizens were never consulted nor did they ask to be made American citizens. Yet there also exists among Puerto Ricans a proud connection to the *barrios* of Nueva York as Puerto Rican migrants came to embrace their neighborhoods of *Loisaida*, the South Bronx, Spanish Harlem, and many other borough communities.

The War on Poverty and Government Funding

The policy changes brought about during President Lyndon Johnson’s War on Poverty programs aimed at empowering local communities to directly provide services and resources were critical in the establishment of many Puerto Rican, black, and women run organizations during the civil rights era. Initiated by the Economic Opportunity Act in 1964, the so-called “War on Poverty’s” spearhead legislation, these government sponsored programs grew out of grassroots demands made by the Civil Rights movement for community control and self sufficiency (Orleck 2011, 2). Expanded welfare state programs initiated by roughly \$947 million provided services to underserved communities such as food aid, job training, medical care, legal

services, and educational advocacy were directly linked to the recognition of second class citizenship on behalf of poor, mostly people of color across the country who were redressing these grievances en masse for the first time in history. This spirit of mobilization was unprecedented as “in an age of intensifying racial nationalism, the soaring rhetoric of a president who promised to end poverty in our time raised the hopes of poor black-city and country dwellers, inspired and ignited by visions of community control and economic self sufficiency,” sentiments never again validated by the state by means of widespread funding and public support (ibid).

The language of the Economic Opportunity Act stated that “it is the policy of the United States to eliminate the paradox of poverty in the midst of plenty in this nation by opening, to everyone, the opportunity for education and training, the opportunity to work, and the opportunity to live in decency and dignity” (Orleck 2011, 9). This rhetoric, the product of much debate about the government’s role in expanding welfare, curiously omits racial language in favor of class based discussions of generalized poverty. Keeping with the idea of racial projects as well as theories of racial cycles and the state (Sawyer 2006), while the U.S. state was rattled by the demands of civil rights activists of color during the civil rights movement, it was only able to concede certain aspects of full citizenship because its interest in maintaining heterogeneous white supremacy was too great to relinquish. The result was a de-racialized rhetoric⁷² centered around poverty which alleviated and distracted much tension from the racial grievances at hand and allowed for over a decade of community action before community organization started to experience government defunding in the Reagan era ushering in privatization and neoliberalism.

⁷² This de-racialized rhetoric became most well known stemming from this era in the writing of William Julius Wilson (1980) who claimed that economic status was of greater concern in American society than racism because race relations had greatly improved as a result of civil rights.

Community activists already laying the groundwork for change in their communities such as Antonia Pantoja and Evelina Antonetty became elevated on the local and national stages once their organizations gained the validity of Economic Opportunity Act funds and 501 (3) (c) status, making their actions a successful negotiation of sorts. Naples (1998) explains that these programs can be viewed as an expansion of citizenship which she defines, describing the War on Poverty era, as something achieved in the community for the benefit of the collective group rather than an individual possession (3). The commonly held idea held by activists of color in the Third World Left that one must become educated to then uplift their community⁷³ reflects this notion of citizenship as something to strive for, be obtained, and later implemented, much like the steps of a negotiation process. In fact, many of the community workers who became formal, paid, employees as a result of the allocation of government funds, most of them women of color, claimed that they entered community work after college “to orient their professional lives towards the ‘betterment’ of their racial-ethnic groups” (Naples 1998, 36).

The government stipulated in its legislation as well as its allocation of funds, programs which institutionalized many grassroots efforts such as Aspira and the United Bronx parents needed to exhibit what it called “Maximum feasible participation” pushing for professionalization and bureaucratization of many community action programs. While maximum feasible participation appeared to have encouraged an agenda of heightened community involvement and control by striving to get the most contributors in any given community involved as possible, this mandate often pitted newly educated professionals of color against community workers who had not been formally educated but who held years of community organizing experience. This tension is described in the memoirs of Antonia Pantoja in describing

⁷³ Stated in various organizational mission statements of the time including the Young Lords Party and the Black Panther Party as well as the Chicano *Plan Espiritual de Aztlán*.

her struggle to establish the Aspira Association, as she herself had been to college and graduate school for social work. Further, it is seen in the different trajectories taken by Aspira which embraced professionalization and quickly branched out to become a national organization complete with a lobbying arm in Washington D.C. while the United Bronx Parents run by mostly women who did not attend college and who themselves often struggled firsthand with drug addiction and mental illnesses was unable to replicate this type of expansion as will be seen further on.

This chapter has shown how Puerto Rican grassroots organizations in New York City materialized in the larger historical context of civil rights and the third world left. How Aspira and the UBP as case studies negotiate at the rhetorical bargaining table amidst a period of social programming and equal rights rhetoric going into the increasingly corporate and privatized era of the post 1980 Reagan United States is the topic of the last two chapters in this study. Having examined the theoretical and historical background of Puerto Rican liminal citizens thus far and some of the aspects of their identity, place, and institutional proximity, I now shift to an analysis of change among this group and its community organizations.

Chapter 3: Aspira and the United Bronx Parents Archival Data Analysis

The methods used in this section are qualitative content analysis of archival material conducted at the Hunter College *Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños* (Puerto Rican Studies Center). Various social scientists (Smith citing Snowdon et. Al 1996, McClellan 1961, Aronson 1958) have long shown that combining content analysis with archival research can yield interesting results in terms of predictability of themes and trajectories among certain groups. In addition, the triangulation of these findings with structured interviews can also create a textured historical analysis across time and space, as the next chapter discusses original interviews conducted with key Aspira and UBP staff and leadership from different periods of the organizations' history.

To understand how race, place, and status manifest in the Aspira Association, I turn to the organization's quarterly newsletter issued quarterly every year since 1987. The newsletter was used to disseminate information about the various branches of Aspira around the country as well as to link the national office's policy and lobbying efforts with the projects of local branches. This study analyzes newsletters from 1987-1990 because as the inaugural years of the newsletter, key notions of the organization's mission and direction are present in these issues. In addition, these years were pivotal in Aspira's pursuit of private funding as well as its transition from being a Puerto Rican serving organization to being a pan-ethnic Latino or Hispanic serving organization⁷⁴. For this chapter, I coded a total of 81 articles for themes related to identity, place, institutions, and citizenship.

⁷⁴ This observation was made after various visits to the *Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños* archives where I have reproduced and analyzed Aspira and specifically Aspira New York's memoranda, meeting minutes, budget documentation, and project proposals. I have also identified the late 1980's as the defining moment of this change after conducting in depth, semi-structured interviews with key Aspira leaders from the organization's founding.

The newsletters themselves focus on a variety of national and local current events with regard to Latinos in the U.S. and their educational, political, and economic life chances. The news reported in the letters includes staff professional as well as personal news, national discussions of the education budget, and congressional debates on nonprofit organizations' ability to lobby. According to Smith (2000), in determining code sets it is useful to think of how the entity of study will be distinguished from another entity. In my dissertation project as a whole, I am analyzing organizational difference between Aspira and the United Bronx Parents, another organization born of the Puerto Rican civil rights movement under similar leadership and circumstances but which took a very different trajectory in terms of negotiating citizenship rights. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, I will be explaining Aspira's organizational characteristics as factors which have set it apart as the country's third largest Latino nonprofit organization⁷⁵.

Also coded here is organizational material from the United Bronx Parents. While the UBP was not as structurally vast as Aspira in the 1980's or even today to have issued consistent quarterly newsletters, I was able to obtain 51 correspondence letters dating from roughly 1968-1984 which I coded under the same categories as Aspira's Newsletters to understand the similarities and differences in organizational culture. While the next chapter is primarily the space in which I compare and contrast the theoretical and ideological differences between the two organizations and analyze these findings in the broader scope of Puerto Rican nonprofit organizations founded in New York during *El Nuevo Despertar*, the main factual and structural findings of each group are explained here.

⁷⁵ According to Hispanic Business Magazine, Aspira is third to Acacia Network and AltaMed Health Services. <http://www.hispanicbusiness.com/branded/top25nonprofits2012.asp> Accessed 7/01/12.

Following key principals of content analysis as a means to organize and analyze large quantities of text, I use this method to identify major trends in how Aspira self identities as an organization. I use the main codes of identity, place, institutions, and citizenship each as markers for sub codes such as gender, race, the U.S. government, migration, island independence, corporations, lobbying, and political institutions, which all ultimately work together to form a set of variables that determine a group's negotiation position for citizenship rights.

Aspira Newsletters 1987-1990

By 1987, Aspira was entering its sixteenth year as an organization and was growing at an exponential pace in accordance with growth in Latino immigration to the U.S. As a result, Aspira as an organization was facing the challenge of retaining its identity as a Puerto Rican founded and serving community group while extending its services to a wider clientele. This is evidenced by the predominance in the use of the term "Hispanic" and "Latino" to "Puerto Rican" in the vast majority of articles (see Table 1). It can be said that the organizational shift toward a pan-Latino identification strategy detaches the organization from its legacy of civil rights and *Nuevo Despertar* era politics toward a more generalized, inclusive, corporate model of nonprofit management. Former Aspirante, or student member, Natalia, confirms the detachment of Aspira from civil rights era political identities and programs of in an interview⁷⁶:

"Aspira doesn't do much of politics to prevent students from feeling uncomfortable because politics can be picky and a turn off. Aspira is always more like, here's the info and you come up with your perspective. It's never about hard core nationalist, republican or democrat. No, no specifically Puerto Rican politics comes up. It has become more about Latinos in NYC."

⁷⁶ Interview Conducted with Natalia Treviño (name changed) at the Aspira New York Office in Manhattan on September 12, 2011 by Principal Investigator Parissa Majdi Clark.

Natalia’s comments create a bridge between the fact that Aspira felt compelled as an organization to identify pan-ethnically and the fact that they also followed a more corporate trajectory to yield high results in funding and other support.

Table 1: Percentage of ID Terms Used in Newsletter Articles

Hispanic	Latino	Puerto Rican	Latin	Other Nationality
55.5%	34.5%	24.6%	1.2%	6.1%

This shift toward an inclusive Latino identity and the courting of corporate sponsors also opens many other institutional doors for Aspira. Codes for institutions, shown in table 2 alongside all codes used, overwhelmingly show that mingling with corporate partners and liaisons as well as government entities was a central part of Aspira’s operations in the late 1980’s. Aspira newsletters thank corporations such as AT&T, IBM, ETS, Coca Cola, The Ford Motor Company, Anheuser-Busch Companies, the Exxon Corporation and dozens of others for their support along with foundations such as the Pew Charitable Trusts, The Ford Foundation, Hispanics in Philanthropy, and the William Penn Foundation. Many articles show a building of relationship with institutions indicating that, following Wong’s (2006) assertion, that immigrant groups first rely on limited mobilization of resources (such as small, local private sector and

foundational sponsorship) to later be able to court larger institutions such as those mentioned above.

Table 2: Percentage of Code Themes Mentioned in Newsletter Articles (N=81)

Citizenship		Identity		Place		Institutions	
Civic Duty	13.5%	Class	19.7%	Migration	3.7%	Foundation	12.3%
Educational Pipeline	41.9%	Gender	9.8%	New York City	1.2%	Government	46.9%
Lobbying	4.9%	Race	43.2%	Politics		Informal	4.9%
Mentorship	35.8%	Structural Inequality	24.6%	New York City Burroughs	8.6%	Community	22.2%
Philanthropy	9.8%	Language	23.4%	Sense of Community	27.1%	Corporate	23.4%
Fundraising	19.7%	“Latino” Issues	12.3%	Puerto Rico	18.5%	Network	22.2%

Newsletter mention of institutions is highest for government entities. The newsletter runs a quarterly segment called “Legislative Update” which describes current debates in congress over various policies and allocations of funds. In addition to this segment, the newsletter mentions congressional committees related to education and Latino issues⁷⁷ such as the bipartisan Advisory Committee for the Senate Republican Task Force in Hispanic Affairs

⁷⁷ The code “Latino issues” above relates to various concerns in Latino communities at the times, here limited to drugs, teenage pregnancy, gangs, AIDS, and immigration.

chaired by Senator Orrin Hatch. In this example, Aspira National Executive Director Dr. Janice Petrovich, also the first female national executive director of Aspira⁷⁸, was reported to have been nominated to serve on the committee to ensure that the concerns of the Latino community were represented in Congress. Other members of the committee included Senators John McCain, Pete Wilson, Robert Dole, and Alfonse D’Amato. This and other examples of appointments of key Aspira affiliates to national level political institutions and policy influencing entities shows that Aspira’s commitment to creating proximity among the U.S. state and Puerto Ricans/Latinos was a large priority.

Table 3: Aspira Public Policy Leadership Program (APPLP) and Aspira Institute for Policy Research (AIPR)

	Overall Mention	Identity	Place	Citizenship	Institutions
APPLP	6.1%	15%	16%	20%	30%
AIPR	7.4%	22.2%	10%	26.1%	29%

Proximity to government and policy institutions is also evident in Aspira’s Public Policy Leadership Program (APPLP) in which Latino youth are trained via government internships and mock legislative activities as well as the in- house Aspira Institute for Policy Research (AIPR).

Each entity is mentioned in approximately 5-6 articles although several times they are either in

⁷⁸ Antonia Pantoja never served as an Aspira national executive staff member, only New York and Puerto Rico regional branch affairs.

the title of the article or they take a prominent role in the article's text. Articles that mention the APPLP tend to relate heavily to mentorship, sense of community, and government institutions while the AIPR relate closest to race, corporate institutions, and community organizations. This suggests that the APPLP can be viewed as a vehicle for promoting Aspira's core mission of mentorship and leadership through internships for Latino students while the AIPR's work is more geared toward awareness of Latino issues and possibly appealing to other organizations to form coalitions. Both groups however are highly linked to institutions as a whole, showing that Aspira's main two public relations arms are well versed in courting and partnering with institutions with political power. In the case of the APPLP, the role of citizenship is explained by Aspira staff member Hernan⁷⁹ who also participated in APPLP (today known as the Hispanic Leadership Institute through a partnership with New York State) as a high school student:

“I think the political edge comes from teaching students to be effective citizens. Not necessarily playing into partisan lines but what does this really mean. We don't talk to them with taking a side on an issue, but why is this an issue. And it also manifests itself the Hispanic Youth Leadership institute that we partner with the department of education here in New York City and the state where we train about 100 young people that are both from the clubs and outside the clubs on the legislative process in New York. The end product of that institute of that program is that they get to travel to Albany and participate in a mock legislation session in the actual New York assembly chamber debating bills that are in discussion in the assembly and they just celebrated their 20th anniversary.”

This sentiment of “civic duty” reflects Aspira's bid to generalize its service base and appeal to a large array of donors and institutions. It also indicates what would later through interview data show a decline in race based language common during the Civil Rights and *El Nuevo Despertar* eras in favor of mostly class and gender based appeals against inequality. This again allows aspira in the resent day to detach itself from its past of social upheaval and change.

⁷⁹ Interview conducted and transcribed by Principal Investigator Parissa Majdi Clark at Aspira New York Office on 9/12/11.

This process was only beginning in the early 1980's, as relics of the organization's activist past would come up occasionally in the newsletters. For example, one article in the newsletter for the first quarter of 1989, Antonia Pantoja is reported to have spoken at the opening ceremony for a new Learning Center in Philadelphia which also bore her name. She said in her speech that:

“I know that fires are burning inside of you for learning. Aspira will help you aspire to reach your goal. You can do it, if you set your mind to succeed. I am part of you no matter where I am. We must all strive for social justice so that you will lift yourselves and the Latino community from the cycle of poverty which oppresses us.”

Pantoja, who left Aspira in the 1980's to pursue other social justice projects, appears here as a matron saint of the Puerto Rican movement, encouraging young people to acknowledge and break the cycle of race based poverty that she experienced as a migrant laborer to the U.S. Her usage of politically charged language such as “oppression” is interesting combined with an idea of self help that is central in Aspira's mission statements of past and present. Still, Pantoja clearly evokes a spirit of the Puerto Rican Movement that becomes increasingly rare in Aspira newsletter articles throughout the 1990's (not shown here).

Pantoja's speech is an example of the racial language common during *El Nuevo Despertar* often delivered by female voices. In Aspira of the late 1980's, mention of gender is rare, limited to the commendation of female colleagues for promotions to positions never before held by women. One such article touts the accomplishment of Dr. Janice Petrovich, the first woman appointed in 1988 as the National Executive Director of Aspira. Petrovich, born and raised in Puerto Rico, worked within the Aspira Institute for Policy Research and served on various committees affiliated with Aspira and other institutions such as the Task Force in Hispanic affairs previously mentioned. The article celebrating Petrovich's promotion mentions having broken the gender barrier once with “Aspira has selected its first female national

executive director” in the first sentence, but does not return to this idea or comment further. Gender is alluded to again later with mention of Petrovich’s involvement in the Center for Research and Documentation on Women which she founded, but again with no commentary. This lack of discussion and the glaring absence of a reference to founder Antonia Pantoja suggests that race and gender strongly associated with *El Nuevo Despertar* and that as *Aspira* began to divorce itself from the language of racial and structural oppression, gender too was disassociated. *Aspira*’s main language to discuss inequality becomes highly class based given that the majority of references to race involve the larger Latino or Hispanic community, not specific to the Puerto Rican struggle and movement.

Finally, place appears to have a much smaller role in this analysis than expected, due to the problem that the *Aspira* newsletter is national in breadth and does not often focus on the politics of each state branch. This is a difficulty in this study’s research design that makes it difficult to know the exact influence of New York City politics on *Aspira*’s overall negotiation of citizenship process. The best solution to account for this is to turn strictly to interview data which eludes the space of this paper. However, what can be said of place from this data is that among all *Aspira* branches, Puerto Rico is mentioned often and is the only place of national origin to be mentioned in 18.5% of the articles, suggesting that the memory of Puerto Rico as a homeland is still strong a decade plus after *El Nuevo Despertar* and more than two decades after the beginning of the Civil Rights Movement.

Aspira has maintained a sense of its original goals to uplift Latino youth through mentorship, leadership development, and educational advocacy. This can be seen by the large number of articles mentioning identity, citizenship and institutions fairly often via codes such as mentorship, sense of community, and network taking large shares of themes mentioned. Network

here refers to articles that show the connections between Aspira staff and key members of the Latino community dedicated to similar goals. In the late 1980's this network was growing through encounters with business entities and Capitol Hill. Today, the Aspira network reaches far into global corporations and government institutions such as the U.S. Supreme Court as Justice Sonia Sotomayor is herself a Puerto Rican native of the South Bronx and a former Aspirante.

United Bronx Parents Correspondence Letters 1968-1990

By the 1980's, correspondence letters indicate that the United Bronx Parents was undergoing constant funding battles with New York City and State budget entities and was often running its payroll in the red until the arrival of last minutes educational grant monies. In 1984, the UBP suffered the sudden loss of its founder, Evelina Antonetty, leaving it to be run by her daughter, Lorraine Montenegro who served as the executive director and CEO for 26 years. This change in leadership was a pivotal moment for the UBP who previously centered its attention on issues of family and education but which shifted in the 1980's to the growing public health services gap in the South Bronx community.

This shift can be seen in the change of its mission statement over the years. The UBP's founding constitution preamble states "We, the undersigned, in order to establish the highest standards of education in Puerto Rican and other minority communities, and in the establishment of true justice and equality for all people, do hereby incorporate ourselves as an organization⁸⁰," committing itself as a social justice and primarily Puerto Rican educational advocacy group. The

⁸⁰ United Bronx Parents, Inc. Fact Sheet, Rev.11/17/08

opening of the UBP’s current mission statement claims “UBP is a private, not-for-profit ‘community-grown’ human services agency providing a multitude of services in the South Bronx and on a citywide basis⁸¹,” showing a change toward service providing which would mainly manifest as drug and HIV treatment programs. Also notable is the fortified importance of place in the mentioning of the South Bronx, to be discussed in subsequent chapters in the context of neoliberal nonprofits and gentrification.

The correspondence letters of the United Bronx Parents are dominated by the theme of funds procurement, most likely because of its lack of a formal development officer/division as well as the absence of a national or state wide presence. In addition, when discussing issues of how the organization identifies itself racially and ethnically, some interesting features materialize as seen in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Percentage of ID Terms Used in Correspondence Letters

Hispanic	Latino	Puerto Rican	Latin	People of Color/ Minority	Bronx/South Bronx
3.9%	3.9%	9.8%	0%	3.9%	17.6%

⁸¹ United Bronx Parents Constitution, Hunter College *Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños*, United Bronx Parents Collection Box 1, Folder 2.

The UBP uses fairly progressive language when it does discuss its racial and ethnic identity with outside parties, especially with the presence of the terms “people of color” and minority as early as the late 1970’s. The term “Latin,” seen in a small amount of *Aspira*’s newsletter material is nowhere present among the UBP, perhaps indicative of their strong social justice identity. It was most prevalent to see the ambiguous phrase “our community” in most correspondence, presumably referring to Puerto Ricans in the South Bronx. However, “our community” also became elaborate by placed itself, often revealing locations and the general notion of the Bronx and South Bronx specifically. In this way, the UBP makes the moniker of the South Bronx as place an identity term which is not the case for Puerto Ricans associated with *Aspira* in Manhattan.

However, race does appear poignantly at times in Antonetty’s memos to various local leaders. For example, in a letter to the Community development Agency’s Assistant Finance Commissioner, Antonetty explains that the CDA’s auditing process has been a troubling and process for the UBP to comply with. She points to hurried auditors and difficult deadlines, but makes her final point by explaining that “We feel very strongly that anyone representing a government agency whether it be federal, state, or city should be able to understand and respect people of color. We are sensitive and can pick up discrimination no matter how subtle”⁸². Antonetty articulates here that while the UBP may be embroiled in the bureaucracy of fiscal reporting and grant writing, that racism and its various forms of microaggressions⁸³ will not be tolerated. This demonstrates a deeper institutional understanding of inequality that the UBP may

⁸² United Bronx Parents Correspondence letter 20, Hunter College *Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños*, United Bronx Parents Collection Box 5, Folder 4.

⁸³ See the work of Daniel Solórzano (1998) and Bonilla Silva (2006) on the subtleties of racist linguistics, speech, microaggressions, and behavior.

not often emphasize in their daily correspondence but that is very much at the heart of their work.

Table 5: Percentage of Code Themes Mentioned in UBP Correspondence Letters (N=51)

Citizenship		Identity		Place		Institutions	
Civic Duty	7.8%	Class	11.7%	Migration	0%	Foundation	3.9%
Educational Pipeline	11.7%	Gender	0%	New York City Politics	7.8%	Government	52.9%
Lobbying	5%	Race	5.8%	New York City Burroughs	64.7%	Informal	0%
Mentorship	3.9%	Structural Inequality	17.6%	Sense of Community	33.3%	Community	31.3%
Philanthropy	0%	Language	11.7%	Puerto Rico	1.9%	Corporate	5.8%
Fundraising	45%	“Latino” Issues	1.9%			Network	25.5%

The UBP is focused politically on the same set of citizenship, identity, place and institutional markers as are the majority of Puerto Rican grassroots organizations from *El Nuevo Despertar*. Mentioning of racism and class differences is distinct yet not central organizationally, because as Thomas (2010) explains, by the mid seventies, the fervor of Puerto Rican anti-racist, anti colonial movement had “ceased to lead a coherent movement” (248). Reasons for this

include political fragmentation as well as the clamor organizations faced in stayed financially viable and keeping their doors open. Therefore, while Aspira's Antonia Pantoja founded Aspira to distinguish Puerto Ricans from the generalized Hispanic Young Adult Association (HYAA) and Evelina Antonetty constantly cited "our people" throughout her correspondences, these overtures to Puerto Rican identity and nationalism begin to give way to institutional needs by the 1980's.

In the UBP correspondence letter data seen in table 5, the reference to government entities is extremely strong. Most correspondence letters take place between organization President Antonetty and various local New York City politicians and agencies such as the Community Development Agency of the NYC Human Resources Administration (established as the administrative overseer to grassroots War on Poverty organizations), the Bronx office of Mayor Abraham Beame (though no correspondence with New York City Mayor Lindsay or other borough mayors), the New York City Housing Authority, and the Commissioner of the NYC Department of Employment. These exchanges most often involved programming logistics for services provided to Bronx schools such as the free lunch program as well as discussions of grant applications and funding outcomes for local government monies.

Another dominant feature of the UBP data is the lack of discussion surrounding the educational pipeline as compared to Aspira. While Aspira often highlights in its newsletters the structural inequality that exists in American public education, citing that Puerto Ricans and other Hispanic exhibit dismally low high school graduation and college attendance rates during the 1970's and 80's, the United Bronx Parents, while initially focused on educating parents to best serve their school aged children, does not often emphasize these ideological points. However, it is not completely unmentioned, showing that structural inequality in education is very much

known among the UBP, as Antonetty does in fact make statements regarding structural inequality such as in a letter to Roger Alvarez, Commissioner of the Community development Agency:

“we [the UBP] feel a very strong concern over the detrimental effects the economic ‘plan’ of Reagan’s administration holds for the future of our community. Needless to say, the prospects of increased unemployment, diminished social services and especially the covert obliteration of youth employment and feeding services are disastrous.”⁸⁴

Here, Antonetty makes no apologies about criticizing the President’s economic and social policies (only a year old at the time of this letter) and naming the structural problems that her community faced.

Most unique about the UBP correspondence letter data as I mentioned before is the strong affiliation with the Bronx/South Bronx as an identity marker. This is also clear as appeals to government entities are often Bronx borough personnel. The appearance of the Bronx/ South Bronx identity language occurs in 64.7% of all correspondence letters⁸⁵ as opposed to specified New York City regions mentioned among Aspira at 8.6%. These data show a difference in scope among the two organizations which will be discuss in more detail in the organizational culture section of this chapter. However, it is important to note that the UBP’s other noticeable differences are in fact tied to this aspect of their identity as they also appeal to local government entities as mentioned previously as well as the difference in approach on structural inequality, because of a more local ,immediate focus on day to day needs.

⁸⁴ United Bronx Parents Correspondence letter 9, Hunter College *Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños*, United Bronx Parents Collection Box 5, Folder 5.

⁸⁵ Following code protocol, the mentioning of the Bronx or written word “Bronx” is not sufficient to be coded as “New York City Burroughs;” mentioning of these terms must be accompanied by further development of place such as discussion of “community” or the importance of the Bronx/South Bronx as a location for various programming or other reasons.

City Grants and Range of Programs

The UBP data has been summarized thematically here in terms of citizenship, identity, institutions, and place, and it can also be categorized on the basis of two dominant features: It's seemingly unending plea for local government funding and its vast array of public programs including the school free lunch and summer free lunch service, culturally relevant curriculum intervention, a proposed nursing home, and parent training (among others). In a letter to New York State Assemblyman Armando Montano in March of 1975, Antonetty draws up a list of programs that she would like implemented by the UBP in the near future which includes the programs aforementioned as well as a museum and fine arts program for the Puerto Rican community with workshops, Low Cost apartments, and a recreation center for youths between the ages of 9-12⁸⁶. This demonstrates the UBP's wide and even scattered interests that they planned to add to their scope in the organization's early life, in addition to parent rights' information distribution, bilingual education, and daycare services in the South Bronx community.

The UBP Summer Meals Program is the one service that is slightly distinguished from other services mentioned in that it appears in 5% of all correspondence letters, mostly in the form of thank you letters written by participating schools. In addition, the summer lunch program represented the largest service in the organization's history at the time of its inception in 1971, feeding over 280,000 New York City children per day across the boroughs. The summer lunch program was the UBP's take on a popular approach of inner city, anti-racist and anti-colonial

⁸⁶ United Bronx Parents Correspondence letter 42, Hunter College *Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños*, United Bronx Parents Collection Box 7, Folder 13.

action in that it not only criticized the lack of nutritious foods in inner city public schools of color, but it also criticized the lack of “ethnically (sic) relevant” foods in such schools⁸⁷.

In this way, the summer lunch program is a hybrid of actions that hinge on access to resources and the demand for cultural relevance and representation⁸⁸.

The UBP also spends a disproportionate amount of time in its correspondence addressing grant and funding issues, often those that have gone awry. As seen in Table 5, 45% of all correspondence letters coded discuss the attainment, possible attainment, or denial of grants, mostly at the city or state level. Federal grant monies for War on Poverty Community organizations were administered by the Community Development Agency, a prominent subject of UBP correspondence. A pivotal moment in the UBPs early life comes in 1981 when the CDA writes to Antonetty regarding her plea to rescind budget cuts implemented by the Reagan Administration. The CDC reveals that the cuts have not only been passed to community based organizations such as the UBP, but also administratively within their agency as “The level of this reduction has not yet been determined, but CDA and the Community Action Board have been able to ensure funding for organizations at the current level through January 31, 1981” which was less than two months from the date of the letter⁸⁹. In 1981, Congress enacted the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (OBRA), which establishes the Community Services Block Grant Program (CSBG) which changed the direct access that the CDA had with community based organizations and further bureaucratized access to government funding while also stopping the

⁸⁷ UBP website accessed 7/1/14 http://www.ubpinc.org/lang1/time_line.html

⁸⁸ This researcher had the privilege of eating a lunch meal from La Casita in the Bronx during an interview session with former executive director Lorraine Montenegro and was taken aback by the quality and care used in preparing the arroz con salchicha y fruta.

⁸⁹ United Bronx Parents Correspondence letter 42, Hunter College *Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños*, United Bronx Parents Collection Box 5, Folder 5. This letter is dated December 8, 1981 which shows that the January 31, 1981 mention must be a mistake because it is meant to mean a future date, probably January 31, 1982.

creation of new organizations. By 1996, the CDA merged with the Department of Youth Services, finalizing its dissolution after years of thinning following the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (see chapter 2).

Budget Documents

Analyzing Aspira and the UBP’s budget documents side by side brings forth one glaring difference in the two organizations: The development capacity of Aspira as a national, multi-state organization in contrast to the UBP as a local community service agency. Aspira, with a national office in Washington D.C., houses a formal development department within its infrastructure which is able to secure funds from large corporations while the UBP’s executive leadership, namely Evelina Antonetty, arranges small partnerships with South Bronx vendors for lodging, utilities, and food donations. Analyzing budget documents for each organization highlights key features of each group’s organizational and ideological culture which is expanded on in chapter 4.

Table 6: Budgetary Sources 1989/1990⁹⁰

	Government Grants	Private Grants
Aspira NY	89.7%	10.3%
UBP	100%	0 ⁹¹

⁹⁰ Information for the UBP covering FY 1990 and FY 1989 for Aspira. Aspira Analysis of Public Sector Outreach. Aspira Collection , Hunter College *Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños*, Box 3, Folder2. UBP Program Descriptions 1990. UBP Collection , Hunter College *Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños*, Box 4, Folder 5.

⁹¹ As described, the UBP secured private monies during this time in the form of donations of local goods and services for various programming needs but not for day to day operation.

Aspira and the UBP appear to be in similar financial territory based on the percentages of public and private sector grants presented in table 6. However, while Aspira appears to only rely on private monies at a marginal level, supporting roughly 10% of its total operating costs, this amount of money, \$289,831.16, alone represents more than double the UBP's total operating budget of 1990, at \$126,846. This does not include Aspira New York's large public sector apportionment of over \$2.5 million to run over 5 different programs including leadership/career development and mentorship services. The onset glaring budgetary differences are perhaps highlighted best in the telegram addressed to Evelina Antonetty from Aspira NY President Mario Anglada in 1974 inviting her to a bilingual action meeting at the renowned Waldorf Astoria Hotel⁹².

UBP budget documents analyzed here outline specific allocations of monies to various expenses such as wages and salaries, supplies, equipment, fringe benefits, transportation, and facilities. This information appears to have been prepared for the Community Development Agency which funded about 3% of the UBP's total operating costs. Figure 3.1 is a document which was submitted to the CDA in 1990 for reporting purposes. It shows that, unlike Aspira, the UBP did not solicit private sector money for major operating costs and that public sector funding was the sole source of grant monies.

By 1990, the UBP recognizes that it is in need of establishing a system for obtaining private funds and proposes the addition of a "fundraiser" in its budget documentation provided to the CDA. This position is not outlined in detail, but in a subsequent document it further explains that should extra money be available to establish a development division or officer, that this person could then add more personnel. However, this proposed venture appears to have never

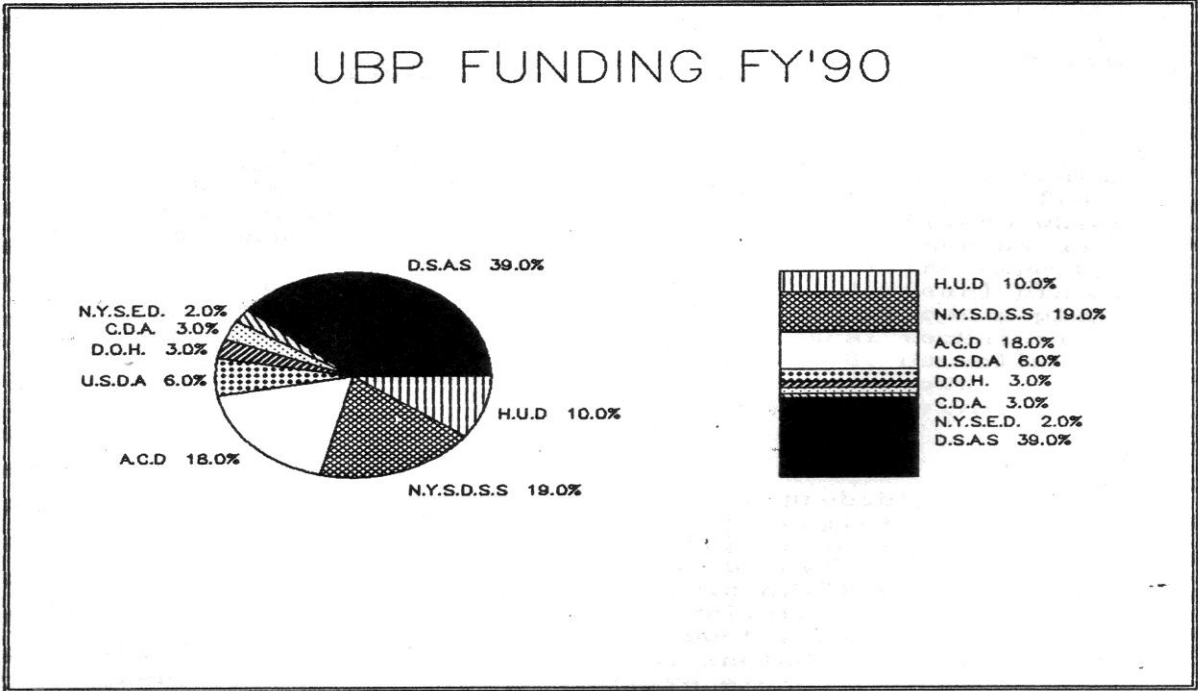
⁹² Mailgram Correspondence Letter 31. UBP Collection, Hunter College *Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños*, Box 1, Folder 10.

been approved and never went as far as to establish a development division or office. Evelina Antonetty's daughter, Lorraine, and President of the UBP confirmed this via interview as she explained that well into the 1990's, the UBP operated on a strict budget and did not dole out grants and funds to attract expensive personnel for fear of compromising the agency's programs:

“I was the cheapest executive director out there given the amount of money of the agency. Why? Because instead of making a cut on people's salaries, I'll take a cut. I never reached what I should have been making... my priorities are that things get done, the uniqueness of some of these programs. And I have a big mouth.”⁹³

⁹³ Interview Conducted with Lorraine Monetnegro at UBP Office in the South Bronx April 23, 2012 by Principal Investigator Parissa Majdi Clark.

UBP FUNDING FY'90



⁹⁴ Figure 3.1. UBP Collection, Hunter College *Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños*, Box 4, Folder 5.

In contrast, Aspira's national office housed a large scale development office which collaborated with grants managers and funding personnel in the regional offices. The development personnel organized funding sources into the categories of public and private, restricted and nonrestricted⁹⁵ complete with the deadlines and expected funding dates of each grant. This early system is reflective of modern development offices in current nonprofit organizations as reliance on corporate funds is dire and public monies are less available once the CDA merged with the Department of Youth Services in 1996. The UBP's style of fundraising is a vestige of the original grassroots community organization model where executive leaders such as Evelina Antonetty also served as development officers and grant writers as they brokered local partnerships and small scale donations for specific projects.

This pre-corporate style of obtaining goods and services for use in community programs was not reliable or even desirable in some cases as can be seen in the UBP correspondence letters. When local vendors were unable to provide help, Evelina Antonetty's reputation as the "Hell Lady of the Bronx"⁹⁶. For example, in a letter addressed to Mr. John Pratt of the Chemical Bank⁹⁷- Urban Affairs division, Antonetty expresses her "dismay" as to "why we were excluded from donations this year as we complied with the customary requirements"⁹⁸. She goes on to say that "Our good faith has been demonstrated by the volume of business we have chosen to refer

⁹⁵ Restricted and unrestricted funds refer to the bylaws and funding rules practiced by each respective donor and Aspira itself. Information for the UBP covering FY 1990 and FY 1989 for Aspira. Aspira Analysis of Public Sector Outreach. Aspira Collection, Hunter College *Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños*, Box 3, Folder2. UBP Program Descriptions 1990. UBP Collection, Hunter College *Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños*, Box 4, Folder 5.

⁹⁶ Interview Conducted with Lorraine Montenegro at UBP Office in the South Bronx April 23, 2012 by Principal Investigator Parissa Majdi Clark.

⁹⁷ Chemical Bank headquarters were in [New York City](#) from 1824 until 1996. Following Chemical's acquisition of Chase, the bank adopted the well known [Chase](#) brand. What had been Chemical Bank is at the core of what today is [JPMorgan Chase](#).

⁹⁸ Correspondence Letter 34. UBP Collection, Hunter College *Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños*, Box 1, Folder 10.

you. It is understandable then that we expect you to show us the same by responding to our request for a donation with a letter or an explanation of the rejection thereof”⁹⁹ Here, Antonetty is acting as the executive director of the UBP as well as the head development officer, a title which is wrought with political conflict and the potential to give rise to strong emotions in budgetary considerations, as appears to be the case here. Chemical Bank, the only national corporation courted by the UBP, was perhaps unaccustomed to the UBP’s style of doing business as a response from Chemical Bank was not found in the UBP archives, nor does the UBP receive any current funds today from Chase bank, Chemical’s contemporary name.

Finally, the reputation of the UBP suffered as a result of the lack of a savvy and experienced development strategy or personnel. In a letter dated June 25, 1981 from the Law Offices of Cohn, Glickstein, Lurie, Lubell & Lubell on behalf of Tony Mondesire and Ruben Cardona of the CDA, a man named Herman Badillo claims that following a financial meeting which Ms. Antonetty was not present at it was concluded that “the books of the United Bronx Parents are not up-to-date, and that tax returns have not been filed for several years”¹⁰⁰.

Antonetty responds to these accusations with intense disagreement stating that “our fiscal standing is such that we are presently the fiscal conduit for all C.D.A. agencies in the Bronx. It is ludicrous to think that such a responsibility would be put in hands [sic] of agency as negligent as Mr. Cardona depicts” and she called for the removal of Mr. Cardona from all matters concerning the UBP¹⁰¹.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Correspondence Letter 35. UBP Collection, Hunter College *Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños*, Box 1, Folder 10.

¹⁰¹ Correspondence Letter 35. UBP Collection, Hunter College *Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños*, Box 1, Folder 10.

Conclusion of Findings

Identity, place, and institutions have all played a salient role in Aspira and the UBP's development as Latino nonprofit organizations as was predicted, though each factor's individual impact on the negotiation process of citizenship emphasizes the importance of institutions and networks specifically and is seen differently in each organization. This data suggests that there exists a relationship between institutions, particularly government and corporate entities, and a "civic duty" rhetoric of citizenship that acclaims self help and an overall detachment from the politically charged energy of the 1960's and 1970's during which Aspira and the UBP are born. It can be said that Aspira's courting of government, foundational, and corporate sources of funding required that it generalize itself as a pan-ethnic, inclusive Latino organization as opposed to a Puerto Rican organization, and that it began to shy away from racially charged language of the civil rights era. This also occurred among the UBP yet they remained rooted in racialized language and identity monikers through iterations of place.

It is also interesting to note that Antonia Pantoja and Evelina Antonetty who founded grassroots organizations during the civil rights era give a female face to the political platforms of that era, while corporate Aspira of the 1980's and 1990's tends to assume a more male role because of the majority of men, especially Latinos, present in corporate America and academia at the time. This will be discussed at length in Chapter 4 as we will see that the UBP endures no such gender shift as a result of corporate lobbying.

Taking cues from gender and race as identity signifiers, it can be said that identity and the memory of migration from Puerto Rico serve as important points of entry for migrants into the American political arena. It can be said of this data that while identity and place may initially

mark the life chances and levels of access that (im) migrants may have at their disposal in society, or their socio-political location, the development of relationships with institutions serves as the most prominent catalyst for the negotiation citizenship and for the utilization of citizenship and civic duty as an accepted identity. In the case of Puerto Ricans, while racial narratives and a strong history of female leadership in grassroots organizations during *El Nuevo Despertar* initially set the stage for the demands and agendas of organizations like Aspira and the UBP, the survival of the organization after public funding cuts in the 1980's depended on the solicitation of government and private institutions for support, causing political narratives and identities to be altered to be more inclusive, general, and non-divisive.

Chapter 4: The Negotiation of Identity, Place, and Institutions among Aspira and the UBP

This study posits that three political aspects of status determine how marginalized groups are incorporated and/or excluded from U.S. citizenship rites and rights. These three aspects are constant themes in Puerto Rican and Latino studies literature and include identity, place, and relationships with institutions. In the case of Aspira and the UBP, I argue that these groups each negotiated each of the three aspects differently, as seen in chapter 3, and thus come to hold very different citizenship statuses. In this chapter, I will illuminate specifically with regard to each of these three categories how Aspira and the UBP's citizenship negotiation process functioned and what outcomes it produced. I will draw on original interviews conducted by myself among Aspira, UBP, and other New York City Puerto Rican nonprofit past and present staff members in New York City.

Blee and Taylor (2002) write that in analyzing social movements and in particular social movement organizations, semi structured interviews can be instrumental to providing a “longitudinal window” into the inner workings and changes in organizations (95). It is for that reason that I have chosen to supplement the archival data analyzed in chapter 3 with original semi-structured interviews with 13 past and present Puerto Rican nonprofit organization activists. This approach has allowed me to triangulate the archival facts presented in the documents presented in the previous chapter with the statements of people associated with Aspira, the UBP, and *El Nuevo Despertar* in general to find elements of change and difference. These interviews took place between September of 2011 and April of 2012 and followed a general guide¹⁰² of questions pertaining to the themes of identity, place, and institutions.

¹⁰² See Appendix for interview guide.

Interviews ranged from 30 minutes to two hours and were all conducted by me either in person in New York City or via Skype¹⁰³.

These interviews are reflective of the process of negotiation that both Aspira and the UBP (among many others) underwent starting in the 1960's as they and dozens of other identity based groups across the country demanded full citizenship rights from a sociopolitical location of second class citizens. I argued in chapter 1 that this process can be likened to the anthropological ritual process whereby liminal community members embark in ritual practice to attain a new status in the community, commonly known as a rite of passage. Community members who all hold liminal status, such as second class Puerto Rican citizens working in the grassroots sector, all hold the status of "communitas" members, whereby they engage in a dialectical cycle of ritual to pass "from lower to higher status" (Turner 1969, 96).

In this case, the status being sought is that of full citizenship and sociopolitical inclusion, the liminal members are two grassroots community organizations in New York City who are seeking status as full U.S. citizens as opposed to treatment by American society as second class Puerto Rican migrants. Each group's negotiation of citizenship rights has vastly different outcomes because of their varying relationships to identity, place, and institutions.

The data presented in the previous chapter suggests that Aspira as an organization takes a direction between 1980 to the present that actively celebrates the acquisition of full citizenship status, despite the fact that this acquisition may in fact be questionable, which is evident in the contemporary emphasis on humanitarian civic duties (to be discussed in this chapter). The stands in stark contrast to the UBP which organizationally remains grounded in a second class

¹⁰³ I have noted where the names have been changed to protect the confidentiality of interview participants solely at my own discretion. All participants willingly agreed to disclose their thoughts and real names though it is this principal investigator's choice to obscure names at times to protect their opinions. Unless noted, all names remain true.

citizenship framework not unlike that articulated by its founder Evelina Antonetty in the 1960's. This chapter will explain these divergent ideological paths using original interview data and within the theoretical framework of identity, place, and institutions presented in chapter one. This chapter argues that pan-Latino ethnic identification along with institutional proximity to traditional political power taking place in Manhattan as a corporate space allowed for Aspira to adapt a narrative of "civic duty" or full citizenship while the UBP, lacking such resources and positioning, fails to do so and remains a small grassroots enterprise in the South Bronx.

Expressions of Puerto Rican/Latino Identity

"I identify as Puerto Rican. Puerto Rican American. Latino. My parents were both born in Puerto Rico, all of my aunts and uncles, so they have a strong identity. They would call themselves Puerto Rican" –Manny Garcia, Senior Managing Director of Aspira New York¹⁰⁴

As previously discussed, Puerto Ricans occupy a tenuous space in the United States in terms of ethnic and racial identification due to the liminal status of the colony of Puerto Rico and the indeterminate nature of the relationship between the United States and Puerto Rico. This uncertainty is perpetuated by the increasingly diverse composition of Latino migrants to the U.S. following Puerto Rican mass migration post World War II and the ever looming difficulty of classification within the American black/white binary (Flores 2000, Martín Alcoff 2006, Oboler 2006, Beltrán 2010). What this means for the purposes of Aspira and the UBP is that there existed and continues to exist multiple routes which the organizations have chosen to exercise their collective selves as Puerto Ricans in the United States, specifically, in New York.

¹⁰⁴ Interview conducted with Manny Garcia (name changed) at Aspira New York Office by Principal Investigator Parissa Majdi Clark on September 12, 2011

The above quote comes from the now Chief Program Officer of Aspira who has worked in nonprofits and the government sector in New York in various capacities for the last 25 years. Manny Garcia's statement on his own identity reflects the multitudinal pathways which Puerto Ricans and many other Latinos can choose to express their identities, more often than not refusing to choose one particular term but rather an amalgam of various terms. Manny's response is interesting in that it reflects the stance that Aspira as an organization took over the last 30 years, from the highly specific, nationalist term *Puerto Rican* to an acknowledgement of place with *American* and then finally to *Latino*, recognizing the common reality of contemporary immigration in New York. This final destination of Pan-Latinidad is currently where Aspira New York¹⁰⁵ finds itself as an organization as it says in its vision statement: "To be the premier Latino youth services organization in New York, helping Latino youth to aspire to improve their lives through educational excellence, and to better their communities through enlightened leadership¹⁰⁶." This statement is distinct from its mission statement which uses the term "Puerto Rican/Latino¹⁰⁷," implying a break from the past and a vision for a pan-ethnic future.

As previously discussed, the UBP links its self identity greatly to the South Bronx as a place, but they also retain a strong sense of nationalism not seen currently in Aspira. Upon first glance at the UBP office during my interview¹⁰⁸ with then executive director Lorraine Montenegro in 2012, I noticed that Puerto Rican flags and nationalist memorabilia from *El*

¹⁰⁵ The distinction between Aspira New York and Aspira National Office must be made clear because of location (New York vs. Washington D.C.) as well as fact that Aspira NY is the focus of this study, not the Aspira National Office.

¹⁰⁶ Aspira New York Vision Statement from Aspira NY's website: <http://www.Aspirany.org/content/about-us> Accessed 7/28/2014

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Interview Conducted with Lorraine Montenegro at UBP Office in the South Bronx April 23, 2012 by Principal Investigator Parissa Majdi Clark.

Nuevo Despertar were prominently on display. When I asked Lorraine about race and identity, she did not place much emphasis on discussing structural inequality or institutional racism as some *Aspira* affiliates would occasionally mention, however her affiliation with being *Boricua*, not Latina, was evident in her statements. Similarly, her aunt and sister of Evelina Antonetty, Elba Cabrera stated that while she uses the term “Latino” or “Hispano,” she is weary of homogenization and values national identity as seems common among members of her generation as she states:

“people want to retain their... Puerto Ricanness... And I think that many of the people that are not Puerto Rican recognize that Puerto Ricans are the ones who opened doors and set the trail for those that came behind us. Because we were here first and... we were citizens... We had an in... We opened doors.”¹⁰⁹

Aspira and the UBP’s reflections on racial and ethnic identity appear to be mixed yet similar as Puerto Ricans in New York in general are sifting through the new reality of Latino diversity. However, the contemporary UBP demonstrates a strong retention of the nationalist Puerto Rican term as *Aspira* has gradually eliminated it from mission and vision statements over the years. However, it is interesting to note that the UBP’s mission statement makes no mention of the history or current status of the Puerto Rican community as it aims: “to provide the basic human services necessary for families and individuals to obtain self-proficiency, through dignity in their struggle to participate as the functioning and valuable citizens they inherently are.”¹¹⁰ However, in discussions of identity and where the UBP stands on being a historically Puerto Rican organization, Lorraine Montenegro, more so symbolically than outright in her words, shows that the UBP has never veered from identifying itself with the Young Lords, Puerto Rican

¹⁰⁹ Interview Conducted with Elba Cabrera via Skype on February 27, 2012 by Principal Investigator Parissa Majdi Clark.

¹¹⁰ UBP Mission statement <http://www.ubpinc.org/ubpwp/> accessed 7/30/14

nationalists such as Lolita Lebrón, and other controversial figures of the Puerto Rican Civil Rights era. When asked if she ever experienced backlash from government or private funders for making the main image of the UBP website a picture of Evelina Antonetty and Lolita Lebrón captioned “The sisters are united to continue the struggle for Puerto Rican rights,” she replied with a simple “no.”¹¹¹

This differs from discussions with Aspira affiliates who eventually come to distance themselves from the nationalist rhetoric of Antonia Pantoja¹¹² after she left the organization as confirmed by former Aspira board member Delia Salazar who claims that “Aspira continues to play a very vital role but has lost the edge in terms of what Tony Pantoja always told us, that ‘you are now in a movement.’”¹¹³ A general trend among interviews with past and present Aspira staff members indicates that while they cite their own personal Puerto Ricanness or the acknowledgement of Puerto Rican history, it is only alongside the term Latino, signaling a shift or a split in self and group identity because of the realities of the demographic changes in New York City.

This split is the subject of Cristina Beltrán’s (2010) *The Trouble with Unity*, in which she discusses how and why *Latinidad*, or collective Latino identity, incited among Latinos and others. She writes that the homogenization of Latinos often comes from outside groups to amass fear among the American general public of the sheer size of this demographic group, but that within Latino communities, use of the term “reflects the diverse political impulses of numerous

¹¹¹ Interview Conducted with Lorraine Monetnegro at UBP Office in the South Bronx April 23, 2012 by Principal Investigator Parissa Majdi Clark.

¹¹² It should also be noted that because Evelina Antonetty passed away in 1984 and Antonia Pantoja remained involved in various social justice projects in New York and Puerto Rico until her death in 2002, that the UBP had more incentive and leverage in memorializing her radicalism.

¹¹³ Interview Conducted with Delia Salazar (name changed) at the NY Department for the Aging on September 15, 2011 by Principal Investigator Parissa Majdi Clark.

communities” (Beltrán 2010, 6). Additionally, Flores(2000) adds of the Puerto Rican situation that “life off the hyphen” is typical of Puerto Ricans who refuse assimilationist terms such as Puerto Rican American, though new pressures to identify differently may influence how the term Puerto Rican stands against the amalgamized “Latino” in a changing New York. Though many interviewees use the pan-ethnic term unproblematically, the mere mention of Puerto Ricanness speaks to beckon a nationalist sentiment of the *Nuevo Despertar* era that many are careful not to incite or to clarify.

Corporate Culture

Continuing the discussion of identity, I now turn to the unique development of Aspira’s corporate identity which will be referred to and expanded on in the epilogue as the “neoliberal nonprofit.” It can be said that Aspira’s ease in adapting a pan-ethnic identity assured its survival from a funding standpoint and that the UBP’s hesitance in relinquishing ties to the Boricua nationalist past has caused it to remain in financial peril. These adaptations have had serious consequences both theoretically and concretely, most notably in Aspira’s post 1980 corporate entwinement and the shift away from female grassroots leaders such as Antonia Pantoja toward corporate trained male figureheads¹¹⁴.

In an interview with Sara Betanza, a Puerto Rican nonprofit consultant who has worked with various New York Puerto Rican organizations in the last two decades and a former Aspira board member herself, she revealed that Aspira’s corporate culture was first only “a little more experienced” than other Puerto Rican organizations in establishing a corporate hierarchal model

¹¹⁴ Due to the lack of women (and especially Latina) in corporate America who might bring their talents to the nonprofit sector as board members or leaders.

in their everyday operations as well as reaching out for private sector funds¹¹⁵. This revelation is telling for two reasons: first, because *Aspira* has shown to be one of the most adept *Nuevo Despertar* groups in adapting the corporate model of operation and second because most *Nuevo Despertar* groups in general failed to make this transition smoothly to secure their futures as traditional nonprofits were able to do around the same time¹¹⁶. The UBP serves as an example of this as they lacked a formal development branch to conduct the necessary outreach to local and nationwide corporations for partnerships and other philanthropic ventures. Of this push to adapt corporate culture, Betanza stated that:

“Most of these [Puerto Rican/Latino/New York City] orgs are developed by activists, someone who was very upset about an institution and wanted change...In *Aspira*... the founder [Antonia Pantoja] was a teacher. You see that there’s [sic] no individuals with business, human resources training.¹¹⁷”

Here, she is sharing her observation that most Puerto Rican grassroots organizations in the New York/New Jersey area that she has worked with as a consultant or board member have lacked the internal corporate structure to excel in today’s business world. She also claims that nepotism is a huge setback in advancing a corporate structure because “they don’t see to upgrade the board of directors because they are making relations on loyalties and in the real world we know this doesn’t work¹¹⁸.”

Betanza’s emphasis on the importance adapting a successful corporate model among Latino organizations is echoed by various other *Aspira* and UBP interviewees. On the subject of

¹¹⁵ Interview Conducted with Sara Betanza (name changed) at the Jersey City Hyatt Hotel on September 15, 2011 by Principal Investigator Parissa Majdi Clark.

¹¹⁶ Traditional nonprofits here refers to groups such as the United Way and the American Diabetes Association. both NY branches were affiliated with staff members at *Aspira* in the last 20 years.

¹¹⁷ Interview Conducted with Sara Betanza (name changed) at the Jersey City Hyatt Hotel Lobby on September 15, 2011 by Principal Investigator Parissa Majdi Clark.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

nonprofit organizations in general, not specifically Latino or Puerto Rican organizations in New York, there exists a substantial body of literature that explains the function and purpose of various categories of partnerships and collaborations. Austin (2000) of the Harvard Business School writes that nonprofit organizations and corporations experience three phases of partnership beginning with philanthropic, charitable giving, transactional, giving with small returns, and integrative, where corporations and nonprofits merge to create a new, mutual identity that benefits both parties. From the interviews conducted, two points emerge following this logic: first, that Aspira and a small handful of other New York *Nuevo Despertar* groups have experienced the integrative level of corporate partnership¹¹⁹, and that organizations also had little choice in courting such partnerships after 1980 because of the shrinkage in availability of War on Poverty era funds¹²⁰.

The late Hector Gesualdo, former Aspira New York Executive Director at the time of these interviews, also confirms the importance of corporate partnerships as a part of the organization's survival and even identity. Gesualdo previously worked for the United Way for 22 years before joining Aspira as the Executive Director, and explained that that experience had allowed him to access an important network of agencies and services in nonprofit New York City. Gesualdo articulates that Aspira NY successfully navigated budget cuts and the lack of public funds because of not only corporate partnerships but also workplace campaigns whereas smaller sister agencies (such as the UBP for example) have closed or face hard economic times.

When asked how these relationships get formed, Gesualdo explained that “a lot of the

¹¹⁹ The Puerto Rican Family Institute (PRFI) is another Aspira-like nonprofit that has been able to successfully obtain private funds and who is keenly aware of development and partnership opportunities.

¹²⁰ Orleck (2011) elaborates that not only were funds simply unavailable, but that the Reagan administration damaged the image of community anti-poverty organizations so drastically that to this day public sentiment against big government seen by the right wing Tea Party movement and in political discussions of welfare is extremely hostile.

foundations and places that have sources of funding have very few Latinos on their boards and that impacts how the funding is distributed¹²¹,” implying that the main challenge for groups like Aspira and the UBP is networking.

Perhaps the most colorful and socially resonant example of corporate partnering and the need for high profile connections in the New York City Latino nonprofit sector are the comments of former aspirante and current President of the Puerto Rican Family Institute (PRFI), a health services organization from the *Nuevo Despertar* era, Anderson Torres, used popular culture to explain the potential of corporate partnerships with Latino organizations:

“The other day we received an award from Goya foods for our food pantry, families in need... They [Goya] wanted to use a venue to tell the people what they were doing and they used Marc Anthony’s concert in New Jersey and they met with our CEO in person. And he said thanks for the wonderful work that you do, I wasn’t even aware of the Institute. That was a springboard for us. We thanked them for their recognition and for Marc’s consent to use them in his concert. Now we’re exploring future plans because this happened just the other day. So I said, why not have Jennifer too¹²²? The key celebrity profile.”

This discussion of celebrity and branding power is not uncommon in the nonprofit world, and it takes a particularly interesting form in terms of the Latino market¹²³. Wheeler (2009) writes that “Use of celebrity endorsers in advertising peaked in the '70s and '80s with at least 20% of the prime-time TV ads featuring a celebrity endorser and then faded, but is in the midst of a revival,” which coincides with the late adaptation of Latino nonprofits to private funding as a whole. Returning to Austin’s corporate partnership thesis, what this could mean for Latino nonprofits is that celebrity power has the ultimate potential to integrate itself with the core identity and values

¹²¹ Interview Conducted with Hector Gesualdo at the Aspira NY Office in Manhattan on September 12, 2011.

¹²² Interview Conducted with Anderson Torres at the PRFI Office in Manhattan September 15, 2011 by Principal Investigator Parissa Majdi Clark (before the tragic split of Jennifer López and Marc Anthony)

¹²³ While not in the scope of this project, the work of Anthropologist Arlene Davila (2001) is particularly salient on Latinos and branding/marketing.

of the organizations themselves¹²⁴, a reality certainly unforeseen by Antonia Pantoja and Evelina Antonetty.

Institutional Proximity and Place

Getting around this challenge hinges on developing a strong proximity to institutions such as city agencies, corporations, and government entities, which is confirmed by Sara Betanza. When asked what distinguishes a historically Puerto Rican organization such as Aspira and the UBP from Mexican or other Latino organizations, Betanza replied that:

“They [Puerto Rican organizations] focus on political power. I mean, you saw the Aspira event¹²⁵, there were politicians on the floor and you wouldn’t see that in other orgs. The focus is more on political power and getting funding that way because we have the vote and we have that power of bringing elected officials¹²⁶.”

Lorraine Montenegro confirmed this as well even though the UBP networks politically on a much smaller, much less formal scale, as she stated that the “Young Lords who had moved on to other things always looked out for us. My mother was good to them¹²⁷.” Whereas the UBP relied on friends from previously influential organizations such as the Young Lords who had moved on to occupy positions of power within the media and local government, Aspira was courting the

¹²⁴ No known research on this topic has been conducted, but evidence in the media and pop culture sphere includes the foundational work of various Latina/o celebrities such as Eva Longoria, Jimmy Smits, and Rose Perez (the former two names being former Aspirantes themselves and visibly present in Aspira’s fundraising efforts such as their 50 year anniversary Gala). It is interesting to note for future research and reference that there are few America mainstream Latina/o celebrities (few to begin with in general) who make “Latino” nonprofits their primary charities of choice. Often, such celebrities choose racially neutral and inclusive causes such as UNICEF or the Red Cross.

¹²⁵ 50th Anniversary Gala held on Wall Street with keynote speakers Jimmy Smits and Rosie Perez.

¹²⁶ Interview Conducted with Sara Betanza (name changed) at the Jersey City Hyatt Hotel on September 15, 2011 by Principal Investigator Parissa Majdi Clark.

¹²⁷ Interview Conducted with Lorraine Monetnegro at UBP Office in the South Bronx April 23, 2012 by Principal Investigator Parissa Majdi Clark.

politicians themselves who were themselves former Aspirantes or who shared the similar narrative of growing up in *El Barrio*. For politicians such as Fernando Ferrer who ran for New York City mayor in 2002, to be affiliated with the nationalist Young Lords Party would be a political slight, and so the UBP retained its nationalist narrative and connections while Aspira, just as they did to secure private funding, moved away from such images as did Puerto Rican politicians in New York.

It should be noted here also that while beyond the scope of this study, the changing demographics of Latino New York are creating new challenges for surviving *Nuevo Despertar* organizations. According to Sara Betanza, for decades Puerto Rican local politicians on the city boards and councils would ascend to power and allocate nonprofit funding to Puerto Rican organizations in an act of “cultural parity”¹²⁸. Once the War on Poverty narrative became antagonized in the 1980’s and the community organizations vilified for misusing public funds and perpetuating social problems, these local politicians came under fire for their allocation of funds. The latest iteration of this backlash against Puerto Rican politicians in New York City who found themselves at the center of controversy for having supported local grassroots organizations¹²⁹ (but were brought up on charges of mishandling or misappropriating funds) were state senator Efrain Gonzalez who was convicted in 2010 of defrauding the West Bronx Neighborhood Association, Inc. and his successor Pedro Espada who was indicted on six federal

¹²⁸ This refers to the case of Puerto Ricans in political considerations of power, drawing on groundbreaking work by Michael Dawson (1994) in the case of African Americans and voting behavior. Dawson developed the Black Utility Heuristic, that African Americans use group status as a proxy for individual utility (Black utility Heuristic, derived from Simon, 1985, who stated that permeative effects can make for individuals to act via proxy factors). For Puerto Ricans, the only salient work done on voting behavior and politicians’ considerations of community in decision making is Sánchez’s (2007) work on Puerto Ricans in Hartford Connecticut. He claims that Puerto Rican power rises and falls based on the willingness of U.S. political institutions to engage in a exchange of interests, and that that engagement reached a height in the 1970’s. Also see the work of Michael Hanchard (2006) on Black political thought and community.

¹²⁹ This dissertation does not confirm or deny the culpability of these politicians, but rather speaks to the recent public outcry against earmarked government funds and the support of nonprofit organizations. A discussion of the emergent neoliberal nonprofit will follow in the epilogue of this study.

counts of embezzlement and theft also in 2010. While these men are merely examples and not directly linked to Aspira or the UBP, Betanza notes that this institutional proximity is vital to Aspira's success and it can thus be said that the UBP's lack of these formal political connections¹³⁰ and proximity is detrimental to their functioning.

Place is pivotal in discussing institutional proximity as well in the cases of Aspira and the United Bronx Parents. I will expand a larger discussion of gentrification in New York City and the displacement/flight of the Puerto Rican community in the epilogue, but briefly as it pertains to the functioning of nonprofit organizations, the physical space and location occupied by organizations is a key component of their sociology and thus functioning and success. Several studies of nonprofit organizations using spatial analysis have analyzed the influence of location on one another as well as the proximity to for profit organizations being helpful in the success of the nonprofit. Bielefeld and Murdoch (2004) explain that "Nonprofit organizations often provide hard-to-evaluate products or services and are, therefore, heavily reliant on factors, including location, which enhance their legitimacy in the eyes of consumers and funders," which is useful information for new startup organizations but tenuous for already established groups such as the UBP (222). Aspira New York having been founded in Manhattan during a time when anything north of midtown was considered downtrodden and well before the advent of neoliberal gentrification¹³¹.

Furthermore, Bielefeld and Murdoch state that "an organization will accrue the prestige, or the lack thereof, of its physical surroundings," which positions the UBP and Aspira against

¹³⁰ In addition, this model of institutional/political proximity is changing because as more Puerto Ricans leave New York and new Latino immigrants such as Dominicans and Mexicans move into previously Puerto Rican neighborhoods like East Harlem and the Bronx, more and more non Puerto Rican Latino politicians are ascending to power and favoring nonprofits that benefit their cultures and communities as once was the case for Puerto Ricans.

¹³¹ To be expanded further in the epilogue. See Smith, Neil. 2002. "New Globalism, New Urbanism: Gentrification as Global Urban Strategy." *Antipode* 34 (3): 427–50.

each other in a way that obviously highlights their stark differences in solvency and scope (2004, 221). Numerous public health studies have shown that “The South Bronx Compared to New York City as a whole, the South Bronx has more than twice the rate of poverty; a greater proportion of adolescents; and higher rates of health problems such as infant mortality, low birth weight, births to teenagers, and homicides,” making it an undesirable candidate even today for the location of any for or nonprofit organization (Freudenberg et al. 1999, 790). However, as will be explained, nonprofit organizations today in what is being dubbed the neoliberal age are arising not out of necessity as was the case during *El Nuevo Despertar* as much as strategy in developing a viable business plan. As fate would have it, Aspira’s Losaida and Upper East Side roots (to a lesser extent Brooklyn) would prove to be its most viable asset being located in the nucleus of global money and power, Manhattan.

On an ethnographic note, no analysis of the differences between the UBP and Aspira NY are more striking than the images of a day in the life of a staff member in each organization. When I arrived at the subway exit at Prospect Ave. in the South Bronx to meet with former executive director Lorraine Montenegro, I emerged from the underground unsurprised by what had not changed in the 9 years since I had previously visited as a teacher in the area as well as the images I had seen in books describing the South Bronx as “neglected” and even “warn torn.” After talking for an hour about the UBP, Lorraine invited me to her car for a driving tour of her *barrio* which she and long time assistant Irene Davila were extremely proud to say. During the drive, Lorraine waved to locals who she told me had previously been addicted to drugs and alcohol or who had untreated HIV, but were now receiving support and care thanks to the UBP. Along the way, she pointed out a mural located on 156th Street and Prospect Ave. depicting her

mother speaking passionately at a rally among children, a decrepit Bronx, and the Puerto Rican Flag. It read:

“We will never stop struggling here in the Bronx, even though they’ve destroyed it around us. We would pitch tents if we have to rather than move from here. We would fight back, there is nothing we would not do. They will never take us away from here. I feel very much a part of this and I’m never going to leave. And, after me, my children will be here to carry on... I have very strong children, and very strong grandchildren.”

My first physical encounter with Aspira NY came with its 50th anniversary Gala which I was fortunate to receive an invitation to through friends of my research¹³². The Gala was held at Cipriani Wall Street, a large wedding and banquet venue, in lower Manhattan. The invitation read that dress should be “colorful,” and the over 200 attendees mingled with specialty cocktails from the open bar prior to the event. The opening speaker was actor Jimmy Smits, a former aspirante from Brooklyn who talked about how important the organization was to his success. Mr. Smits along with actress Rosie Perez were presented with honoree awards for their involvement in the Aspira community. The evening included dinner and table seating and the invitees brokered partnerships and ideas from across the spectrums of politics, education, entertainment, law, public health, and corporate America throughout the event. The Gala was a “who’s who” of Puerto Rican and Latino elite in New York.

To be fair, Aspira does not host this caliber of event all the time as it was a once in a lifetime 50th anniversary celebration. However, in contrast with the UBP’s daily affairs, which seldom include fundraisers or galas of any kind but rather daily strategy sessions and operations, it can be seen why location and proximity to New York’s Latino elite has worked in Aspira’s favor.

¹³² Thank you to Professor Leo Estrada of UCLA and his wife Ivelisse for their kindness in facilitating this experience.

Gender, The Ethics of Care, and Citizenship

“It was not only being a woman, but being a single woman, that created friction. The idea was that you had to come with a family. And usually women have their families, then get the education. I did it the other way around: BA, MA, experience in my field, and then started a family. That was a trend that was not seen or appreciated. Even my female coworkers perceived that I was against family and the tradition of marriage. It was a combination of Latina, female. My Anglo coworkers that were white were never questioned, never asked ‘when are you gonna have kids?’”

- Sara Betanza, former Aspira board member and nonprofit consultant

Finally in this comparison of Aspira and the UBP in terms of their negotiation of identity and how that process yields different citizenship rights and rhetorics, Aspira also diverges from the UBP on iterations of gender. This divergence can be attributed to generational differences as well as a smaller sample size, as the UBP office is comprised of fewer high level staff than Aspira NY from which to assess their opinions on gender. Additionally, most of the UBP’s staff grew up during the *Nuevo Despertar* era and, like many Latina/o activists of the time, prioritize race and class issues over gender inequality¹³³.

Sara Betanza, a young child in Puerto Rico during *El Nuevo Despertar* but someone who migrated to New York in the late 1980’s and built a successful professional career, has a unique experience of gender in the Puerto Rican nonprofit sector over the past several decades than do her *Nuevo Despertar* affiliates. Sara approaches gender from the standpoint of Latina values and traditions dominated by pre-fabricated archetypes of the dichotomous woman as “good/bad,” “virgin/mother/whore,” and “adelita (loyalist)/malinche (traitor)” (Gaspar de Alba 2003). She

¹³³ See the work of Segura and Pesquera (1997) in the case of Chicana feminists, who found that most Chicanas who allied with white women’s suffrage were seen as “Desgraciadas” (ungrateful) or “Vendidas” (sell outs) while most Chicano male activists outright denounced such behavior.

explains in the quote above that prioritizing her career over starting a family in her early career was met by other Latinas with hostility and she often felt excluded. Similarly, Sara was also met with hostility when she chose to mimic the demeanor and style of dress of her corporate colleagues from the Pratt Institute. She states that “If you’re Latina, you come with certain stereotypes assigned to you; all the things they say about Latinas. I know people in the field that say ‘Latinas like to wear tight clothes’ and I agree with it. They [Latinas] don’t see it¹³⁴.” She is distancing herself from other Latinas in this statement, but doing so to advance herself as a non-stereotypical dichotomous woman.

Women of the *Nuevo Despertar* era are reluctant to discuss gender because there appears to be a certain acceptance from this Puerto Rican baby boomer migrant generation of women for whom the struggle of being Puerto Rican supersedes the women’s movement. Delia Salazar states that “Yo no deajo que esas cosas never affected me (I don’t let these things affect me)¹³⁵.” Salazar explains that working with community organizations in Losaida, she was often asked by male colleagues and superiors if she could “handle” the *barrio*, to which she replied “I grew up here, I take care of myself¹³⁶.” Lorraine Montenegro of the UBP also responds to issues of gender in the early years of her work with a strong sense of place, not unlike the conflation of race and place among the UBP discussed earlier. She states that “growing up in *El Barrio* in 1960’s and 1970’s New York brought with it a confidence among profession seeking young

¹³⁴ Interview Conducted with Sara Betanza (name changed) at the Jersey City Hyatt Hotel Lobby on September 15, 2011 by Principal Investigator Parissa Majdi Clark.

¹³⁵ Interview Conducted with Delia Salazar (name changed) at the NY Department for the Aging on September 15, 2011 by Principal Investigator Parissa Majdi Clark.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

women that allowed them to ignore gender bias and stereotypes of the Puerto Rican/Latina woman as irrational and hysterical¹³⁷.

When asked how women of this generation as well as her mother and aunts came to be so involved in politics, organizing, and overall breadwinning, Sara Betanza replied that “Puerto Rican women come from the background of women working in the factorias, taking to the street after being mistreated. They’ve been working¹³⁸.” This experience of Puerto Rican migrant women entering the political spectrum through labor is unique of Latina immigrants because of the postwar industrial era and its demise before the migration of other Latino groups.

Some feminist scholars argue that women have been public entities in western societies all along through the multitude of types of labor that women perform (childcare, domestic work, community activism, etc.) that has the potential to reform political obsessions with abstractions of justice and fairness and become an equitable society for all based on logical ethical considerations. Known as the ethics of care model, this literature contends that the public sphere can benefit from characteristics usually associated with the separate (and supposedly weaker) private sphere of women and focusing on valuing women’s logic and work as universal standards for reciprocity and social equity. Looking at the example of Puerto Rican women activists in *El Nuevo Despertar*, this appears to be the case as women successfully parlayed already existent labor experience at home into formalized public labor and then to community activism.

This model today is highly useful for the case of Puerto Rican women and community leadership because it establishes that any group or individual that engages in “a species activity

¹³⁷ Delia Salazar refers to psychological research produced during that time when Puerto Rican women were exposed to eugenic experimentation and sterilization in clinics and hospitals in Puerto Rico and even New York’s Lincoln Hospital. This research claimed that Puerto Rican women were not only irrational for being women, but particularly “hysterical” for being Latinas which perpetuated the “fiery Latina” stereotype that exists to this day. See the work of Iris López (2008) *Matters of Choice: Puerto Rican Women's Struggle for Reproductive Freedom*.

¹³⁸ Interview Conducted with Sara Betanza (name changed) at the Jersey City Hyatt Hotel Lobby on September 15, 2011 by Principal Investigator Parissa Majdi Clark.

that includes everything we do to maintain, continue, and repair our ‘world’ so that we can live in it as well as possible,” is committed to an ethic of care (Tronto 1993, 103). This set of ideals envelopes the mission statements of most, if not all, non-profit, community-oriented service providing groups today, implying that the “women’s logic” formerly relegated to the private sphere is alive and well in the public. The elements of a universal ethics of care exhibited by groups like *Aspira* include moral foundations in attempting to achieve care in one’s world such as integrity, responsiveness, competence, and responsibility (ibid). While these ideas may seem broad, they explain the change from nationalist rhetoric to a set of democratically inclusive, civic ethics which became negotiated by racialized groups after 1980.

If we follow and apply this model to the role of Puerto Rican women, it can be said that women made an indelible mark on the character of contemporary community nonprofit groups. Some advocates of the ethics of care even argue that it can reform previously distorted iterations of citizenship if applied correctly among civic entities (Sevenhuijsen 1998). Citizenship is today posited by activist groups as a narrative of social responsibility, a strand of the ethics of care that creates a “moral impulse towards respect for diversity [that] can thus strengthen democratic citizenship, at least if we accept, in the spirit of Hannah Arendt, that the most fundamental task of democratic societies is to find ways of dealing with plurality” (Sevenhuijsen 1998, 145-146). This shift in understandings of citizenship represents a change in how Puerto Ricans, and perhaps other groups, see their own status as citizens of the United States: from racially marginal with a drive to provide absent services to ethically (and strategically) responsible care.

Many community groups today like *Aspira* believe that reconciling inequalities in plural societies is best done by adopting an ethic of democratic responsibility (Sevenhuijsen 1998). Under this view, inequality is not thrown to the wayside but is instead recast as a recurring

democratic problem that citizens of a polity have the responsibility and power to change. This republican notion of duty and responsibility shows that with changes in corporate sponsorship and demographics came a profound change in how Puerto Ricans viewed themselves in relation to American democracy.

Two glaring problems stemming from the history gender and race inequality still remain: first, the maintenance of Puerto Rico as a colony of the United States, rendering its people subjects of the U.S. empire in various political and economic manners. Second, women in community groups, while it is argued that their “logic” has remained present in the public realm, are more absent from community leadership today than during *El Nuevo Despertar*. In shifting to an inclusive (pan-Latino, full citizenship) and depoliticized ethics of care that was appealing to corporate and philanthropic funding entities, many structural changes in organizations such as Aspira took place. Aspira previously relied on the service of female migrants in the labor force, people who experienced a variety of social and political institutions on a daily basis to serve as vocal members and leaders of their groups; women such as Evelina Antonetty and Antonia Pantoja. In the post 1980 period, Aspira leadership recognized the projection of the time that “Latinos will outpace blacks as the largest ethnic minority in the next thirty to forty years,” and under Director Luis O. Reyes, began making changes accordingly¹³⁹. Consequently, the Aspira national office staff even hired an image consulting firm to affirm and advertise their new identity, an affirmation of the solid commitment Aspira had to changing its mission¹⁴⁰.

Although Antonia Pantoja remained involved in Aspira’s executive leadership until her death in 2002, many organizations such as the UBP led by women were simply unable to secure

¹³⁹ Aspira organizational records, Archives of The Puerto Rican Diaspora. Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños, Hunter College, CUNY.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

the funding necessary to stay afloat, perhaps due to an inability or unwillingness to change their mission and identity. Large groups such as Aspira successfully carried out the change of their image due to the use of corporate modeled consultants and business executives, often men. This is not to say that Aspira's board of trustees and/or executive leadership was previously comprised solely of women, but the shift to a corporate mode of conducting business "in the black" connotes a male-centered logic and leadership given meager past and present statistics on the number of women in corporate America and general business endeavors.

That women became alienated by civic rhetoric and male-dominated realms of corporate fundraising has been studied in contexts other than Puerto Rican female activism. In a study on the role of Mexican women in nonprofit management and participation, Fernández Rodríguez et al (1999) found that upper class women were successfully able to secure funds through skills such as "better personal relations," "feelings and intuition," and "more initiative," but ultimately found in interviews that women link their success in fundraising to their higher educational level. This reveals that for working class women, fundraising is limited to a set of "private" realm activities such as organizing "auctions, raffles, concerts, balls, and film premieres" (Fernández Rodríguez et al 1999, 259).

While feminists may laud the ethics of care for being a female driven model present in the majority of public sphere nonprofit organizations today, for racialized, second-class Puerto Rican women this is not enough. In addition, to switch to a model of republican citizenship is extremely problematic for Puerto Ricans in the U.S. and on the island not only because of a hegemonic history between Puerto Rico and the U.S. but because that colonial hegemony still exists today. This is evidenced by the latest debacle in the Puerto Rican second-class citizenship drama where in 2010 over 1.3 million Puerto Rican birth certificates were rendered invalid by

the U.S. federal government because of supposed fraudulent welfare claims and identity fraud¹⁴¹. Because of the perpetual “welfare queen” stereotype and perceived foreignness of Puerto Ricans by the U.S., the assertion of full citizenship, even under a feminist lens, is simply false.

Conclusion

What this study leaves us with is a two-pronged story of exploitation, success and silence as Puerto Rican women migrants painfully left their homelands and entered often repressive workplaces yet found a political voice in community activism. This dual experience is noted by scholars of Puerto Rican women and scholars of Puerto Rican politics as a whole which is marked by an ambiguous liminality representative of colonial relationships in the current political era. In her article “Labor Migrants or Submissive Wives: Competing Narratives of Puerto Rican Women in the Post-World War II Era,” Whalen (1998) finds that because Puerto Rican women were “at the nexus of policy makers’ plans for the island’s economic development,” that their experiences would inevitably be multi-faceted (207).

To conclude, as reflected by the second-class/republican, public/private debates surrounding the representation of Puerto Rican women in community politics, Puerto Rican identities as a whole are products of binaries that stem from colonial-subject. It is hoped that this historical/archival and conceptual piece might move closer in understanding not only the status of Puerto Rican community activism, but also how marginalized Puerto Ricans navigate American society and institutions on a daily basis. Puerto Rican women, as with many Latinas, are often dichotomized as worker/domestic, black/white, virgin/whore in a variety of different contexts ranging from home life to political encounters. How women negotiate a middle ground

¹⁴¹ www.Prfaa.com/birthcertificates

for themselves can sometimes be reflected in unique political moments such as *Aspira* and *El Nuevo Despertar*. By analyzing Puerto Rican diasporic politics from the lens of citizenship, the contours of these experiences prove that citizenship is an antiquated concept that needs to be able to account for diverse life experiences.

The discussion of identity in general, corporate culture, institutional proximity, and place signals two important theoretical ideas in the spectrum of this study: 1. The departure from racial and radical/nationalist expressions of self on the part of *Aspira* and 2. Upon attainment of corporate model, *Aspira*'s identity shift from occupying a marginal, second class location to a status of full citizenship, or civic duty stance. By civic duty, it is meant that individuals and the organization as a whole speak from a position of privilege, full citizenship inclusion, so as to be able to demand equality and obligation to equal rights for marginalized groups. This book argued in chapter one that citizenship rights are the result of a (ritual) process of negotiation, which, for *Aspira*, resulted in a rhetoric of full citizenship rights and civic duty, away from the second class citizenship narrative of the 1960's and 1970's.

Epilogue: The Contemporary Neoliberal Latino Nonprofit

“As long as there’s a [Puerto Rican Day] Parade, I think people will be happy”-Sara Betanza

“Now it’s not about people. It’s about how good do my reports look and the money.” -Lorraine Montenegro

In this dissertation I have chronicled the history and changes among two civil rights era founded Puerto Rican nonprofit organizations in New York City, Aspira and the United Bronx Parents. Though similar in their inception, these two service providing groups couldn’t be more different in terms of leadership, scope, and vision today. However, there exists a stark similarity that is a result of the contemporary sociopolitical spectrum of inclusion and voice on the grassroots level- the pressure to obtain private funds in order to ensure survival. This pressure has caused both the UBP and Aspira to make organizational changes that they otherwise may not have considered as well as some that they were coerced to make.

There also exists a sweeping paradigm shift in the relationship between grassroots organizations and the government which has changed the former War on Poverty and Community development Agency’s oversight of groups founded by activists of the Civil Rights Era. Soss et. al (2011) explain that “poverty governance has shifted direction” toward neoliberalism and paternalism on the part of the state in order to maintain archaic notions of racial order and hierarchy,” seen in these cases when racism is extracted from organizational mission statements en lieu of humanitarian language (18). According to this research, disciplinary policies such as the federal welfare reform bids of the 1990’s and the endorsement of states’ rights to implement welfare as they see fit constitute examples of how the impoverished of this nation, mostly women and children of color, have come to be criminalized

for their “bad citizenship.” This notion of “delinquent citizenship” harkens back to the migration era of Puerto Ricans in the U.S. when recent arrivals were not considered worthy of full citizenship rights despite their de jure status as American citizens.

Neoliberalism has been used recently as not just an economic but a social and political frame to explain how a variety of institutions have shifted since the advent of globalization in the last 30 years. In her most recent book, Ana Ramos-Zayas (2012) admits that neoliberalism has become a “buzz term” to describe economic shifts in the second part of the twentieth century. She defines it as “the conglomerate of economic urban development policies that aim to attract capital accumulation through private investment, and selective state deregulation in favor of free market approaches” and applies it to her anthropological work by coining the phrase “neoliberal personhood,” which refers to the personal internalization of market principles (24). This mindset affects individuals and groups and is present in all structural levels of society and government, permeating discussions of race, self, and equality at all times.

That neoliberal personhood could be applicable to nonprofit organizations and in particular, the case study organizations in this study, is a logical assumption. Analyzing nonprofit management through the lens of contemporary neoliberalism has been a popular trend though little exists along the lines of nonprofits of color and neoliberal paternalism or personhood. This book can serve as a springboard for such research beginning with the meaning of the rhetoric of service among historically marginalized groups if those groups purport full citizenship status despite post/neocolonial considerations such as with the case of Puerto Rico. Also, how individuals who have been historically racialized can continue to be subjected to racism through the guise of the free market such as is the case of the South Bronx and impending gentrification (to be discussed further on) is of much interest.

Today, multiple groups of U.S. born second and third generation immigrants who hold full citizenship status are treated as second class citizens as were Puerto Rican migrants decades ago because they subjectively fit the archetype of the “unruly” and “undesirable” colonial/imperial citizen. What is interesting with regard to Puerto Rican and other nonprofit organizations of color is twofold: 1. The state no longer facilitates but in fact discourages organizational rhetoric that advance racial or marginal identities and agendas¹⁴² and 2. In order to comply with the neoliberal and paternalist system of governance with regard to services provided to those in need, organizations lay claim to humanitarian vision statements and universal, post-race¹⁴³ rhetoric. In other words, we are likely to see *Aspira* and even the United Bronx Parents take on with more fervor and frequency the language of human rights, as opposed to Puerto Rican or Latino rights.

Evidence of this shift has already been collected in this study, most notably from the comments of the younger, post- *Nuevo Despertar* generation of *Aspira* staff members. Natalia Treviño, a former aspirante, Barnard College student, and current *Aspira* NY leadership development specialist, explained that despite her own interest in *Aspira*’s politically charged past and support of Puerto Rican nationalism, that *Aspira* today “doesn’t do too much of politics to prevent students from feeling uncomfortable because politics can be picky and a turn off¹⁴⁴.” When asked about what the *Aspira* high school clubs discuss if not Puerto Rican history or

¹⁴² This is evidenced by the latest state and federal Supreme Court debates over the legality of affirmative action in the workplace and in schools.

¹⁴³ See Eduardo Bonilla- Silva (2006) *Racism Without Racists: Color Blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in the United States* which expounds the meaning of racism in an increasingly anti-racist society that obscures traditional forms of exclusion in favor of racialized subtleties.

¹⁴⁴ Interview Conducted with Natalia Treviño (name changed) at the *Aspira* New York Office in Manhattan on September 12, 2011 by Principal Investigator Parissa Majdi Clark.

politics¹⁴⁵, Natalia elaborated that “the students now have turned more humanitarian, like natural disasters and poverty in other countries.” When asked what motivated these types of broader interests, she responded that “Aspira says ‘you’re going to college and you’re gonna give back. Although the kids have changed, they still stress [about] achieving all you can for yourself, for the community, for the kids¹⁴⁶.”

These comments bring up several important dynamics for future research. First, the ongoing struggle for academics to catch up with social media trends and data. In this case, youth appear to become compelled by generic, nonpolitical issues of human rights yet how that information is disseminated and depoliticized remains unknown to social scientists. Second, Natalia, herself the daughter of Mexican immigrants from Puebla who grew up in Queens, New York, appears concerned about the pressure put on second generation Latino youth to simultaneously cultivate successful personal careers as well as help their communities. When the weight of Ramos-Zayas’ neoliberal personhood is applied to this timeless immigrant dilemma, the Latino middle class self becomes confronted with even more pressure to conform to market trends such as pursuing careers for money as opposed to interest. Third, the behavior of this understudied Latino middle class in general behooves further investigation, especially as it pertains to philanthropy and the nonprofit sector.

Little has been written about large, power brokering organizations in the philanthropy/nonprofit sector such as Hispanics in Philanthropy¹⁴⁷ and the Hispanic Federation.

¹⁴⁵ These topics are apparently discussed but they do not represent the center of conversation as they once did.

¹⁴⁶ Interview Conducted with Natalia Treviño (name changed) at the Aspira New York Office in Manhattan on September 12, 2011 by Principal Investigator Parissa Majdi Clark.

¹⁴⁷ Hispanics in Philanthropy, located in San Francisco, serves as a hub for mostly west coast Latino foundational monies and grants. It distributes funds for new organizations and furthers the mission statements of those which already exist which are in line with their goal to “invests in Latino leaders and communities to build a more prosperous and vibrant America and Latin America” (HIP website www.hiponline.org accessed 9/01/14).

Apart from their choice to assert the term “Hispanic” as opposed to Latino or nationalist terminology, these organizations rest at the center of some of the most powerful Latinos in the country and control the flow of millions of dollars in private funds for various causes and organizations. The Hispanic Federation, located on Exchange Place in lower Manhattan with a national office in Washington D.C. and currently headed by José Calderón, is an overarching parent organization to dozens of Latino nonprofits in the Northeastern United States. Often mentioned in my interview with Aspira and UBP affiliates, their mission statement reflects their high visibility in the New York Latino nonprofit community and reads as follows:

“The Hispanic Federation provides grants to a broad network of Latino non-profit agencies serving the most vulnerable members of the Hispanic community and advocates nationally with respect to the vital issues of education, health, immigration, economic empowerment, civic engagement and the environment¹⁴⁸.”

How this high profile organization functions amidst high rates of Latino poverty and lack of access to education and services and in a resurgent era of anti-immigrant sentiment is of extreme interest. Similarly, Hispanics in Philanthropy, located in San Francisco, CA, represents a west coast version of an overarching organization aiming to channel funds and ideas in the Latino charitable giving sector. Though less prominent and less concentrated than its New York counterpart, Hispanics in Philanthropy has produced some research on these very questions of Latino middle class social mobility¹⁴⁹. Some more contemporary work such as that of Marx and Carter (2008) has investigated the nature of Latino charitable giving, finding that Latino giving

¹⁴⁸ <http://www.hispanicfederation.org> accessed 8/8/14

¹⁴⁹ President of Hispanics in Philanthropy Diana Campoamor (and other contributing authors) wrote in 1999 *Nuevos Senderos: Reflections on Hispanics and Philanthropy* reflecting on various trends among Latinos in terms of leadership in the nonprofit sector, charitable giving, and overall involvement.

remains below the national average, that the use of federated campaigns and organizations to pool community organizational resources could be instrumental in harnessing the potential of this growing demographic.

Aspira and the UBP in 2014

The effects of these external and theoretical pressures on Aspira and the United Bronx Parents can be seen in their daily operations and recent respective choices in programming. After the untimely passing of its previous executive director Hector Gesualdo in 2012, Aspira New York has not yet selected a succeeding executive director and remains engaged with its previous initiatives and programs in place¹⁵⁰. However, the Aspira national office is making new strides in the fields of social media and public health as its Facebook page status updates over the course of 2014 have almost all been dedicated to AIDS/HIV awareness and nutrition. In July of 2014, the Aspira national office announced a new partnership with the Potomac Health Foundation to prevent diabetes and obesity among youth in Prince William County, Virginia¹⁵¹. This shift toward public health represents an increasing popularity among neoliberal nonprofit organizations to “marketize” their services, or align their programs to current market trends. Given the climate of the ever expanding health care sector as a result of the enactment of the Affordable Care Act in 2010, this is a lucrative expansion on the part of Aspira.

The UBP has been compelled to expand its public health services since Lorraine Montenegro assumed the presidency after her mother’s death not because of market trends but

¹⁵⁰ According to its website <http://www.aspirany.org> accessed 8/8/14

¹⁵¹ <http://www.aspira.org/news/potomac-health-foundation-apoya-aspira-y-hola-en-promover-la-salud> Accessed 8/8/14

because of the greater availability of government funds in this area. As funds became less available for social services such as education, daycare, and food distribution, the UBP shifted its attention to the growing need of drug and HIV prevention and treatment. In the 1980's, the UBP expanded from educational and parent advocacy to include services to the homeless, abused women, and substance abusers. By 1993, it received grants monies from the New York State Health Department as a newly named Multiple Services Agency, a title which qualified the UBP to obtain a variety of government funds. In 1997, the UBP opened an innovative transition home for HIV positive substance abusers and by 2000 it began providing services to senior citizens.

However, the UBP's expansion may have contributed to a change in its identity that would ultimately damage the organization's autonomy. In 2012, Lorraine Montenegro reluctantly shared in an interview that the United Bronx Parents had recently agreed to merge with health services conglomerate The Acacia Network. Acacia has been ranked among the largest Hispanic nonprofit organizations in the country¹⁵² (as has Aspira) and as a multiservice organization provides health services ranging from asthma awareness to community health centers and shelters. When discussing the new merge, Lorraine was less than thrilled, implying that the United Bronx Parents had no choice financially but to join Acacia because of impending losses of funds. She insinuated that the UBP was coerced into joining Acacia because such funds had been deliberately denied leaving them with the difficult choice to join or close their doors.

Lorraine is no longer the executive director of the UBP as its leadership is now filled by staffers of Acacia. She has served as a "historical consultant" for the UBP for the last 2 years which entails sorting through the UBP archives and preserving the legacy of her mother's organization. In contrast to this founding, Acacia is a self proclaimed Hispanic nonprofit

¹⁵² According to Hispanic Business.com:
http://www.hispanicbusiness.com/branded/2014/nonprofits/2014_top_25_nonprofit_list.asp Accessed 8/10/14

organization based on its leadership and the types of other organizations that it has acquired over the years (Losaida Inc., The Community Association of Progressive Dominicans, Promesa, Hispanos Unidos de Buffalo). The Acacia Network website is somewhat cryptic in that its timeline shows when it acquired each of these organizations, but very little is said about its own individual background and history.

This change represents the intense pressure that *El Nuevo Despertar* groups faced to stay operational after the Community Development Agency's funds and reach came to a halt in the 1980's. It is clear why *Aspira* and other surviving groups, now including the UBP, opted to court corporate sponsors in order to preserve the vision and services of their founders. What must be considered politically, however, is how the mingling of corporate power and the ongoing colonial status of Puerto Rico can be reconciled, if at all. Given that Puerto Ricans remain one of the most impoverished ethnic groups in the U.S. and that the island of Puerto Rico is entering a new economic downward spiral following the latest global recession, the middle class and elite behavior of Puerto Rican philanthropists and corporate board members is a curious paradox. In New York City, this paradox becomes even more curious as droves of Puerto Ricans can no longer afford to live in Manhattan or the boroughs and are leaving the tri-state area in search of an affordable cost of living elsewhere.

This phenomenon is certainly not specific to Puerto Ricans, as the "new urban crisis" of gentrification following overall shifts caused by globalization is affecting millions of people of color worldwide. Smith (2002) describes this new urban landscape in the following way:

Retaking the city for the middle classes involves a lot more than simply providing gentrified housing. Third-wave gentrification has evolved into a vehicle for transforming whole areas into new landscape complexes that pioneer a comprehensive class-inflected urban remake (443).

What this means for working class people of color in New York City, Los Angeles, San Francisco and other large and desirable urban metropolises is that globalization has finally reached the most local level possible in the vein of neoliberal personhood- where one dwells. This sentiment came up in many of my interviews as multiple people expressed their dismay about their changing city. Delia Salazar commented that “I lived in the lower east side of Manhattan, which is now called Losaida and I still live in the lower east side .That’s a whole other story, I mean, I came to New York in 1950 so it’s been many years that I’ve been here and I’ve seen many transformations¹⁵³” with atone of disappointment, even regret. Lorraine Montenegro claimed that even the South Bronx, untouched by Smith’s (2000) first three historical waves of gentrification due to the sheer decrepit nature of the area, was starting to witness banks purchasing and renovating large housing units to be rented out as “Manhattan adjacent.”

¹⁵³ Interview Conducted with Delia Salazar (name changed) at the NY Department for the Aging on September 15, 2011 by Principal Investigator Parissa Majdi Clark.

Yet, the mood is not entirely dim as Elba Cabrera told me in her co-op city government subsidized high rise apartment:

“We’re still here to fight, we’re here to stay. A younger group might move out, but older people are here and we’re not going anywhere. We have political power, we have congressman Jose Serrano and the city council has quite a few Puerto Ricans. It’s not like we’re saying we’re gonna give up, we’re not gonna do that... The city belongs to us, we just have to get over the [economic] hump¹⁵⁴.”

In this spirit, while Aspira and the UBP today continue to advance the original goals of Antonia Pantoja and Evelina Antonetty it remains to be seen how the organization will preserve its legacy as a historically Puerto Rican serving and female founded organization. If the goal of (im)migrant struggles today is to simply sit at the negotiating table, more is at stake than ever in advancing beyond this initial point as the city and globe outside are falling to the hands of neoliberal exploitation. How organizations like Aspira and the United Bronx parents can not only negotiate rights for their communities but also now for the global population of disenfranchised people to which the colony of Puerto Rico is inextricably linked is pivotal in deciphering their, and other groups’, contemporary success.

¹⁵⁴ Interview Conducted with Elba Cabrera via Skype on February 27, 2012 by Principal Investigator Parissa Majdi Clark.

Appendix

Puerto Rican/Latino Community Leaders (Past and Present) Interview Guide

Principal Investigator: Parissa Majdi Clark

Protocol ID:IRB#11-002482 UCLA IRB Approved Approval Date: 7/29/2011 Through:
7/28/2012 Committee: North General IRB

Consent Script:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study on contemporary Puerto Rican and Latino nonprofit groups. Your participation in this interview is voluntary. The purpose of this research interview is to document and analyze changes in Latino/Puerto Rican nonprofit groups in the last 30 years. If you agree to participate, I will ask you to answer some interview questions over the course of about 45 minutes, which will be tape recorded for analytic integrity. Personal questions about your background will be included to give a foundational basis for your responses, but your identity and personal information will remain strictly confidential via pseudonym even in the final versions of this research. You may decline to answer any of the interview questions. Do you consent to participate in this study?

Work Past and Present- Change

1. What is your current career position and in which organization?
2. When and how did you become involved in this type of work?
3. Do you or did you at one time have an affiliation with Aspira? If so, how?
4. Did you consider this work to be political in nature then?
5. Do you consider this work to be political in nature today?
6. What type of mission statements motivate you?
7. Have the organizational mission statements that you have worked with changed in the last few decades? If so, how?

Identity

8. Where were you born?
9. Where did you grow up?
10. How do you identify ethnically or racially?
11. Do you use the term Latino/a? Why or why not?
12. What is your educational background?
13. What is your parents' educational background?

Work Current (organizational shifts, gender, corporate funding, mission

14. Why have you/did you chose to be involved in the nonprofit sector?
15. In your current or former organization, what are/were the demographics of the staff?

16. What challenges do/did the organization and others like it face?
17. How have corporations played a role in contemporary Latino/PR organizations?
18. Who does your organization primarily serve?
19. Is the Puerto Rican community visible in your organization (staff or membership)?
20. Does your organization use the term Latino or some other term?

Women in Nonprofits

21. Are women prominently represented in your line of work?
22. Did women used to be more prominently represented at another time?
23. What positions do women in these fields typically hold?
24. What is an atypical position for a woman in this field?
25. Are many women in leadership positions?
26. Have women's roles changed at all since you began your career?
27. What difficulties do Puerto Rican/Latina women face in this type of work?
28. At your organization, are the main development officers male or female? Has it always been this way?

Puerto Rican Specific (racialization, nationalism, citizenship)

29. What issues used to face the Puerto Rican community when you began your work?
30. What issues affect the Puerto Rican community today?
31. In your opinion, how do most Puerto Ricans born in the U.S. identify themselves?
32. Does the Puerto Rican community face any internal or external tensions?
33. In your opinion, what is the distinction between identifying as Puerto Rican, Latino, or Hispanic?
34. Do issues that affect the overall Latino community affect Puerto Ricans as well? Are there any differences?
35. Do Puerto Ricans believe that they are full citizens of the United States?
36. Has this belief changed at all?
37. Have Puerto Ricans in the United States been discriminated against in any way? If so, how?
38. Have Latinos the United States been discriminated against in any way? If so, how?
39. Does this discrimination still exist?
40. Do organizations focus on this as a part of their work? Why or why not?
41. Do Puerto Rican independence or island issues ever come up in Latino organizational work? If so, how?

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