

Suburban Chicago: The Latino Capital of the Midwest

John P. Koval

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ABSTRACT

Moving from the city to the suburbs has traditionally been more of an unspoken indicator about upward mobility than geographic mobility. The history of immigration to the U.S. is a history of urban immigration with American cities serving as ports of entry. Chicago was, and remains, the quintessential example of an American city populated, built, and run by immigrants. In fact, the city of Chicago has been a classic example of urban immigration and absorption. However, after years of White middle- and upper-middle-class dominance of suburban Chicago, Latinos are now at the forefront of the racial and ethnic integration of Chicago's suburbs. This analysis provides an overview of Chicago's racial/ethnic composition, its socio-economic landscape, and economic divides. In particular, the majority of Latinos in metropolitan Chicago—as well as the five other largest immigrant groups—live in the suburbs. Specifically, the city of Chicago is no longer the immigrant capital of the Midwest; rather, today, it should be conceptualized as suburban Chicago.