HISPANICS IN THE SUBURBS – COMMUNITY ADAPTATION IN OLATHE, KANSAS

BY

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Abstract

Olathe, a predominately white community in Kansas, went through a building boom in the late 1990s that "pulled" a wave of Hispanic immigrants into the area, a people that simultaneously were being "pushed" out of Mexico and Central America by government upheaval and economic turmoil. In this process Olathe people found they had to adapt to the new population in order to provide needed services, maintain their own culture, and ensure that local laws were observed by the immigrants. My study explores this process of change.

After reviewing the historical presence of Hispanics in Olathe between 1910 and 1990 and reasons for their recent surge in numbers, I employ a multifaceted approach to examine the adaptations made by the community. This consists of cultural landscape analysis, seventy-seven detailed interviews, quantitative spatial analysis of the results, and scrutiny of Hispanic-related articles in two local newspapers. I utilize the theoretical themes of *language as power*, *otherness*, and *hybridity* as guides to assess the overall process, including which cultural group in the community is wielding power under various conditions and how this relationship is tied to areas of Hispanic density.

Because perceptions are a guiding force for how people interact with space, I examine how interviewees' viewpoints of Hispanics and the majority's responses are affected by areas with differing Hispanic population levels. Similarly, I compare observed cultural differences with areas of differing Hispanic density. The results show that, in some cases, perceptions are impacted more by personal experience or deviations from cultural norms than by proximity to dense Hispanic locales. Several cultural differences, ways in which *othering* was exhibited or observed, cultural landscape types, and majority-employed adaptation methods are tied to areas having immigrant populations equal or greater than eight percent.

Using an agglomeration of interview and landscape-analysis data, I also create a timeline of adaptation by the Olathe community and discuss the sequence of change in the city. My research finds that Olathe's churches, schools, and probation services were the earliest responders by providing language services, special services and products, and adjusting to the Hispanic culture. Other business and organizations soon followed using these same approaches. They also implemented education and partnerships about and for the immigrants, including Hispanic traditions. Finally, I describe how acculturation efforts by the majority have affected Olathe, determine a percentage threshold for when an immigrant population starts to affect a host community, and suggest adaptation methods other communities may find useful.

Acknowledgements

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Between the times I first worked in Olathe, Kansas, in 2000, and when I then came back again in 2004, something had changed. It was subtle—the same way when you look at an old friend who just changed her hair style or went from glasses to contacts—but important. As I tried to put my finger on this difference, I happened to be considering where I was going for lunch that day. What sounded good? Greasy burger? No. Barbecue? No. Mexican? Perfect! I remembered Chapala's—the *one* Mexican restaurant that was there before—but as I drove around, I noticed new choices to pick among: Mi Ranchito's, Mexico Lindo, Mariscos Vera Cruz, Charritos, and Corona Garden. Wow, four years had produced at least five additional, "authentic" Mexican restaurants. I looked a little closer and saw that old strip centers were now being populated with businesses that displayed only Spanish-language signs in windows. I also noticed Hispanic[1] people. They occupied whole apartment complexes and walked through many neighborhoods and stores. Local 7-11 and Price Chopper stores had special aisles dedicated to Mexican products.

Not only were Hispanic people visible on the streets and in stores, I began to observe as well how they were impacting city government, schools, social-service agencies and other similar enterprises. In fact, my job gave me a front-row seat. I worked for the city's Municipal Services department, served as interim manager for the Office of Human Relations, and was active on Olathe's Diversity Committee and its Americana Jubilee Multicultural Festival.

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[1] I am using the word Hispanic to refer to individuals who come from Spanish-speaking countries or regions. This can include, but is not limited to: Mexico, many Caribbean islands, and most of the countries of South and Central America. People who fall in this category have also been referred to in various literatures as Latino, Chicano, and Mexican, and may be indicated as such if used in a quotation or as a reference.   My definition is similar to that outlined by the U. S. government for the 2000 census (U. S. Census Bureau 2000c).

Evidence for adaptation was everywhere. Businesses were offering brochures in Spanish.

Olathe Municipal Services had a Spanish-speaking employee to assist customers who came with

questions or to pay their bills. The school district had a bilingual department plus a number of

staff and school programs directed specifically at Spanish-speaking students and families.

Churches held services in Spanish. Grocery and convenience stores were modifying their stock

to meet Hispanics' taste preferences. Additionally in 2004, reporters for the Olathe News wrote

a series of articles about Hispanics in Olathe. All of these things led me to believe that the

formerly quiet and predominately white, middle-class suburban city of Olathe had acquired a

new complexity.   I decided to study this place as a case example of how communities adapt to a

new ethnic group.

When people talk about an immigrant population moving into a city, suburb, or

neighborhood, they often emphasize the acculturation of that population. But the place the

immigrants move to also adapts in a reciprocal process. This can be seen in ways that I have

noted above plus many others including city-sanctioned celebrations of the immigrants' native

holidays and the promotion of distinct neighborhoods.

In a study on Chinatown in Vancouver, British Columbia, Kay Anderson (1987)

demonstrated how an ethnic neighborhood is constructed more by the majority group to

categorize and confine a culturally different population than it is by the minority population

itself. This can be seen in Olathe. It is common to hear various non-Hispanic people refer to a

specific part of town that has an apartment complex largely populated by Hispanics and various

surrounding ethnic businesses as "Little Mexico."

Studies elsewhere have demonstrated that schools, churches, and police departments

adapt first as an immigrant population increases (Broadway 2006, De Leon 2001, Stull and

Broadway 2001). With a Hispanic influx, for example, schools may print flyers in both English and Spanish, give hiring preference to teachers who speak Spanish, provide English learning programs for students and parents, and/or provide Spanish interpreters (personal experience, Stull and Broadway 2001). Schools and churches may also establish recreational activities for Spanish-speaking students. Valerie Mendoza, for example, has documented sponsorships by Catholic and Protestant organizations in Kansas City through boy scouts, girl scouts, campfire girls, and sewing schools (1997: 186). Churches may offer bilingual services and literature (Chen 2004a, personal experience), open food pantries (Chen 2004a), list organizations that can help immigrants with various services (Cultural Relations Board 2000), and provide church staff who speak Spanish (personal experience). Police departments may hire police officers who speak Spanish, use the AT&T Language Line (an over-the-phone interpreter) to communicate with offenders, and provide bilingual literature (Davis 2005, personal experience, Stull and Broadway 2001).

A second way a city or suburb adapts is through businesses. Mendoza has pointed out that, soon after Mexicans became numerous in Kansas City around 1915, local liquor stores began to use Spanish language advertisements and cater to the new clientele's specific tastes (1997: 100). In addition, the Jones Store, a prominent department store in Kansas City at that time, ran an advertisement touting that they "had Mexican employees who served their countrymen with courtesy" (Mendoza 1997: 115).

As immigrants increase, so do the number of businesses adapting. This was what Mendoza found in the Kansas City of the 1920s and the same thing is happening now in Olathe (1997: 140). According to Tim McKee, vice president of economic development for the local chamber of commerce, "Many Hispanic businesses are opening to fill the basic needs of the

larger Hispanic community . . . . [They] are dispersed throughout the city, but clusters . . . can be found on Dennis Avenue and by Kansas Highway 7 . . . . There are definitely more Hispanic businesses than there was 10 years ago" (Chen 2004b: 8A). Smith and Furuseth (2004) observed that apartment complexes with a large number of Hispanic tenants quickly began to use Spanish language signs. As immigrant numbers increase, non-Mexican businesses start to advertise in Spanish, place ads in Spanish-speaking papers, establish aisles dedicated to Mexican products, and hire Spanish-speaking staff. Additionally, Daniel Arreola (1988) has found that brilliant colors provide a cue to recognize Hispanic ethnic identity on the landscape.

Still another way to adapt comes when the local place begins to celebrate holidays from the immigrants' native lands. A sure sign that the Mexican population was in Houston, Texas, to stay came when all residents of that city started to celebrate Mexican holidays (De Leon 2001: 10). Through personal observations in 2006, I saw something similar beginning to happen in Olathe. Much advertising for Cinco de Mayo was evident and Mexican restaurants were so crowded that day they commonly had customer wait times of an hour or more.

Similar Communities

An immigrant community typically produces a distinctive cultural landscape. This is a result of many factors, including isolation, an unwillingness to learn the local language, and a desire to have items reminiscent of native lands (Erdentug and Colombijn 2002, Mendoza 1997). An example from Pennsylvania has been described by Jian Guan: "As an ethnic community, Philadelphia Chinatown represents both residential and commercial concentrations . . . . It provides its residents and other Chinese visitors with a 'comfort zone', offering a sense of security and support in cultural, linguistic and spiritual aspects through social organizations, churches and kinship associations" (2002: 126-127). Traditional Chinese architecture, types of

businesses, business names, and a large gate marking the physical entrance are all ways in which that community has modified Philadelphia's cultural landscape to mimic Chinese culture. Olathe has not had such extreme adaptations, but changes are definitely occurring.

Considerable research exists on the economic impact made by Hispanic peoples on American states and cities. One such study focused on Nebraska (Decker, Deichert, and Gouveia 2008) found that immigrants made major contributions in terms of generating additional jobs, filling needed sectors of the economy, and substantially contributing to tax revenue. When these positive factors were weighed against additional costs for government and other services, Decker, Deichert, and Gouveia found "while the contribution-to-cost ratio is 1.0 for the native population, the corresponding ratio for the immigrant group is 1.07, indicating that this group 'pays in' about 7 percent more of what it uses in terms of governmental support" (2008: 1). These results imply that cities perhaps should be spending even more money on adaptation efforts than they are.

Lourdes Gouveia, one of the authors of the Nebraska study, previously reported her findings on the impact of Hispanics in the cities of Omaha, Lexington, Lincoln, and Grand Island (2006). There she discussed the benefits and costs of a large and rapid increase in immigrants:

> Our work documented the strain on local schools, the struggle of non-profit social agencies trying to provide housing and basic necessities for newly arrived workers, and an initial wave of crime associated with age as well as contingents of California-based criminal groups that sought to take advantage of this vulnerable population. By the same token, we documented benefits such as a healthy increase of sales taxes, the revitalization of downtown businesses (most of which were bordered up at the end of the farm crisis), and the fact that the immigrant presence created additional jobs for native-born or older residents while taking virtually none from them (160).[2]

Monica Davey has written about an instance in Fremont, Nebraska, where political leaders rejected an ordinance that would ban businesses from hiring illegal immigrants. This ordinance

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[2] Gouveia is referring to the newcomer Hispanic immigrants as the vulnerable population.

would have required businesses to use a federal database, E-Verify, before hiring and landlords to rent only to people who had secured a new city occupancy license costing five dollars. Landlords then had to turn such information over to the police (2010: A12). Although this Fremont experience does not demonstrate a community adapting to the Hispanic immigrants, it does show that their presence impacts the political scene.

Iowa is another Midwestern state impacted by what Mark Grey (2000, 2006) has referred to as "rapid ethnic diversification." Here, the bulk of immigrants arrived in a five-to-six year time span. Because Iowa has an aging population and low birth rates, most residents felt they needed new blood for a healthy economy. To attract immigrants, the governor started pilot programs in Marshalltown, Mason City and Fort Dodge (2000). Planning teams were set up to work with chambers of commerce and other community leaders in helping school systems deal with varying levels of English proficiency and high enrollment turnovers (Grey 2006: 48).

Health care professionals also made changes. The Iowa Department of Public Health created a new multicultural office and modified existing free or low-cost healthcare programs to accommodate Latinos. They translated printed and web material in Spanish, provided Spanish language interpreters, and allowed children to qualify regardless of their parents' immigration status (Grey 2006: 51-53). Law enforcement officials joined the Iowa efforts as well—hiring Spanish-speaking officers and creating Spanish languages videos to inform people of their basic rights and responsibilities (Grey 2006: 56).

Communities in other states are making adjustments similar to those in Iowa. The public school system in Frederick County, Maryland, for example, faced a 252 percent increase in Hispanic children from the year 2000 to 2010. Officials there have provided access to English Language Learner instructors at elementary schools. Older students get bused to a central

location for help. Simultaneously, the Frederick County YMCA has brought in interpreters for

potential non-English speaking members (Eckstein 2011).

As can be seen, cities all across the United States are responding to Hispanic immigrants

much like they are in Olathe. Hispanic numbers and presence have grown so that they have

become a part of the United States' culture, economy and politics. Their presence cannot be

ignored. Evaluating how communities are adapting should help the general process forward with

as much grace and ease as possible.

Overarching Theoretical Themes

Postcolonial theory often is applied to the aftereffects of areas where one group of people

has been colonized by another. Olathe should not be thought of as a traditional colonized area,

of course, but it has been greatly affected by a fast-growing Hispanic population. These people

came to fulfill labor demands. As their numbers grew to five percent of the city's population in

2000 and then to ten percent in 2010, business owners and service providers had to decide how

they were going to respond.[3] Postcolonial theory provides a context for these choices. This

theory is broad. If a different language is spoken, scholars may focus on issues of *language as

power*. Certainly, as a result of the different languages and/or cultures involved, the concept of

otherness becomes important. Finally, because of different ways in which the older and newer

groups interact in daily life, the issue of *hybridity or adaptation* arise. I will explore each of

these concepts in turn.

Additionally, I will look briefly at the more general issue of power in society and how it

can be employed and resisted. This idea was developed largely by the poststructuralist scholar

Michel Foucault (1980). Even though Foucault did not think of himself as a pioneer, he was the

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[3] From my experience and result of the interviews, Hispanics did not demand or request that the majority make such expansive changes or adjustments via language and customs. This is something the majority did without prompting.

first person to probe into the mechanism behind power or, in other words, how power impacts

the order of ideas. From this he reasoned that, to question power means to ask whom the

discourse serves—what set of ideas benefit which people? Foucault's basic idea certainly

applies to my research. The white majority population in Olathe clearly wields the local power,

and I want to explore how the perceptions and adaptations of this group have impacted the

Hispanic minority. These actions can be addressed specifically with the concept of *language as*

power, and in a wider context, with the ideas of otherness and hybridity. It is important to

recognize that the concept of power is always present even if it is not blatantly apparent, and that

it constantly impacts how people interact within and between spaces. As Foucault has said,

"Power *is* 'always already there' . . . one is never 'outside' it . . . [and] there are no 'margins' for

those who break with the system to gambol in" (1980: 141).

Furthermore, Foucault contemplated how power can be considered as a positive force.

This idea runs counter to a broad literature that refers to groups in power as always having a

negative influence. In his words:

> What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse. It needs to be considered as a productive network which runs through the whole social body, much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression (Foucault 1980: 119).

This idea provides another way to consider the impact of one group of people on another. It will

be useful with analysis of the varying concepts and in summarizing results.

Otherness

The distinguished literary scholar Edward Said (1978) once noted how Europeans tended

to group all non-European (Asia, Africa, Middle East) peoples together as not only different

from themselves, but also culturally inferior. Europe was the Occident in this mindset and non-

Europe was the Orient. Further, Said argued that the Europeans gained an identity from this labeling process. What he called Orientalism is now seen in more general terms, and has become known as the concept of *the other*. *Other*, therefore, is the idea of identifying one people as being different from another's norm in terms of some set of cultural practices (Bhabha 1994, Carli et al. 2003, Parameswaran 2002, Said 1993). Homi Bhabha (1994) has gone so far as to argue that everybody needs to have *the other* to exist, and that the concept is based on image rather than on reality: "It is always the production of an image of identity and the transformation of the subject in assuming the image" (44).

M. Satish Kumar (2002) has employed the idea of *the other* in his work on Madras (today known as Chennai), India. His theme is that the British colonizers there treated the native peoples in disparate, subordinate ways by defining them as fundamentally different from themselves in terms of language, caste, religion, race, and trade. As the concept of *the other* becomes ingrained in a society, it permeates a person's identity whether they have agreed to it or not. Edward Said (1978) addressed this idea when speaking about a man being Oriental: First he is Oriental, then a man. From this delineation, stereotypes can be extrapolated—true or not—thereby helping to predict *the other's* behavior. One example Said gives is from the nineteenth-century scholar Ernest Renan, who generalized that all Semitic speaking peoples must have the same cultural qualities and behavior (1978: 231). Additionally, ideas regarding anatomy, history, anthropology and even geology could be formed from these assumptions (1978: 232). Although these are only perceptions and not facts, they can enforce attitudes and drive behavior.

Said spent a great deal of time discussing Lord Evelyn Baring Cromer's[4] knowledge of the Oriental Egyptians and how he conceived it, because this knowledge impacted and guided how Cromer ruled and interacted with these peoples (1978: 38-39). This example is directly analogous to my study in Olathe and gives credibility and value to studying how and why a majority population perceives, reacts, and responds the way it does to an incoming minority population. Olatheans did not necessarily see the Hispanic minority as a group to be controlled or one of lesser value, but certainly they formed ideas about these people and then used this new knowledge to create policy and otherwise help integrate them into the community.

Identifiers of *otherness* are made visible in many ways, by how both groups of people act, think, and are perceived; how cultural identities are exhibited; and how differences in language are spoken or displayed. In fact, the creation of *the other* helps to maintain each group's spatial and cultural identity and to control their interaction. Said (1978) spoke directly to these points:

> We must take seriously Vico's great observation that men make their own history, that what they can know is what they have made, and extend it to geography: as both geographical and cultural entities—to say nothing of historical entities—such as locales, regions, geographical sectors as "Orient" and "Occident" are man-made. Therefore as much as the West itself, the Orient is an idea that has a history and a tradition of thought, imagery, and vocabulary that have given it reality and presence in and for the West. The two geographical entities thus support and to an extent reflect each other (4-5).

Homi K. Bhabha talked about finding identity when confronted by *the other*. This concept can be applied when looking at human interactions in space: "In postcolonial text the problem of identity returns as a persistent questioning of the frame, the space of representation, where the image – missing person, invisible eye, Oriental stereotype – is confronted with its

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[4] Lord Cromer spent twenty-five years ruling in Egypt on behalf of the British. He is recognized as having "raised Egypt from the lowest pitch of social economic degradation until it now stands among Oriental nations . . . alone in its prosperity, financial and moral" (Said 1978: 35-36).

difference, its Other" (1994: 46). From here we can question the space that exists and which group's identity occupies that space.

Said (1978) continued on to acknowledge that Orientalism can be used to study and understand the power relationship between the Occident and Orient: "Orientalism is more particularly valuable as a sign of European-Atlantic power over the Orient than it is as a veridic discourse about the Orient" (6). This is valuable to my study because it shows that, when investigating and understanding *the other*, I can use this information to understand the power relationship between Olathe business people, service groups, school officials, and others with Hispanics.

Said (1993) expressed the idea that *the other* challenges the notion of one's identity and often causes new alignments to materialize across borders, types, nations, and essences. Jenny Robinson (2002) made a similar point when looking at white British colonizers and black South Africans. She noted how colonizer and colonized not only impact self-identity, but also work together to form new histories and geographies. Again, Olathe is not being colonized, but changes made for *the other* can still impact majority identity. These changes can be through interactions based on law, government policy, cultural conventions, and practices. Robinson continued to say that part of recognizing *the other* is to identify common humanity and reach out for compassion and mutual recognition. This has been done in Olathe, where various groups have recognized how to help Hispanic residents to become part of the greater community and provided the tools for this interaction to take place.

Language as Power

Language is a useful means for communicating our thoughts, wants, and needs. But, when two different languages are encountered in the same space, they can become a source and driver of

power to guide, divide, and control or merge varying populations. When such juxtaposition occurs, the more powerful group of people can use *the other's* language to their advantage. Said (1978), for example, wrote that: "To have such knowledge of such a thing [i.e. the other language] is to dominate it, to have authority over it" (32). In this statement, Said was referring to Great Britain's occupation of Egypt in 1910, but the proposition certainly applies more broadly. In fact, I believe the idea of knowledge as power can be expanded to understanding and using the language of *the other* by the majority. Such knowledge can then be employed in various ways, including guiding the minority group in a direction you want them to go.

Said continued his point as follows: "Study of esoteric Oriental languages is useful for obvious rudimentary strategic reasons; but it is also useful for giving a cachet of authority, almost a mystique, to the 'expert' who appears able to deal with hopelessly obscure material with firsthand skill" (1978: 291). By learning *the other's* language the mainstream group increases their power and ability to control.

Said showed the modern applicability of this concept in discussion of a report made in 1958 on the "Present State of Arabic Studies in the United States." He and the report argued that foreign languages are no longer the "sole province" of humanity scholars. Instead, they are and can increasingly be a tool for engineers, economists, and social scientists for the design of policy objectives or propaganda efforts (Said 1978: 292). In Olathe, this statement is particularly relevant for how city officials and other Anglo leaders are employing the Spanish language as a means of advertisement, community building, supporting equal rights, and more.

As the numbers of Spanish-speaking people in Olathe increase, the majority English population has had to adapt, if only so the growing minority can understand the basic laws and cultural customs of the area. This can be communications as simple as advising people that

children need to wear seatbelts in the car, that a valid license is required to drive, that laws

prohibit the parking of cars on the lawn, and that children need to arrive at school on time every

day. To deal with this language barrier, service providers and others have sought Spanish-

speaking employees and interpreters, utilized brochures, or employed the AT&T Language Line:

> You come here [to the bank] on a Friday afternoon. Any one of our branches in Olathe at
> three o'clock and you will see folks getting off coming to cash their paychecks. . . . We
> have lines for folks in Spanish. This is the line for the check cashing because some times
> the volume is very large. . . . We have a flyer of our range of services in Spanish[5]. . . .
> [when explaining bank locations identified on the Spanish flyer] banking centers where
> we have bilingual representation. . . . Have certain compliance signs that are hung in
> Spanish. . . . We use a really neat digital signage solution amongst our banking centers. .
> . . We offer information slides on it in Spanish as well (T. Vargas, pers. comm.).[6]

Edward Said looked at the language-as-power issue primarily in terms of the colonizer

not speaking the native language and so being dependent on natives to interpret. In turn, the

natives could take advantage of the colonizer (Said 1993: 151). They could deliberately

misinterpret at times. They also could choose to either cleave to their native tongue as a way to

stay native or to learn the new language as a way to become one with the colonizer (Said 1993:

213). In Olathe, language is power in the context of the majority using it to assist the Hispanic

minority become accustomed to Olathe's way of life. In a sense, the English-speaking majority,

as the disrupted group, is employing the new population's Spanish language, not as a separator

or divide between the two groups, but to bring both segments together.

Cheryl McEwan has written that connections exist "between the relations of power that

order the world and the words and images that represent the world" (2003: 343). Similarly, Said

(1993) held that media is a mode of articulation that brings the world together. Their ideas in

action can be seen in Olathe when the local newspaper created a Spanish-language version of

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[5] This brochure explains what individuals need to do to obtain a loan and to open an account. The cover is designed
to be inclusive by saying *nuestros servicios* (i.e. our services).
[6] Tony Vargas (vice president of information technologies and chairs Hispanic Task Force at First National Bank of
Olathe), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, November 12, 2008.

itself and when the Olathe Public Library added Spanish-language materials. According to local

librarian, Lori Hyten (pers. comm.):[7]

> When I first came there were some Spanish-language materials, but a very, very, very,
> limited collection-very very very limited. And it became apparent to me. . . . that we
> were having a lot [emphasis] of Latinos coming into the library. And we didn't have
> stuff in Spanish language for them. . . . [The Spanish language collection] is a transitional
> collection, it's not intended to mirror or duplicate the main collection. It's for those
> Latinos who arrive in the Olathe community with little or no English. And it's intended
> to help them make the adjustment to this community. So it involves [an] emphasis on
> learning English material and on essential living skills, for instance pregnancy, health
> materials while someone is (the assumption being) learning English, they also need to
> raise their kids, take care of their health, cook, and to a lesser degree leisure materials.

The power in language can further be seen when colonized or minority peoples use such

abilities to enter the world from which they had been excluded. Carli et al. (2003) have

demonstrated this process when they studied border towns in Germany, Italy, and Austria. New

language skills led to increased job opportunities and social esteem. Lunga (2004) found a

similar situation in postcolonial Zimbabwe. Although both of these studies stressed how the

minority group benefited from new language skills, the opposite also is happening in Olathe with

the majority English speakers often reaping rewards from being bilingual. For them Spanish is a

tool to connect to and access the Hispanic immigrant community.

Hybridity

Hybridity is a term used increasingly in postcolonial and neocolonial discussions to

recognize the complexity and implications of modern culture. It is perhaps best understood "as a

communicative practice constitutive of, and constituted by, sociopolitical and economic

arrangements" (Kraidy 2002: 317). Intercultural practices are not static in most current

situations, but are continuously negotiated. Hybridity recognizes this new reality, and Kraidy

goes on to argue that the concept "belongs in the arsenal of the critical cultural scholar, because

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[7]Lori Hyten (reference librarian—Olathe Public Library), Interview with the author, Olathe, KS, August 14, 2008.

it illuminates issues of context, process, and representation central to intercultural and international communication" (335).

From Kraidy's words we can see that hybridity is a vague, though useful concept for exploring power relations and the results of those conflicts on language, customs, laws, and much more. Homi Bhabha (1994) has added that, when things are different, they produce hybridity. In other words, differences become drivers of adaptations (1994: 53). The idea is that foreignness can be an agent for change. This can occur, for example, when the immigrant element destroys the original structure of reference and communication:

> Not simply by negating it but by negotiating the disjunction in which successive cultural temporalities are "preserved in the work of history and at the same time cancelled."[28] . . . And through this dialectic of cultural negation-as-negotiation, this splitting of skin and fruit through the agency of foreignness, the purpose is, as Rudolf Pannwitz says, not "to turn Hindi, Greek, English into German [but] instead to turn German into Hindi, Greek, English."[29] (Bhabha 1994: 227-228).

Violet Lunga (2004) took on some of these same issues by studying how hybridity is reflected in and by language in postcolonial Africa by colonizing and colonized peoples. She recognized, for example, that this is a survival strategy where one group is adapting to gain power.

Cultural hybridity is not an instant process. Panos Hatziprokopiou (2003) stated how the incorporation of immigrants into a society involves "continuous and dynamic interactions" and varies depending "on the characteristics of the particular place where immigrants settle and organise their lives" (1033). Whether dealing with immigrants or natives, it is helpful to recognize the values that each group can contribute. Said, for example, has noted that if Europeans had respected natives more in the past by learning their values and characteristics and supporting them rather than taking over, a more peaceful transition toward a true hybrid culture could have taken place in the various colonial empires (1978: 249).

Said has gone so far as to claim that: "Indeed all culture is hybrid . . . and encumbered, or entangled and overlapping with what used to be regarded as extraneous elements" (1993: 317). Others support this view and Marwan Kraidy (2002) added the idea of how cultural mixing can be used in order to maintain control, a situation that exactly reflects what is happening in Olathe. By blending the dominant American culture with elements of the Hispanic one, the majority group is able to avoid subjugation by the minority population. Simply put, cultural mixing helps to preserve the majority's existing way of life.

The creation of cultural hybridity in a place can be propelled by an acknowledgement that *the other* can have a positive impact on that locale just as easily as not. One way this can be done is simply by recognizing the formation of immigrant networks. Hatziprokopiou's 2003 study of Albanians in Greece, for example, found that "like immigrants anywhere, [these people] unavoidably interact with the local population, which may result in the eventual breakdown of cultural barriers and prejudices" (1050). Such interactions take place socially and in the workplace, and can lead to "interactive networks of assistance in job-finding, teaching of the Greek language, and material help" (Hatziprokopiou's 2003: 1051). Also, groups have formed in Greece to help immigrants integrate into the host community. Hatziprokopiou found that such social networks and organizations played an important role in migrant incorporation.

Such cultural hybridity can be seen in Olathe. A group called the Hispanic Ministries Task Force was started there by a Spanish-speaking minister through a majority-dominated church. A number of majority organizations come together in this way to help assimilation. Their activities range from child care to city services to law enforcement (S. Romero, pers.

comm.).[8] By having the majority make adaptations—initiating hybridity—to the immigrant group, they establish a welcoming community.

Bringing all the theoretical concepts discussed above together, Said has written that: "Survival in fact is about the connection between things" (1993: 336). The English-speaking majority has exerted power—become the source of power—by deciding to use the Spanish language themselves in the form of brochures, translators, and smaller endeavors, as well as trying to understand the Hispanic culture in a more general sense. Such action has enabled them to maintain control of their city—to be assured that laws are followed, people are kept safe, learning environments are uninterrupted, and the new group not taken advantage of by others. When this happens, cultural boundaries are blurred, creating at least some neutral spaces where no cultural contestations occur (Lunga 2004: 295). Homi Bhabha (1994) has called such locales *third space*. Hybridity can remove the sense of otherness in this way and create an environment where groups gradually become part of the same community in the same space. Acculturation by the Hispanic minority is accompanied by acceptance by the majority, English-speaking population. This, in turn, helps the majority group to accept and incorporate more of the Hispanic cultural traditions without fear of losing their own.

Greater Contribution

As minority populations grow, city governments can either cope with change as it unfolds or wait until problems arise, thereby compromising community relations. It is in the interest of government officials to accommodate the interests and values of all residents because, when people feel connected to an area, they are more likely to keep neighborhoods clean and free of crime. In addition, a strong sense of community can help when fighting common problems

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[8] Sylvia Romero (pastora for Center of Grace Church), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, November 19, 2008.

whether they are related to political issues, transportation infrastructure, or environmental concerns.

This study should aid policy makers by identifying positive, negative, or neutral impacts associated with how a majority population adapts to a large minority immigrant population. Information gained about areas of past and potential conflict can be used to help resolve problems before they start. Areas that have little to no conflict can be used to identify best practices to model. It can help to clear up unknowns, alleviate fears and provide an understanding of how groups can adapt to each other. On a larger scale, this information may be useful for immigration reform policy. In addition, this study adds to the collective work being done on Hispanics in the United States, creating a more comprehensive picture of the impacts and contributions this group has made.

The Study Area and the Research Questions

Olathe, the county seat of Johnson County in east-central Kansas, was founded in 1857 (Map 1). Its name means beautiful and comes from the language of the Shawnee Indians who used to live in the area. The city once served as a stop along the Santa Fe Trail and its people still take pride in this heritage. A large metal sculpture of a wagon train was dedicated in 2007, and the community owns and operates the Mahaffie farmstead, which once served as a stagecoach stop. Olathe functioned as a typical Midwestern small town until the expansion of Kansas City led to its suburbanization about 1970 (Olathe Historical Society. Accessed November 3, 2009. http://www.olathehistoricalsociety.com/history_timeline.cfm).
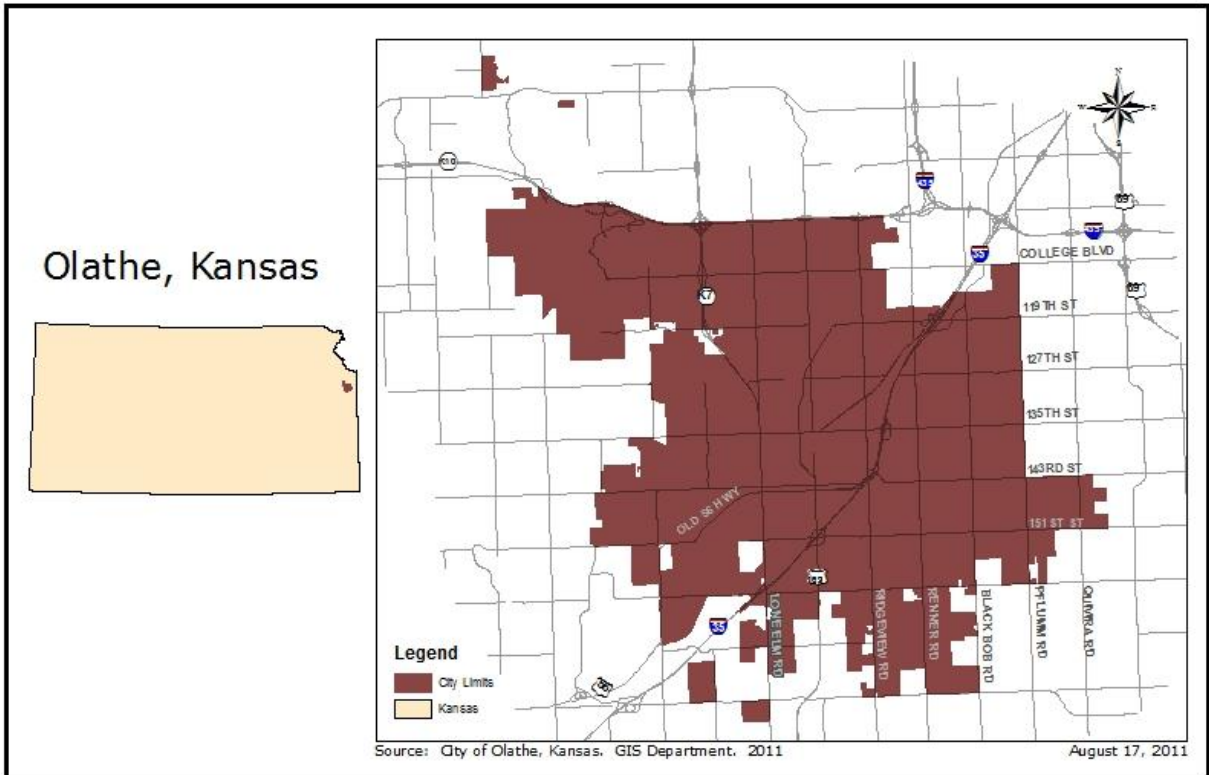
Map 1: Olathe's location within Kansas with details of the city limits as of 2009.

Olathe has been and remains a predominately white community (Table 1). Until 1990,

African Americans were the city's largest minority group, averaging about five percent of the

population from 1900 thru 1980. Hispanics then assumed this role with 5,060 (5.4%) people in

1990. The change in ethnicity was sudden and caused by a rapid suburbanization process that

produced a local boom in home construction and business openings. Leaders loved the growth,

of course, and touted the city as an ideal setting: small-town virtues combined with major

employers such as Farmers Insurance, Garmin International (navigation and communication

devices), the Olathe Medical Center, Honeywell (aerospace innovation design and

manufacturing), the Olathe School District, and Johnson County's government offices.[9]

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[9] All companies and agencies listed employed at least 1000 people in 2008.

Table 1: Population characteristics of Olathe, 1890-2005

Year	Total Population	Native Born	Foreign Born	Percent population Foreign born	Hispanic	White	Black	Other
1890	3,294	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
1900	3,451	3,310	141	4.09%	NA	3,198	249	4
1910	3,272	2,976	117	3.58%	NA	3,093	179	0
1920	3,268	2,876	167	5.11%	NA	3,043	219	6
1930	3,656	3,296	75	2.05%	NA	3,371	269	16
1940	3,979	3,679	65	1.63%	NA	3,744	235	0
1950	5,593	5,272	67	1.20%	NA	5,339	251	3
1960	10,987	10,881	106	0.96%	NA	10,563	395	29
1970	17,718	12,025	531	3.00%	107	17,353	479	85
1980	37,258	36,652	606	1.63%	472	35,685	899	674
1990	63,440	62,163	1,277	2.01%	1,145	59,731	1,912	1,709
2000	92,962	87,477	5,485	5.90%	5,060	82,393	3,440	7,129
2005	117,116	106,510	10,606	6.37%	6,965	89,387	7,400	3,958

Source: Census records and estimates[10]

Olathe is a good place to study current community adaptation because of its recent and major Hispanic immigration (Chen 2004b). That group's total was 1,141 (1.8% of the city population) in 1990 (Chen 2004b), but then rose sharply to 5,060 (5.4%) in 2000 (Chen 2004b) and to 10,771 (10%) in 2005 (Spivak 2005), an 844 percent increase in 15 years. Today Olathe has the highest concentration of Latinos of all Johnson County suburbs (Lewis and Ruiz 2006). The Olathe Daily News ran a series of articles in 2004 about different aspects of the local Hispanic community, suggesting how prominent this presence has become (Chen 2004a, Chen 2004b, Smith 2004a, Smith 2004b, Smith 2004c). In addition, on November 13, 2005, the Kansas City Star identified Olathe as the community most welcoming to diversity in the entire metropolitan area. As Jeffery Spivak wrote:

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[10] The official definitions for the various groups of people (Hispanic, White, Nonwhite, Colored, Black, foreign born, etc.) vary for each census, and this impacts the population counts. For example, people of Mexican origin may have been counted as white in earlier censuses but as Hispanic in more recent years. For values listed as NA, the overall city population was too few for that value to be published due to privacy concerns.

Their [the Latino] presence is spreading, and while they sometimes face discrimination, this city of bedrock values is making extra efforts to accommodate them . . . . It's the range of services and opportunities that has been drawing Hispanics to Olathe . . . . They [Latinos] choose Olathe . . . because of its affordable housing, because relatives are there, because of the schools and because of the community's lack of crime . . . . For both new immigrants and longer-established Latino residents, Olathe offers a lot to make them feel accepted (2005: A21).

The obvious Hispanic presence in Olathe intrigued me, and I wanted to see how businesses, social-service agencies, schools, government, and other elements of the mainstream society made adaptions to this segment of the population. Additionally, I wondered if differences in this impact varied spatially based on where concentrations of Hispanics resided. Impacts of adaptation theoretically could be anywhere from animosity to a feeling of enrichment by being exposed to a different culture and language. I wanted to know how this cultural change affected the community.

I started the research with the notion that local businesses, education, social service groups, government agencies and hospitals, would feel the impact first. They would have to adapt out of necessity. For example, children have to go to school regardless of their English-language ability and hospitals must help all people despite any language or cultural differences. In addition, I thought that money would be the motivator for adaptation by businesses. Finally, I thought the Hispanic minority would be the driver of change through its usage of Spanish.

In order to understand what was happening I asked the following research questions:

1. What historical role did Hispanics have in Olathe up to 1930?
2. Today, how has the influx of Hispanic immigrants into the suburb of Olathe caused businesses, social-service organizations, health-care providers, churches, police and others that serve the community to adapt? Has the adaptation impacted their perception (safety, quality, cleanliness, etc.) of the area they are in or of the city as a whole?
3. Today, are there any differences in the cultural landscape of areas dominated by Hispanics versus those that are not?
4. Today, does the majority population have any awareness of *otherness* associated with specific areas?

5. Today, have some organizations resisted adaptation? For those that have adapted, why are some of them more proactive than others? What does this mean? Does adaptation follow a sequence?

Chapters Overview

This dissertation consists of eight chapters after the introduction, each tying to the research questions. Chapter 2 covers how my study area was selected, how maps are used, and what was involved in my cultural landscape analysis. I speak about the interview process and how it contributes to gathering a fundamental understanding of the participant group as well as the sampling method and interviewee characteristics. Finally, I address how newspaper reviews were used and contributed to the overall research.

Chapter 3 takes on the challenging task of placing Hispanics in Olathe through time. I look first at the general background and origins of the Olathe community and then focus on why Hispanics have immigrated there. The chapter presents information on Mexican states of origin uncovered during interviews, what types of jobs the new arrivals held, and the reasons for coming to Olathe. Sometimes the stories they tell differ from those appearing in standard accounts written by Anglos. I start with 1930 and go to 2000.

Chapters 4 and 5 explore cultural differences and perceptions and are based primarily on interviews. Chapter 4 focuses on differences, and draws on newspaper information including inferences in articles or advertisements. I also talk about the spatial distribution of those opinions. Chapter 5, on perceptions my interviewees have about the Hispanic population and the adaptations the majority has made, draws on mental maps and the spatial interaction between the location of responses and Hispanic population concentrations. I specifically address senses of otherness exhibited by the majority population and what that means.

Chapter 6 presents my analysis of Olathe's cultural landscape. I discuss visible distinctions between majority and Hispanic houses and businesses while exploring cultural and

socioeconomic causes for these findings. I also discuss how my results compare to stereotypes identified during interviews and differences that exist based on respondent locations.

By piecing together information from interview questions and mental maps, I provide an overview discussion in chapter 7. I list how different sectors in the community have adapted to the Hispanic presence in the city. I provide explicit examples along with maps comparing adaptation rates for various neighborhoods to the patterns of Hispanic residence. I then present a timeline of events based on collected interview data. Discussions of how these changes fit with overall themes provide a sense of response to Hispanic immigration.

Finally, in a concluding chapter 8, I tie all the findings back to the original research questions. I identify positive, negative, and neutral impacts of the various adaptations and discuss how the results can be used.

CHAPTER 2
STUDY DESIGN

Geography is about spatial relationships—studying how people, places, and things interact in space and the result of those interactions. To better understand these relationships and influences between the Olathe establishment and the city's new Hispanic community I decided on a four-pronged approach: cultural landscape analysis, interviews, quantitative spatial analysis of the interview and landscape results, and study of Hispanic-related articles in the local newspaper—the Olathe News—as well as the Kansas City area bilingual Spanish newspaper—Dos Mundos. Katriina Soini (2001) among others has recommended such a multifaceted approach for community study. The combination of methods provides a reasonably holistic approach to the social adjustment now taking place in Olathe. The method will generate hard data, of course, but in addition will provide a more humanistic sense of place so that readers can obtain a deeper understanding of how a majority population adapts to a new minority.

Selection of Study Area

Basic mapping of Olathe's Hispanic minority population was an essential prerequisite to studying the adaptation question. U. S. census tract data was used for the study of Hispanic populations in America by both Arreola (1988) and Smith and Furuseth (2004) and I followed their lead. Using the basic tools of the 2000 census and a Geographic Information System (GIS), I set out to identify areas with a significant minority population and, for comparison, majority-dominated spaces of comparable age and income.

Smith and Furuseth (2004) have suggested 15 percent of the total population as a threshold figure for determining if a minority's presence is significant, but admit that this number is arbitrary. For my study, I used a more conservative figure of 5.5 percent. Nine census tracts in Olathe had a Hispanic-origin population value at least this high for the year 2000 (U. S.

Census Bureau 2000b). Other characteristics about the Hispanic population can be determined

by combining their identified location with the desired attribute. I mapped based on median

household income as described below (Map 2).
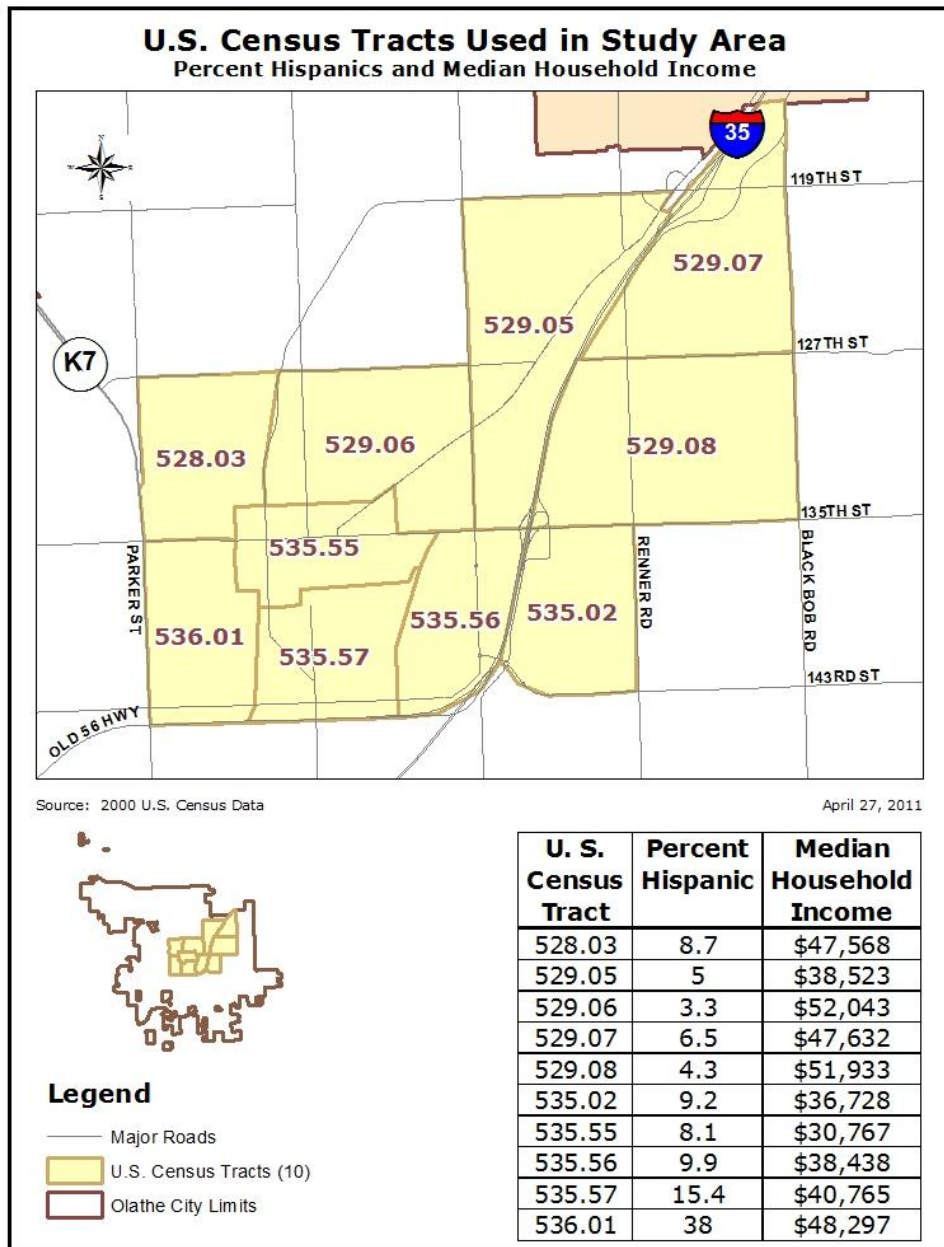
Map 2: U. S. census tracts used in study area with percent Hispanics and median household
income.

I focused my study on tracts that have a significant population of Hispanic peoples. To help identify if any differences existed in how the majority was adapting to these minority populations there, I also picked contrasting study areas using data on median household income. I used household figures instead of family figures for this analysis so that all people (regardless of relation) using the location as their place of residence would be included in the tabulation.

Cultural Landscape Analysis

A landscape, whether one thinks of houses built, flowers planted, or signs erected, is a direct outward expression of culture. Some of the effect is subconscious, but a lot of it has to do with people's expression of themselves or what message they want to convey. By exploring the cultural landscape of Olathe I hoped to see how people's presence both in terms of the Hispanic minority and the majority's adaptations to this group are reflected outwardly to the community. In theory, these reflections should provide a personality and sense of place for the area. They also should give insight into who is exerting power both actively and passively.

Carl Sauer set the foundation for considering landscape as a needed part of cultural geography. He focused on how humans interacted with and impacted the natural environment. For him, the landscape was a text to be read. Sauer's methods were based in phenomenology by observing and describing first the natural environment and then the actions of humans in modifying that landscape. He recorded information that included geomorphology, housing structures, and materials, population density, mobility, communication skills, religious beliefs, and political systems, just to list a few (Mitchell 2000, Cosgrove 1989). I used these ideas at the root level when collecting my observations.

Sauer saw landscape as a tool with which the history of an area could be discovered. Denis Cosgrove shared similar views with Sauer in the importance of describing and interpreting

the landscape. He has written that some of the most interesting geography can be found by decoding landscapes of our everyday lives. Finding the meaning of landscapes tells us much about ourselves, and sometimes the best clues can come from seemingly "superficial expressions" such as flags and graffiti (Cosgrove 1989: 124, 133-134). Someone who is proud to be an American, for example, may have an American flag hanging on the outside of their house just as someone who is proud to be Mexican may have a Mexican flag.

Don Mitchell has taken the argument even further, saying that it is better to think of landscape as a stage or theater—instead of text—so that one can see how life plays out (Mitchell 2000: 124). By doing this you are able to identify the source of power that is directing and guiding the "movements, actions, experiences, and emotions" of the actors (Mitchell 2000: 125). This idea from Mitchell helped me identify ways in which the majority in Olathe has been adapting to the Hispanic minority and then examining whether the source of power for those adaptations lies with the majority or the minority group. Examples of visual indicators shaping the landscape and giving clues to the power source are when a business wanting to show they welcome Hispanic patronage places advertisements in Spanish on their window or when those not wanting to serve Spanish-speaking customers place signs saying "Only English Spoken Here!"

Cosgrove believed that landscape is a "way of seeing" (Cosgrove 1989: 121). This provides a specific perspective to interpret the world, offering control of interpretation to the viewer and not the creator.   So, how the cultural landscape is observed by others impacts the definition of that space and how people treat and travel through it. It is important to note that, regardless if the perceptions are true or not, they are the driving force for people's actions. Cosgrove also wrote that landscapes are "multi-layered, offering the possibility of simultaneous

and equally valid different readings" (1989: 123). Furthermore we can get a deeper understanding of the impacts of a group on an area by using the concepts of culture and consciousness—in this case the Hispanic minority on the majority and their adaptation to it in Olathe. According to Cosgrove, "culture is not something that works through human beings, rather it has to be constantly reproduced by them in their actions, most of these being the routing unreflexive actions of daily life. . . . A suburban householder may well be equally unaware when mowing the lawn of maintaining a cultural sign of propriety in a proprietory landscape, so mundane has the practice become" (Cosgrove 1989: 123). I used these ideas to help me interpret the landscape and make connections to thoughts and actions expressed by people casually and formally in interviews.

During my time working in Olathe before the idea for this dissertation emerged, I sometimes would have casual conversation with people regarding Hispanics in the area. When I would ask "What part of town do they live in and how do you know?," a typical answer would go something like the following: "The house is run down. There is a bunch of junk in the yard and there are a lot of cars in the driveway. It wouldn't be unusual if one was up on blocks. They keep the insides of their houses neat, but I don't think they maintain the outside of their houses where they come from." Those comments, along with my own observations from driving in the area, were my inspiration to incorporate cultural landscape as a key component to understand Olathe's adaptation to and perceptions of the Hispanic community.

My husband, Dana, and I drove up and down every street in each of the census tracts on Sundays between approximately at 8:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. from July 17, 2008, through August 30, 2009. Sundays were a deliberate choice. People are home weekends rather than at work and

some of my interview conversations suggested that Sunday would be better than Saturday. Four

examples follow:

>August 21, 2009, Superintendent of Olathe's Park and Recreation Department, Brad Clay:[1]
>
>>The dad works 6 days a week. Sunday is the day off and their day to come together. . . . Let's come together at this park on Sunday for two hours. What's great about their culture, what you see, it's not just dad out there playing but kids are out there playing too. . . . Go out on Sunday there would be a gazillion teams of Hispanics out there playing. [On Sundays] they are packed up at Black Bob Park. They are out at Lone Elm Park soccer complex. They are also at Prairie Center. . . . At Oregon Trail Park, under renovation now, but he would be out there with his kids playing soccer, you would see—it was so cool, you would see this whole Hispanic Community migrate out there. Some playing baseball, soccer, sand volleyball. It [Sunday] was their day to recreate.

>March 27, 2009, Director of Sales for Residence Inn by Marriott, Michelle Gressel:[2]
>>Sunday is a day of rest for them.

>April 3, 2009, Painting Company Owner, John Gutierrez:[3]
>>On Sundays when they [Hispanics] weren't working, a lot of them would go to church, then afterwards they would congregate in the yards and have little parties and stuff.

>February 20, 2009, Wal-Mart Store Manager, Jim Miller:[4]
>>We are growing Hispanic population as far as shopping since we opened in May until date. I'd say we've probably more than doubled as far as what I see on weekends. Most of the shopping is done on weekends, as far as the Hispanic population. Saturday afternoons and Sundays are really strong for us.

Dana would drive so that I could focus on the landscape, but he also pointed out things of

interest. I was looking primarily for identifiers of adaptation by majority businesses or

organizations such as displays of national flags, signs in Spanish, bilingual materials,

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[1] This was in response to the question: "You mentioned you've been trying to bring Hispanics into the programs. Have you had any luck with that?" Brad Clay was working to find ways to incorporate the Hispanic community into the Olathe's recreation programs. Through his efforts he became familiar with the time and ways they choose to recreate.

[2] This was Michelle Gressel's response when asked about cultural differences. Michelle also works in close contact with a number of Hispanic women on the housekeeping staff.

[3] This is John Gutierrez's response when asked "If there are any visual indicators of Hispanics in Olathe."

[4] This is Jim Miller's response when asked "What has been the response for you [by Hispanics] with the increase in product lines?"

advertisements for bilingual staff, use of bright colors, displays for holidays, and the like. As I

came across an occurrence, I would jot a number on my map, write down the details in my field

notes, and often take a photograph. I highlighted each street as we completed our observations

there (Appendix 1).

Because cultural landscape is an outward expression for the majority's adaptation, the

minority's existence, and an indicator for the source of power guiding those actions, I used it to

help answer the following research questions:

1. Does the Hispanics' influence on the cultural landscape impact the majority's perception
   of those areas?
2. Today, are there any differences in the cultural landscape of areas dominated by
   Hispanics versus those that are not? Is there any difference in an outwardly response, i.e.
   signs with Se Habla Español in the window, by the majority in areas with a higher versus
   lower concentration of Hispanics?
3. Does the cultural landscape impact any sense of otherness by the majority?
4. Today, have some organizations resisted adaptation?

Sauer, Mitchell and Cosgrove agree that beliefs, values, and ideas of culture shape the

landscape, while Mitchell adds issue of power and capitalism. Mitchell's perspective was

helpful to my study because capitalism is certainly the driving force for defining which parts of

town are most highly populated or traveled to by the Hispanic population. Additionally, his look

at power as the ultimate identifier for landscape is also useful in looking at how the Hispanic

population is impacting an area. This was easily seen in signs businesses displayed. An example

I saw daily prior to starting my study was for a doctor's office. A large sign on the front of the

building's overhang close to the street read Clinica Medica.[5] Then a sign attached to the building

gave more information about their practice in Spanish (Photo 1).

Cosgrove has described using interviews as a way to evaluate the accuracy of landscape

readings, to help present "evidence free from conscious distortion. [It is a source] that can

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[5] Clinica Medica means medical clinic or doctor's office.

inform us of the meanings contained in the landscape, for those who made it, altered it, sustain it,

visit it and so on" (1989: 127).   I took his advice. Combining landscape and interview findings

provided further insight into the landscape while helping to understand the power guiding

Photo 1: Spanish language display. Prominently located on the outside of a building in Olathe.

adaptation. In addition, I was able to get a sense if the Hispanic population was accepted into the

community by spatially examining cultural landscape interview responses with concentration of

Hispanics in the U. S. census tracts. I took the locations of outward cultural expressions and

mapped them against responses to research questions. Some examples are:

1. Houses with a lot of cars and messy lots versus interview responses to what areas feel
   unsafe to get an idea of people's perceptions.
2. Locations of Spanish words versus responses to interviewees that have Spanish speaking
   positions to get an idea of adaptation and source of power.

Also, by mapping where Spanish verbiage was being used in the census tracts while looking at

Hispanic concentrations, I could identify the power source—the driver of adaptation.

Interviews

As I have described earlier, many previous studies have focused on how a minority

population adapts to the majority when they move into an area. With my experience in Olathe, I

could see that adaptation was going both ways with non-Hispanic groups printing information

pamphlets in Spanish, businesses providing full-time Spanish interpreters, and grocers stocking

Mexican-based food products. I wanted to know to what extent and how this was impacting the

majority group by proposing the following research questions:

1. Today, how has the influx of Hispanic immigrants into the suburb of Olathe caused businesses, social-service organizations, health-care providers, churches, police and others that serve the community to adapt? Has the adaptation impacted their perception (safety, quality, cleanliness, etc.) of the area they are in or of the city as a whole?
2. Today, does the majority population have any awareness of "Otherness" associated with specific areas?
3. Today, have some organizations resisted adaptation? For those that have adapted, why are some of them more proactive than others? What does this mean? Does adaptation follow a sequence?

Research by Broadway and Stull on immigrants in Garden City, Kansas, and in Brooks,

Alberta, shows that the people who responded earliest to the minority immigrant population were

social-service groups, police, churches, schools, businesses, and similar agencies. Such

organizations are in touch with a wide cross section of residents and should have a good sense

for how people feel about the increase in the Hispanic population. Taking their research into

consideration, I felt that to really get a sense of what was going on, I needed to focus my

interviews on businesses and service groups because they deal with people at all levels on a day-

to-day basis. Specifically I talked to people associated with: an apartment complex, banks,

churches, community leaders, the corrections department, city government, grocery stores,

hospital, industry (hotel, landscaping, manufacturing, painting, car dealership), insurance offices,

the library, nursing home, real estate professionals, schools, social service, and stores (liquor,

home improvement, auto parts, convenience, discount, small electronics.) I felt this would give

me a reasonably comprehensive picture of how much adaptation was happening with the

majority population, how they felt about it, and how those feelings and perceptions differed among neighborhoods with higher and lower concentration of Hispanics.

Spatial variation in the adaptation process was an important part of my study. To this end, I used maps to make sure all of the city's census tracts were adequately represented. I then used GIS combining census tracts and research question results to better understand where and the extent to which adaptation was occurring. In order to do this, codes were created based on research questions. I went through each interview looking for responses that matched a code. The results were then sorted by code to agglomerate into an answer for each question. Additionally, the coded responses were mapped so that I could see how participants' perceptions and experiences were represented spatially in relation to the high and low concentrations of Hispanics. The old adage "a picture is worth a thousand words" is the best way to describe the benefit of using maps to analyze my research questions:

1. Today, how has the influx of Hispanic immigrants into the suburb of Olathe caused businesses, social-service organizations, health-care providers, churches, police and others that serve the community to adapt? Has the adaptation impacted their perception (safety, quality, cleanliness, etc.) of the area they are in or of the city as a whole?
2. Today, does the majority population have any awareness of "Otherness" associated with specific areas?
3. Today, have some organizations resisted adaptation? For those that have adapted, why are some of them more proactive than others? What does this mean? Does adaptation follow a sequence?

Bradshaw and Stratford (2005) have indicated that, for qualitative research, sample size should be determined by what the researcher wants to know and what will provide the richest, most meaningful, original data. No exact sample size determines this. I used criterion, snowball, opportunistic, purposeful and theoretical sampling methods. Criterion sampling based on my personal knowledge was used to identify businesses or organizations that have made specific changes to better serve or interact with the Hispanic population. Snowball sampling was utilized

within the various organizational groups by talking with a variety of sources in the community who recommended other informants. Opportunistic sampling gave me the flexibility to seize leads that arose during an interview. This enabled the use of results from my cultural landscape observations to identify additional businesses or organizations to contact.

An example of the opportunistic approach is provided by two auto parts stores from the same chain. A sign on the door for one shop located in the high Hispanic concentration part of town said "Se Habla Español" (fieldnotes, July 15, 2008). This led me to check out the comparison store on the other side of town. I also used theoretical sampling. As stated by Agar (1996: 172), theoretical sampling is used to obtain data for comparison with a group you have already interviewed. When I mapped out my interviews after they had been completed, I noticed a lack of participants in two census tracts that had lower concentration of Hispanics. I therefore sought out the additional informants in those tracts so that I would better be able to test my questions of adaptation.

I conducted a total of 77 interviews (Map 3). At this point I was reaching the point of theoretical saturation, meaning I was getting no new data (Agar 1996: 172). Still, I felt a need to interview a few additional people who might be in a position to have significant interaction with the Hispanic population or who might have valuable insight into Olathe as a whole. The last three entries of the 77 participants included a leader of a prominent church, a former newspaper editor, and a nursing home chief executive officer.

When seeking people to interview I tried to focus on non-Hispanics. When I contacted people to take part in the study, however, I often got referred to an organization's designated Hispanic contact person. Even though I was looking at the impact from the majority's perspective, I decided to interview several people in such liaison positions since they obviously

had heavy interaction with the Hispanic segment of the community. Their perspectives proved to be useful.

I did not purposefully seek specific racial percentages for participants. Because of the study's focus, I was more concerned about a good representation of businesses and organizations. Interview race breakdown was White 57 (74%), Asian 1 (1%), Hispanic 16 (21%), and Black 3 (4%). There were 35 males (45%) and 42 females (55%). I also did not make it a requirement that my interviewees live in Olathe. I was interested in the business and organization perspective, and so felt that someone who was involved in the area through their work or volunteering would have just as much insight as someone who lived in the area. During the interviews I did ask place of residency, however. As it happens, 51 or 66% of those participating did live in Olathe. Additionally, 4 or 5% used to live in Olathe.

Interview Locations

Gender
- Female; 42; 55%
- Male; 35; 45%

Race
- Asian; 1; 1%
- Hispanic; 16; 21%
- Black; 3; 4%
- White; 57; 74%

Residency
- Not Olathe; 22; 29%
- Olathe; 51; 66%
- Formerly Olathe; 4; 5%

Value; Number; Percent

Legend
- ★ Interview Locations (77)
- Major Roads
- U.S. Census Tracts (10)
- Olathe City Limits

Source: Maggie Book's Interviews July 31, 2008-July 17, 2009   April 28, 2011
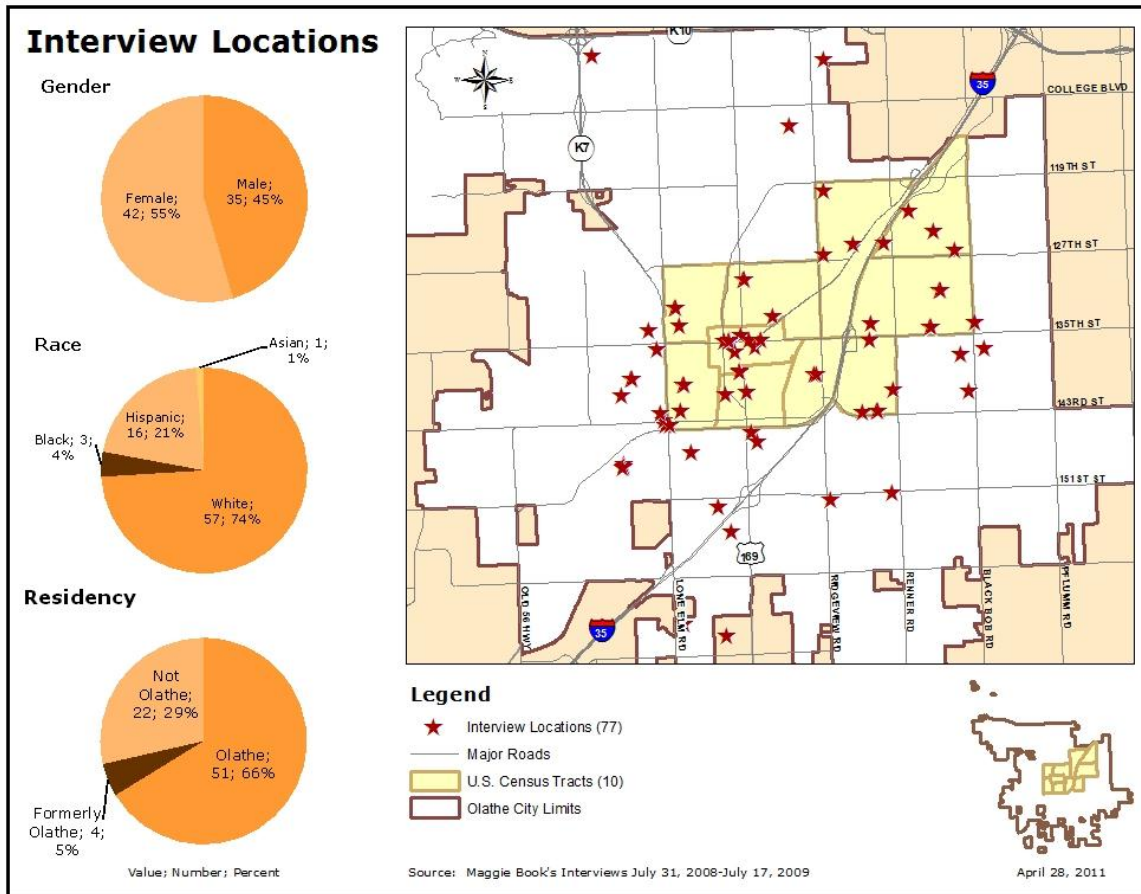
Map 3: Location of interviewees and breakdown of participants by race, gender and residency.

I was pleasantly surprised at the positive responses my interview request received. Most people were happy to help. I only had five no's: at a title company, one elementary school (teacher and principal,) a grocery store, and a dollar store. Once they declined to participate, I simply bid them a good day and thanked them for their time. I had one person not appear for an appointment we had set up.[6]

Informants were initially contacted by phone. I introduced myself as a KU doctoral student in geography and identified how I had obtained their contact information. Telling the name of the person who recommended them almost always put them at ease. I think that my

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[6] He owned an apartment complex that was well known for being occupied mainly by Hispanics. I tried to reschedule with him, but he would either not return my call or be ambiguous about meeting. I stopped trying to meet with him after a third attempt to set an interview failed.

cold-call interviews participated out of curiosity. Still, I could tell they felt more comfortable when I presented my KU student business card as well as the informational letter I discuss below. I next explained the curiosity that led to my dissertation project and how an interview with them would provide insight on the subject. I asked for approximately one hour of their time, and explained that we could meet at a public place that was convenient for them. Most interviews were conducted at their place of employment, a couple at a coffee shop, and one at a book store. I advised them that they could review any part of their interview that might be used in my final paper and that their identity could be held in confidence if they chose to do so. I had to receive special permission from the Olathe School District to speak with administrators and teachers. This was done by submitting my proposal to the district's research project facilitator along with a list of people I wished to speak with. Upon approval they issued a letter saying I was allowed to proceed in the school district with a list of their restrictions.

Once an interview was scheduled, I sent the participant a letter (in a couple of cases emails were requested). This letter was on KU letterhead and summarized the information stated above, outlined their rights for being interviewed, and included my advisor's contact data. Interviews were semistructured. Dunn (2005) has described this format as operating from a written list of formal questions and topics. These questions did not have to be asked in an exact sequence, however. This method allowed flexibility so as to let the informant guide the interview to some degree, to address issues they wanted to talk about, and to uncover topics I did not include in my original research design. At the same time, of course, it also ensured that all the questions needed for my research were covered.

Interviewees received an information sheet ahead of time about what the interview was going to entail (Appendix 2). At the interview they also received the list of the questions to be

posed (Appendix 3). I asked if they objected to my use of an audio recorder. If they did object, I took hand notes. In the end, I took hand notes for 8 interviews, audio recorded 68 others, and utilized email for one set of questions and answers. My decision to provide options to remain anonymous and to review parts of the dissertation that pertained to their interview helped respondents to feel more comfortable and willing to participate. One interviewee was particularly explicit about the review options because he had been misquoted in the past. Four people added their own caveats, mainly that confidentiality would not be necessary when being used in the scholarly realm, but would be if published for a wider readership. Others wanted to make sure that their company's name would not be listed specifically, but instead referenced by general category. Overall, 48 or 62% of the respondents said that they did not need their identity concealed, 4 or 5% only needed to maintain confidentiality outside scholarly work, and 25 or 32% wanted their identities to remain confidential. The participants who wanted to verify their data were 32 or 42%.

Adhering to special requests helped me gain the trust of people I did not know personally prior to the research. To respect confidentiality wishes, I gave pseudonyms for names and used the generic category for their business type. Everyone who participated received a summary of the project so they could see the results of their contribution.

I used an oral-consent procedure for interviews instead of a written one (Appendix 4). This decision was based on a concern that people who did not know me personally and were not familiar with university procedures might be uncomfortable with signing a written consent form. I thought the latter would lower participant rates, which would have led to the loss of valuable information. During most of the interviews, I started the recorder and then read the written consent form to the subject. I asked the person to verbally acknowledge that they understood

and to state whether or not they wanted their identity to be confidential. I also offered them a

copy of the form. If the subject preferred for me to take written notes, I read him/her the form

and asked for verbal acknowledgement that they understood. I also offered people a copy of the

form (most gave it back or threw it away) and made it clear when I was and was not recording.

Sometimes people would tell me things "off the record." I wanted to respect their wishes and not

appear sneaky in my methods.

Interviews were conducted from July 31, 2008 through July 17, 2009. I started with the

people I knew (18 or 23% of the total), before moving on to the ones they recommended (35 or

45%), and then those I identified during landscape analysis (24 or 31%). Interviews ranged in

length from 16 minutes to 2 hour and 48 minutes. The majority took between 45 minutes and an

hour and a half. Sometimes, the short interviews provided better information than the longer

ones. Some people were straight to the point, others elaborated a great deal on their answers.

Some of the longer interviews were not particularly fruitful, but the in-depth conversation was

sometimes necessary to ease comfort level or just to hear what they had to say. Sometimes, too,

tangents provided valuable information that I was not originally looking for. Since each of these

people had been gracious enough to make time for me, I felt it respectful to listen to what they

had to say whether on topic or not. At times, I had to steer the conversation back to the question

at hand.

I had one to four interviews scheduled per day. If an interview was going really well, I

was willing to miss my next appointment and ask forgiveness to get the data. Once this

happened when I was meeting with a lady who co-owned and managed an apartment complex

that housed mainly Hispanics. She was providing lots of rich data and I did not want to interrupt

her. So I listened and asked questions. Consequently, I missed my next appointment with an

individual who ministered to a prominent church. It took several weeks to meet with him after that, but the data I received from the apartment interview was well worth it.

Most interviews were one-on-one, but two had multiple people participating. In these instances, I made sure all parties were okay with talking in front of one another. Generally speaking, those multiple interviewees fed off of each other's comments and in some cases added clarification.

I wanted to make each informant feel comfortable during the interview to help them provide fruitful information. If I knew the individual, we chatted for a bit to catch up before starting with the questions about themselves and their organization. If I did not know the person, I started by asking a few general questions to help ease the informant into the process. I would also answer questions they asked of me. However, if I thought the responses to these questions might affect the interview data, I told them I would be happy to share that information after the interview was over so it would not influence their participation.

Since the interview process was semistructured, I let the interviewee somewhat guide the conversation. I would skip over scheduled questions if they had already been answered during the conversation, for example. This helped the participant feel like I was paying attention to what they were saying. When a break occurred, I would go to the next logical question based on the previous comments. This helped maintain the flow of conversation and echoed the advice of scholar Katy Bennett when she wrote that: "whilst you should have a checklist of the issues you would like to cover, you should be prepared to let the encounter run its course, as this will not only allow the interviewee to express herself in her own way but also raise matters you might not have anticipated" (2002: 155).

Part of the interview included participants sharing their mental map of Hispanics in Olathe. The terms mental or cognitive maps are used to describe the way a person's internal thoughts and perceptions about an area can be displayed visually to understand how they move through and within space. Such cartography makes the images accessible for analysis, and "provides a way of exploring what is 'out there' as well as what is 'inside us'. As a mode of representation, all maps might serve as objects for examining human perceptions of the landscape" (Soini 2001: 225).

Participants all had a working knowledge and certain comfort level about the Olathe area. They each were given a base map showing city limits and major roads (Map 4) and asked to draw in areas they thought had a lot of Hispanics or were highly influenced by Hispanics.[7] After a participant finished, I asked him/her to explain why they marked the map as they did and then then followed up with asking if, by just looking around, would they be able to pick out where someone of Hispanic heritage lived and if there were any parts of town they felt were unsafe.

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[7] In hindsight, I should have included railroads as a layer on the map because they are prominent feature in Olathe and people did ask where they were located on the map during interviews. However, I did ask a number of people at all technical levels and residence status before settling on the final map. During that process no one mentioned including the railroads.
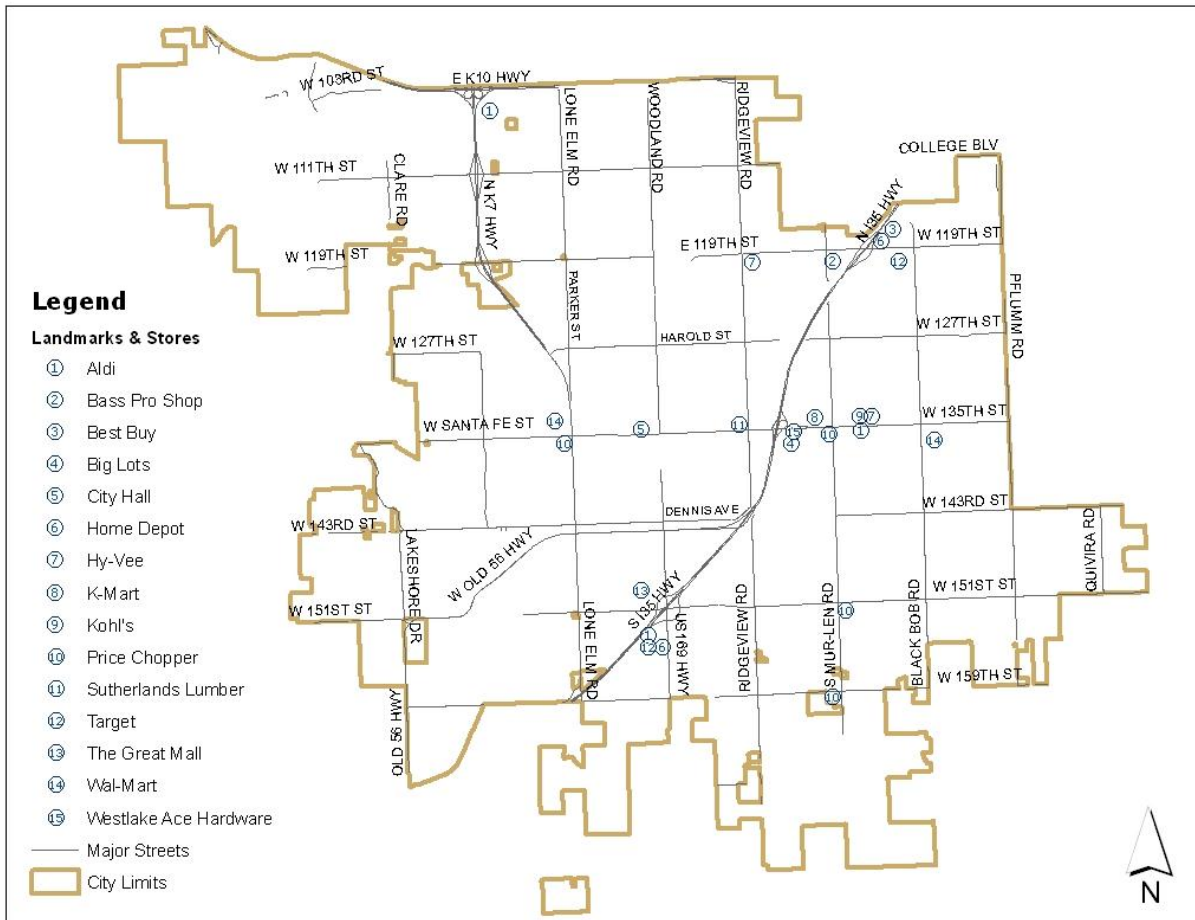
Map 4: Base map used by participants to capture mental map data.

I looked at the mental map results while the interview was still in progress and compared its patterns with the answers given to my other questions. This process allowed me to identify inconsistences between the two data sources, thus providing a scrutiny for validity on issues of cultural differences, perceptions, and adaptations. In some cases the comparison led to additional questions for clarification. At the end of the interview I would double check that all the questions got answered and then ask if they had any questions for me.

I wanted to keep my own experiences, perspectives and opinions in abeyance so that I could collect and understand the details of the interviewees' experience and perceptions without being clouded by my own. I tried as much as possible to go into each interview with an open,

clear mind. Soren Larsen has employed the phenomenologist's term *bracketing* for this process, a way to keep "one's academic and personal perspectives [out of the way] to learn directly from other people through [their] firsthand experiences" (2002: 68). Using this technique enabled me to focus on the person at hand, asking questions to further my understanding of his/her experience.

Once the interviews were completed, I needed to convert the taped information into a written format. I planned to transcribe each interview. To this end I purchased a speech recognition software <u>Dragon - Naturally Speaking 9</u>. I tried it on the first few interviews completed, but so many words were missed or misinterpreted that I had to go through the audio and transcribe anyway. After one interview took eleven and half hours to write up and another seven, I decided there had to be a better way. I also had a timeline to take into consideration for completion of the interviews, because a chance existed that I would have to move at any given time due to my husband's job. If that happened, it would make it very difficult or even impossible for me to finish.

After consultation with my advisor, a decision was reached to complete all my interviews before transcribing. This ensured that all the interviews would be completed in timely fashion. To keep memories of each interview fresh, I wrote down a summary of each meeting at the end of each day, noting what the person looked like, surroundings and anything special that happened or that I saw during the interview.

The difficulties with transcription also led to a decision to take notes from the interview tapes instead of constructing verbatim transcriptions. I listened to each interview (reviewing frequently) and typed my notes. This procedure worked well, as I was able to identify and stress salient points and type out direct quotes when I came across juicy bits. This saved me time and

made it easy to find needed quotes when writing.[8] For interviews where I took notes by hand, I typed those out within a day of the interview. I wanted to maintain as much accuracy as possible since I did not have an audio to fall back on.

Anne Kearney and Stephen Kaplan (1997) have written about how cognitive structures vary from person to person because of different experiences. Certainly, my interview participants had different back stories that would influence how they see and perceive the world around them. So, when the perceptions and other answers were repeated by others, I gained more confidence that these views were general rather than specific to any one individual. This duplication provided validation and verification for my research questions. As Larsen has stated for his study in British Columbia: "when an interpretation of mine checked out across a large distribution that included all ethno-religious groups, for example, I knew it possessed a high level of validity for Southsiders in general. Similarly, when an interpretation possessed a large distribution within one of the three groups, I knew it had substantial validity for that ethnic sector" (2002: 82). However, scattered responses indicated that further research or a new approach was needed to gain further understanding. These validity techniques were applied to all portions of analysis.

Newspaper Review

Studying newspapers is an obvious way to supplement interviews as a means for obtaining an insider's perspective on my basic dissertation questions. Consequently, I undertook a careful reading of the Olathe News from May 10, 2008 through September 26, 2009 focusing on the issue of how much Hispanics were considered a part of the community by this mainstream media outlet and thought to be newsworthy. Briefly, I found that articles addressing Hispanics decreased when the newspaper's editors changed. Even though the number of articles decreased,

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[8] Even though time was saved, it still took a total of 12,922 minutes or 215.4 hours to convert audio to text!

I was still able to identify many instances where businesses, organizations, or the general community were adapting to Hispanics and the degree to which Hispanics were becoming a part of the community based on advertisements, legal notices, help-wanted advertisements, photos, and high school sports articles. I looked for items such as "Spanish interpreters available" as part of an advertisement in Spanish, names of Hispanic origin in legal notices, appearances and/or names of people in photos, festival entertainment with a Hispanic twist, and requests for "Spanish-speaking skills". All of these show an acceptance and adaptation by the majority in business and/or culture. I also looked for any indicators that Hispanics were not welcome or that an organization was not going to adapt to their presence. A job advertisement stating "Must speak English" is one way to make that clear.

Other signs of adaptation and acceptance by the majority are when they know where to post information to reach the Hispanic community. From my time as interim manager with Olathe's Office of Human Relations, I understood that the Spanish-language newspaper Dos Mundos is where city departments advertised when they wanted to make sure they reached potential Hispanic candidates. Reading a couple of editions confirmed this note—Dos Mundos is indeed a major vehicle for communicating among Hispanics in the Kansas City metropolitan area. Moreover, advertisements in this newspaper for stores or services located in Olathe imply that the Hispanic community in Olathe is now a part of the bigger Hispanic group in the Kansas City area.[9] They also suggest that Hispanic people in Olathe are reading Dos Mundos to get their information. In addition, advertisements in Dos Mundos by the majority white population in Olathe are an indication of their adaption to their new Hispanic customer base. Apartment complexes, jobs, grocery stores, service advertisements (doctors, general stores, etc.) also

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[9] La Peque is an example of a Hispanic convenience store that carries imported goods from Mexico and other Latin American countries. It also sells fresh-made Hispanic food such as tamales.

advertise. I looked through editions of <u>Dos Mundos</u> from May 8, 2008 through June 17, 2009.

Newspaper work helped me to answer the following research questions:

1. Today, how has the influx of Hispanic immigrants into the suburb of Olathe caused businesses, social-service organizations, health-care providers, churches, police and others that serve the community to adapt?
2. Today, have some organizations resisted adaptation?

CHAPTER 3
HISTORY OF OLATHE AND THE HISPANIC PRESENCE

"Location, Location, Location!" This byword of realtors is usually applied to neighborhoods, but is equally accurate for cities, and certainly is true for Olathe. The community's history goes back to shortly after the inception of the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 that created Kansas Territory. Opportunities in the new land attracted people from the more populated eastern United States, and some of them created Johnson County in 1855. Local settlement was delayed two years until a survey of land recently vacated by the Shawnee Indians could be completed. Then, Dr. John T. Barton selected a town site central enough that it could be considered as a courthouse location. Olathe was officially named the Johnson County seat in 1859[1] (Bauer 2006; Cutler 1883: 624-645; Enright 1988; Olathe Centennial 1957). According to the 1860 census, most local settlers' ancestry was from England, Germany, Ireland, and Scotland.

Conflicting stories exist as to how the actual name "Olathe" came about. Some include a legend of a Shawnee maiden named "O-la-thee" and her lover Wa-zi. When O-la-thee died, Wa-zi buried her in the prairie among the wild flowers. Wa-zi then is said to have guided Dr. Barton as he laid out the town site. As the two men were overlooking the prairie, Wa-zi supposedly whispered "O-la-thee" in memory of his young love. Dr. Barton asked its meaning, which is "beautiful," and felt that the word encapsulated the place's feeling. He decided it should be the name of the new town (Enright 1988).

Another, less complicated story about the town's name says that Dr. Barton was traveling with a Shawnee guide called Dave Dougherty. When Barton saw this particular prairie site he

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[1] Dr. Barton was a physician assigned to Shawnee Tribal Headquarters (Bauer 2006, Enright 1988, Olathe Centennial 1957).

was taken aback and asked Dougherty if he knew the Shawnee word for beautiful. The answer, of course, was "O-la-the" (Bauer 2006, Cutler 1883).

Besides its county-seat functions, Olathe's location also was favored by a position near the main path of the Santa Fe, Oregon, and California Trails. This proximity was exploited primarily by the family of J.B. (Beatty) Mahaffie, who in 1863 established a stagecoach stop on their 570-acre farm just northeast of town. This became a popular first day's destination for travelers going west from Westport, Missouri (Bauer 2006, Olathe Centennial 1957). The Mahaffie's provided supper and a place to sleep for many, plus noon-day dinners for other travelers (Olathe Centennial 1957).

Trail travel effectively ended about 1870 with the development of local railroads. Olathe people adapted to this change by securing spots first on the route of the Kansas and Neosho Valley Railroad south from Kansas City (Mr. Mahaffie was even on the board of directors) and then on track running from Ottawa to Kansas City that eventually became the main line of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad. Townspeople also acquired a second institution to supplement the courthouse. The Kansas School for the Deaf moved to Olathe from Baldwin City in 1866 (Bauer 2006).

As the years passed into the 1930s and 1940s, U. S. highways joined railroads in Olathe and the city gained additional economic stability when a Naval Air Station was located there, bringing with it a large number of military families. Then, after World War II, Johnson County began to see rapid urbanization growth and Olathe became known as a "bedroom community." As one local historian explained: "people could live in the small, quiet, somewhat rural community and work in the busier, more crowded, and more cosmopolitan city" (Bauer 2006: 42). By 1960, when Interstate 35 was completed through the city, Olathe's access to other cities

in the Kansas City metropolitan area became even easier. Two major employers also

materialized: the federal government's regional Air Traffic Control Facility and MidAmerica

Nazarene College.

From 1970 to 1980 Olathe's growth doubled from 17,718 to 37,258 as the city continued

to become a suburb for neighboring Kansas City, Missouri. During this time urban renewal

efforts demolished older neighborhoods, widened major roads, and constructed new city

buildings (Bauer 2006). Olathe's population nearly doubled again over the next decade to

63,440 by 1990. Its hospital added a cardiovascular center and a twenty-four bed emergency

room, and the city now became large enough to attract a number of sizeable businesses.[2] The

increase in Olathe's ability to be self-sustaining is exemplified in my interviews, where 66

percent of the participants actually worked and lived in the city. Such growth has produced

prosperity and allowed local officials to pursue extensive development and redevelopment of

both the downtown and residential areas (Bauer 2006).

The Hispanic Presence, 1910 thru 1930

Hispanic peoples have been a part of the Olathe community since 1910 according to U. S.

census manuscript records. Seven Mexican-born residents are listed that year. This number

increased to 76 in 1920 and to 88 in 1930, making the group about two percent of Olathe's total

population during those years (Table 2). Small as these numbers were, Mexicans nevertheless

constituted almost 70% of the city's foreign-born total population in 1930.

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[2] Large employers are listed in chapter one on pages 19-20.

Table 2: Mexicans and foreign-born population in Olathe, 1910-1930

	Olathe Total Population	Total Foreign-Born Population	Number of Mexican-Born Residents	Mexicans as % Total Population	Mexicans as % Foreign-Born Population
1910	3,272	117	7	0.2%	5%
1920	3,268	167	76	2%	45%
1930	3,656	126	88	2%	69%

Source: U. S. census records and estimates

Previous studies by Judith Laird (1975) and Valerie Mendoza (1997) have established the general framework for immigration and cyclical returns between Mexico and the Kansas City area in the pre-1930 period. The first big immigration push was the Mexican Revolution of 1910-1920, augmented by generally poor economic conditions at home. At first, single men would come to the United States to work three-to-six months at a time and then return to Mexico. For some people a cycle of movement was created, depending partly on the work available in the United States and partly on the timing of agricultural needs in Mexico. Other men brought their families with them to the United States. This was especially true during the Mexican Revolution and on other occasions when their home environments were tumultuous and unsafe. Most of the migrant families never intended to stay in the United States, but many ended up doing so as new opportunities presented themselves (B. Kramer, pers. comm.).[3]

The political and economic unrest in Mexico made this country a fertile recruiting ground for various American railroads in search of cheap labor for their maintenance crews. In particular, the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad was active in this regard. This company had a line that ran from El Paso, Texas, to Chicago, Illinois. It also had ties with the Mexican Central Railroad. These two conduits acted to move Mexicans deep into the Midwest (Laird 1975). Railroad officials would first recruit people to come to El Paso and then transport them to

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[3]Bill Kramer (Railroad retiree), telephone conversation with the author, Olathe, KS, November 14, 2006. Mr. Kramer graduated from Olathe High School in 1941 after which he started working for the Santa Fe Railroad. He left for three years to serve in the military, and then came back to Olathe to work a total of 43 years for the railroad before retiring in 1988.

different rail yards throughout their system to work (Mendoza 1997). The Mexicans could be paid cheaper wages than the Irish labor force that currently existed, and they had a reputation of being capable and hard workers (Duker 1983). To induce people to come north, the railroad men often offered free transportation for employees and their families not only to the work location, but also back home a certain number of times per year. The companies also paid for lodging, water, and heat, plus some food and an agreed-upon wage (B. Kramer, pers. comm.; Laird 1975; Mendoza 1997).

It is hard to trace the hometowns of recruited workers for this period because of a lack of records. However, historians have identified two core source areas: the northeastern border states (Chihuahua, Coahuila, Durango, Nuevo León, and San Luis Potosí) and the states of the central plateau (Aguascalientes, Distrito Federal, Guanajuato, Hidalgo, Jalisco, Michoacán, Zacatecas, Querétaro, and Tlaxcala) (Laird 1975: 5). Judith Laird also has provided more specific information on a tendency for immigrants from the central plateau to by-pass "these northern groups for locations in the interior . . . . Migrants from the interior of Mexico found their way to the Midwest locations via the railway network" (1975: 83). She found that, for the Kansas City, Kansas, area, over fifty percent of the city's Mexicans in the 1910-1930 period came from the states of Guanajuato and Michoacán (Map 5). The next three highest states were Zacatecas, Jalisco, and Aguascalientes (Laird 1975).
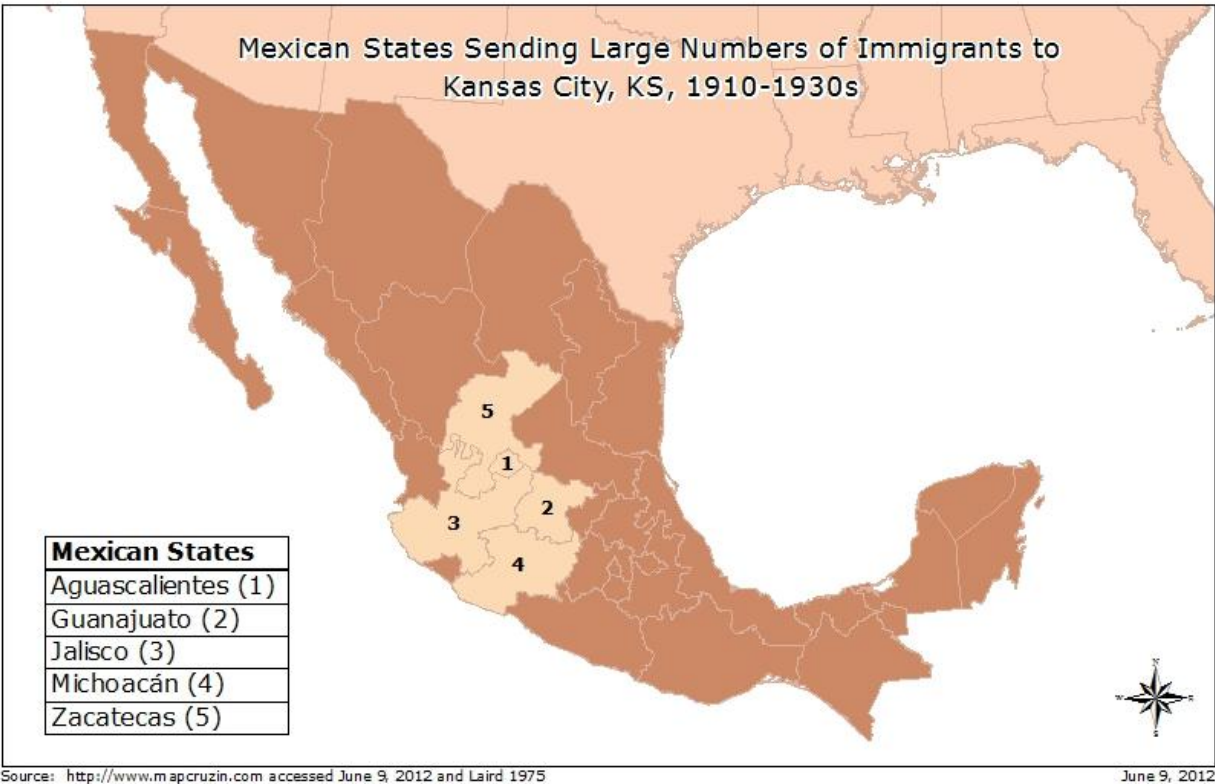
Map 5: Mexican states sending large numbers of immigrants to Kansas City, Kansas, 1910-1930s.

It is easy to see how critical the railroads were in bringing Mexicans to Olathe, because every job listed for them on the census manuscripts from this period has "railroad" listed as their employer. This was part of a national trend as described by Laird. Although some immigrants came for jobs in sugar beet fields and other endeavors, railroads "utilized more Mexicans than any other single industry" (Laird 1975: 27). Of the three railroad lines that ran through Olathe during the 1910-1930 period—Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe (Santa Fe); St. Louis and San Francisco (Frisco); and Kansas City, Clinton and Springfield—the first two definitely hired Mexican workers (Map 6).

Map 6: Location of Hispanics in Olathe 1920-1930.

Both of these railroads had yards within the city limits: Santa Fe's on Kansas Avenue and

Frisco's yard on Keeler Street. Both lines also provided housing, including a Santa Fe bunk

house at the intersection of Willie and Prairie Streets (Map 6). Bill Kramer (pers. comm.)

explained to me how the railroad companies divided their tracks into block sections. Each block

station had section workers and offered housing either in bunk cars and/or permanent structures

provided by the railroad.

The U. S. census manuscripts do not always list the name of the specific railroad

employing each Mexican immigrant, and I could not derive this information from other

geographical references on the manuscript. The 1910 U. S. census data was so limited, in fact,

that I was not even able to identify the parts of town where individuals lived or which railroad lines they worked for (Table 3). For the 1920 and 1930 censuses I was able to do better.

In 1920, nineteen of the thirty Mexican railroad workers in Olathe were employed by the Santa Fe (Table 3). The Frisco line employeed eleven. Five other workers existed for whom I was not able to identify an employer, but I was able to assess that these five lived in rural Olathe Township. The 1930 U. S. census shows the Santa Fe railroad as the employer for 54 out of the 64 immigrants. I was able to locate five of these people inside of city limits (Table 3).

Table 3: Number of Mexican railroad employees in city or rural areas, 1910-1930

	Total	Unknown	Santa Fe (city)	Santa Fe (rural)	Frisco (city)	Either (rural)
1910	6	6				
1920	30		14	5	6	5
1930	64		5	54		5

Source: U. S. census manuscripts

Bill Kramer helped shed light on the immigrants' jobs, saying that most of them "came as track workers and stayed after that as section line men. [The] railroad had extra gangs that would repair tracks and re-lay ties in summer time. Most Mexicans came on in this role, and then ended up staying on at stations as section gangs (laborers) that would do normal maintenance the rest of the year" (pers. comm.). James Ducker, providing more detail, has written that "the crew would spend most of its day reinforcing weak roadbeds, tapping down loose pins, replacing worn ties, and clearing the right-of-way weeds, grass, and debris" (1983: 4). Reports from the Johnson County Coroner reveal that 8 out of 17 or 47% of Hispanics identified died as a result of railroad related accidents. It was definitely a hazardous life.

The vast majority of the Mexican railroad labor forces were men. Census manuscript numbers reflect only one employee in 1910, 1920, and 1930 as female (Table 4).

Table 4: Mexican workers and families by gender and year, 1910-1930

	Railroad Worker	Non-working (Family)	Total
1910	6	1	7
Male	5		
Female	1		
1920	25	51	76
Male	24		
Female	1		
1930	64	24	88
Male	63		
Female	1		

Source: U. S. census manuscripts

We also can tell that many immigrants brought family with them (Table 4). In 1910, there were two married couples and three unaccompanied males (known as solos) (Table 5) (Laird 1975, Mendoza 1997). In 1920, the number of families increased to 19 and solos to 6. As indicated by Laird (1975) and Mendoza (1997), this increase in families likely was to escape the Mexican Revolution that was going on during this decade. After the period of turmoil, it again became more common for solos to come to the United States to make money and then go back home. This trend is reflected in the 1930 census figures. Most of the families reported for 1930 immigrated after 1925, while two immigrated in 1918. I can speculate that those in the 1920s did so to seek new opportunities, but it is hard to say what their motivation really was. Almost all of the solos have no immigration date on the census forms while a few list 1929. The Mexican economy was still poor at this time and so jobs likely were the lure for immigrants (Table 5).

None of the individual names listed in the censuses were repeated in subsequent years. This implies short stays in Kansas, but my interviews suggest families did remain in Olathe and continued to work for the railroad (B. Kramer, pers. comm.).

Table 5: Number of Immigrant Mexican families and solos in Olathe, 1910-1930[4]

	Families	Solos
1910	2	3
1920	19	6
1930	8	57

Source: U. S. census manuscripts

As stated previously, the Santa Fe and Frisco railroads both provided bunk cars and houses in Olathe for their Mexican workers. Families and solos lived in both types of shelter, with the houses reserved for permanent workers. As one of my interviewees remembered, the Santa Fe's versions of such housing "were built out of clay tile that are like brick except larger and hollow. A foreman would have his own house [while] . . . section line workers (linemen) would share a bunk house. As many as four families would share. There would be a breezeway in the middle with two families on each side" (B. Kramer, pers. comm.).

Bunk cars were utilized by temporary and traveling gangs. As the gang moved, these cars would move with them. Each one was equipped with metal army cots, a heating stove, and a shower facility, but not much else. People knew they would be living in them for only a short period of time. The railroads also provided water and coal for heat. "Water was received by bringing a tank car; then they would go to the car to get their water" (B. Kramer, pers. comm.).

According to my telephone conversation with Bill Kramer, regardless of whether the workers lived in permanent or temporary housing, they often mixed with the people in Olathe and other towns in the vicinity. This may have been a daunting task at times since many of them did not speak English. No information on languages spoken is available for 1910, but in both 1920 and 1930 only three of the migrant individuals could speak English. In 1910, 3 out of 7 or

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[4] Families can include children and in-laws plus widows (or widowers) with children and in-laws.

42% of the migrants could read, although it is not stated if the skill was in English or Spanish. In 1920, 26 out of 76 or 34% could read and in 1930 the numbers were 9 out of 88 or 10%.

Migrant children definitely went to school in Kansas, although a difference in evidence exists between findings for the Argentine District of Kansas City, Kansas, by Mendoza and what I found in Olathe. Mendoza has written that Mexican children were often not accepted in public schools and so had to attend private Catholic schools to get an education (1997). However, in my conversation with Bill Kramer, he said his wife went to school with Mexican children in 1930 in the Clare public one-room school house.[5] Still, my search through the school records available in the Johnson County Archives for all school houses in the county revealed no Mexican names. Possible explanations include teachers changing the student names so that they were easier for others to read and write, misspelling of children's names, or me not being able to read the handwritten records clearly.

The Hispanic Presence Since 1980

During my interviews, I asked each respondent when they had started to notice the Hispanic presence in Olathe. Dennis Pine, who had worked in the city's code enforcement department for twenty years at the time of his interview and therefore frequently crossed through all the city's neighborhoods, said the date was the late 1980s. This was the start of the current Hispanic growth that has continued to the present day. Pine remembered that he saw both families and single men, but mainly Hispanic males. He stated: "When we would talk to them, they would say they work here and their families were back home" (D. Pine, pers. comm.).[6] In 1980, Olathe's population was 37,258 with 472 or 1.2% identified as Hispanic. As the general population nearly doubled to 63,440 in 1990, the Hispanic contingent grew even faster, to 1.8%

[5] Clare is a community southwest of Olathe on the Santa Fe line, but still located within Olathe Township.
[6] Dennis Pine (senior community enhancement officer—City of Olathe Codes Enforcement Department), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, November 7, 2008.

or 1,145. The same thing happened the next decade, with the general population rising to 92,962

in 2000 and the Hispanic segment increasing to 5,060 (5.4% of the population). Such a change

may seem insignificant to cities in the United States that are filled with diversity, but to a

predominantly white, Midwestern suburban community, this was huge. The impact was echoed

in many of my interviews:[7]

> December 3, 2008, principal at Central Elementary, Stephanie Dansco:[8]
> I remember when we weren't even talking about other cultures. . . . In the mid-90s [we started seeing increase in Hispanic population]—around 93-94. I was at Westview Elementary as a fifth-grade teacher. . . . I had the first [Hispanic] in our school. . . . I remember the principal bringing him down and saying, "I'd like to introduce you to Pedro and he's going to be in your class." And I said, "Hi Pedro, welcome to fifth grade." And he looked up at me and he said, "No inglés." And I said, "I don't really know Spanish, but I think he just said he doesn't know English. Is that possible?" And the principal looked at me and he said, "Yes." And I remember my whole thought process of panic. . . . I don't know what to do. I presented the problem to the class. . . .what a wonderful opportunity for us. Pedro doesn't know English so we are going to help him learn English. Students signed up [to teach him different things]. . . . Each student would quiz him on flash cards [on 20 minute rotations]. . . . By the end of year he read one page of our end-of-the-year book and everyone clapped and cheered because they had such a great investment in him. It was a really neat opportunity for us, but it was the next year that we had more of an influx. Then it became very obvious we've got to figure out what we're going to do here. And the district did.

> November 19, 2008, Principal Havencroft Elementary, Cathy McDonald:
> I've been principal in the Olathe schools for twelve years. The first five years were at Central Elementary school in Olathe. That's where I really got my first introduction to the Hispanic community. The first year that I was there, I remember having two Hispanic students or two whose parents really didn't speak English. By the time I left, five years later, there were 52. That was my reference point for numbers for the exponential increase.

> December 5, 2008, Mortgage Professional in Olathe:[9]
> I had that black hole of three-and-half years that I was in Manhattan, but definitely when I came back, which would have been '98-'99, at least in this area, kind of Olathe North [High school], I saw more of the storefronts [signage in

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[7] See table 1 in chapter 1 (p. 20) for population characteristics of Olathe, 1890-2005.

[8] Stephanie Dansco has been at Central for five years and in the Olathe school district for 23 years at the time of her interview. This is her response when asked if she has seen a change in the population.

[9] The mortgage professional came to Olathe in 1990. He attended high school there, and then left to go to college in Manhattan, Kansas. After college he came back to Olathe.

Spanish] that were converted to where it was more directed toward Hispanics. That led me to believe, at least at that time, that there was more of an influx and more of a demand for those types of stores, restaurants, and etcetera.

August 12, 2008, Retired, community leader, involved in numerous volunteer organizations:
We'll go back into the '80s [when I recognized the Hispanic community was growing.] Late '90s to early 2000 for as far as when [the Hispanic population was] *really* growing, really obvious that they're everywhere. My attitude at that time was that they're out there doing work that other people [locals] won't do. . . . They're roofing, they're landscaping, they're out in the hot days just working away, and not complaining. . . .They're here. They're working. They're not deadbeats. That was more just the single guys doing all this working. Then I think as they began to bring more of their families in . . . . They work during the good months of the year, but when it got cold they high-tailed it back south. . . .They work here; they send money home. That is all they do. . . . As they began to bring their families here; then I think that is when we really started to see the population increase and the impact it had on our schools and services.

The time frames put in place by interviews can be substantiated by the census data that place the year of entry for Latin American immigrants (Table 6). Over seventy-five percent of the newcomers came to Olathe after 1990.

Table 6: Year of entry for Latin American-born population in Olathe

Year of Entry to U. S.	Population	Percent
Latin America	2,327	100
1990 to March 2000	1,754	75.4
1980 to 1989	315	13.5
Before 1980	258	11.1

Source: 2000 U. S. census

In 2005, Olathe's general and Hispanic population was still on the rise, with totals now reaching 107,710 and 6,965 (6.4%), respectively.

My interviews and information provided by the Olathe school district provided further insight into the country of origin for the new Hispanic population. Interview information on this point was specific but limited in amount. Data from the school district are more complete—for

the countries of origin—but exists only for 2005 and does not include numbers for each country

(Table 7).

Table 7: Country of origin for Hispanics

Olathe School District 2005	My Research 2008-2009
Argentina	Columbia
Brazil	Ecuador
Costa Rica	El Salvador
Cuba	Guatemala
Dominican Republic	Honduras
Ecuador	Mexico
Guatemala	Puerto Rico
Honduras	Spain
Mexico	Venezuela
Puerto Rico	
Spain	

Source: 2005 Language Count OSD Director Bilingual Services and author's research

The 2000 U. S. census provides more precise information. First, immigrants from Latin

America made up 2,327 or 42.5 percent of Olathe's foreign-born community that year (Table 8).

Table 8: Foreign-born population in Olathe sorted by continent of origin

Region or Area	Population	Percent
Foreign-born population	5,470	100.0
Europe	592	10.8
Asia	2,158	39.5
Africa	300	5.5
Oceania	0	0.0
Latin America	2,327	42.5
Northern America	93	1.7
Born at sea	0	0.0

Source: 2000 U. S. census

The dominance of Mexico as a source area is clear when the Latin American component is

broken down by region and then Central America by country (Table 9).

Table 9: Latin America foreign-born population in Olathe sorted by region and Central America countries

Region and Country	Population	Percent of all foreign-born population	Percent of Latin-American foreign-born population
Latin America	2,327	42.5	
Caribbean	26	0.5	1.1
Central America	2,159	39.5	92.8
Mexico	**2,102**	**38.4**	**90.3**
Costa Rica	0	0	0.0
El Salvador	0	0	0.0
Guatemala	31	0.6	1.3
Honduras	16	0.3	0.7
Nicaragua	0	0	0.0
Panama	10	0.2	0.4
South America	142	2.6	6.1

Source: 2000 U. S. census

During interviews, four states were identified as principal sources for Olathe's Mexican immigrants: Chihuahua, Guanajuato, Querétaro, and Zacatecas (Map 7). This is much the same area reported for earlier immigrants (Map 5). In addition, the business names of a snack store and an auto shop referenced one of those locations (Photo 2).

Map 7: Mexican states sending large numbers of immigrants to Olathe, 1990-early 2000s.

Photo 2: The Chihuahua state name used to brand businesses.

The reasons Hispanics have come to Olathe in recent years are not very different than those of anyone else. Actually, they may be some of the same reasons our own parents, grandparents or great-grandparents might have given and seem to be a classic combination of "push" and "pull" factors. Catalysts were a poor economy and political climate in Mexico and

prosperous conditions in the United States. Mexico's currency—the peso—suffered a major

devaluation in December 1994 as a result of political corruption at the end of President Carlos

Salinas's term (Associated Press 1999; Guggenheim 2000; Martin 2000; Robberson 1995; Solis

1995). During this period, "the [Mexican] stock market collapsed, inflation and interest rates

soared and Mexico fell into a recession" (Guggenheim 2000) [an unpaginated electronic work].

As these events unfolded, Mexico had a seemingly low unemployment rate of 3.7

percent, but this number does not provide an accurate picture of the actual economy. The way

the Mexican government defined employment included anybody who worked even one hour a

week. For example, if someone was juggling on the street corner only on Saturday afternoons,

they would still be counted as being employed. Many people could find work only in the

informal sector that provided poor wages and was void of benefits (Martin 2000). Those who

worked in this arena often had multiple jobs, and an average day's wage was incredibly low. As

Louis Uchitelle reported in 1993:

> The percentage of Mexicans earning only the minimum wage of 14 pesos a day, or $4.70,
> is 1% of those listed as working, whatever their task. More significantly, roughly half of
> the workforce—in the legal or illegal economy—earns what Mexican officials describe
> as two minimum wages or less. That is 28 pesos, or $9.40 cents a day (1993: 2).

He goes on to describe what the value of a double minimum provides:

> "If you already own a house, a family of four people can live on a double minimum, but
> not well," said Gustavo Ponce Melendez, a Labor Department official. Many Mexicans
> say that even a small Mexican household, four people or fewer, requires at least 50 pesos
> a day in income, or nearly $17, to get by (1993: 2).

During this interval in Mexican recent history, it was not uncommon to have large families and

minimal education. According to one account, the average Mexican had only six years of

schooling and "only a third of Mexican students understood basic math" (Solis 1995: 13A).

Political turbulence continued as well (Guggenheim 2000; Martin 2000).

A stark contrast between the Mexican and United States economic situations existed. In the U. S., unemployment was the lowest it had been in thirty years. In fact, it was so low that not enough people existed to fill the needed labor pool. As Robert M. Solow (2002) explains, unemployment rates are dangerously low at six percent, a point at which it becomes hard to find employees. Unemployment rates for the United States fell below this figure during 1995, and they eventually tailed off to an even more extreme four percent by the end of 2000. At Olathe, the unemployment rate was lower still—two percent in 2000 (U. S. Census 2000). At this same time, the minimum wage was $5.15 per hour (U. S. Department of Labor accessed on 6/15/12). Someone from Mexico could earn the equivalent of a day's wage in Mexico by working only one hour in the United States. The need for labor and the higher minimum wage were powerful attractions (Uchitelle 1993).

The experiences expressed during interviews reflect the situations described above. Several interviewees told me that the immigrants they interacted with could not make the kind of money in Mexico that they did here. Many of the new immigrants came to Olathe via work programs sponsored by landscaping companies with the blessings of the federal government. Because of the shortage of domestic local labor forces willing to do the work and the lack of legal, nondomestic workers, these companies were allowed to seek employees in Mexico and to provide them with work visas. An operations manager of a local landscaping business stated:[10]

> It's really difficult to get people that want to do this type of hard labor, work out in the heat and not have it as a full-time job. So we really kind of struggle to get . . . employees that are willing to do that.

In addition, the low unemployment rates during the late 1990s and early 2000s forced businesses such as that of the landscaping operations manager's to search elsewhere for labor. He shared

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[10] Identity confidential (operations manager of a local landscaping business), interview with author, Olathe, KS, April 1, 2009)

more about the work visa program process, compensation for workers, and reasons why his

company went down this route:

> Obviously a lot of people feel like lawn-care companies go to work visas or Hispanics because there's cheap labor. . . . My highest-paid visa employee is making twenty dollars an hour. So I don't consider that cheap labor. We actually spend thousands, not counting housing and such that we help set up, just our fees for lawyers and the process can run between eight and ten thousand dollars a season to get our visas. So it's not an easy out. It's actually a really complicated program that takes a lot of work, but the unemployment rate was so low, especially in Johnson County. It was low in general, so it's really difficult to get people that want to do a laborer's position and, on top of that, it's not a full-time position. It's seasonal.

Realtor Char MacCullum told me that affordable housing was another contributing factor

in the Mexican influx to Olathe (pers. comm.). She stated:[11]

> Anybody who needed affordable housing—regardless of race, ethnic culture—they came here because we gave them a lot for the money. Lately I've been seeing more and more . . . at one time it was a lot of strong Asian/Indian, now it's a strong Hispanic population that are buying some of the affordable homes.

Olathe also offers immigrants low crime rate, suburban location without big city

problems, and community support via a variety of social service agencies and churches. These

qualities combine with word of mouth and already established family or friends to provide a

strong draw to the area. A family support worker for El Centro stated that, in her experience,

one of the biggest draws to an area is existing friends and relatives (pers. comm.).[12] Such a

network helps newcomers get settled and find jobs. Below are the experiences of two

interviewees who have had direct conversations with Hispanics regarding this matter:

> December 12, 2008, Probations Officer and Olathe Human Relations Commissioner, Ray Ramierz:
> > What I see happening is that word gets out that Olathe is a good place, a good place to be and that the City of Olathe welcomes [immigrants]. I'm not just going

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[11] Char MacCullum (president/CEO of Char MacCullum Real Estate Group, Inc.), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, April 17, 2009.

[12] Identity confidential (family support worker for El Centro, Inc.), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, February 18, 2009.

to say Hispanics. The door is open for anybody coming into Olathe. Olathe is just a welcoming city. I think it opens up doors to everybody.

November 19, 2008, Principal at Indian Creek Elementary, Linda Voyles:
I've been told that we're a very open, very warm community [Indian Creek Elementary and Olathe]. . . . Olathe is a destination point for a lot of Hispanics coming from Mexico and coming from different areas, but particularly from Mexico. They hit Garden City first, then they come over to us.

A number of interviewees expressed that the biggest force driving immigration was a better life for one's family, which included good educational opportunities. Parents want their children to learn English and tend to be highly supportive of educational endeavors. An educator said that parents tell her students that "they are moving to give them a better education to make something of yourselves" (pers. comm.).[13] An elementary principal, was told by a sixth-grade girl that, "I'm going to be the first one in my family to get a real education." He continued with the generalization that Hispanics "are very committed to [education]. They are very supportive of that" (pers. comm.).[14]

A first-generation Hispanic American, whose parents were originally from Chihuahua City, Mexico, said he was struck by how similar Olathe is to Chihuahua (pers. comm.).[15] This may seem like an odd comparison to American eyes, but he is familiar with both areas as he had spent many holidays and summers in Chihuahua and lives in Olathe. He said that the resemblance between the two locales makes it easier for immigrants to assimilate into the new community.

Finally, the proximity of Olathe to Interstate Highway 35 as a reason for Hispanic immigration is an idea worth considering—it may even be viable as a study in itself—even

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[13] Identity confidential (educator at Santa Fe Trail Jr. High), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, November 14, 2008.
[14] Identity confidential, (elementary principal), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, October 28, 2008.
[15] Identity confidential (first-generation Hispanic American), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, February 25, 2009.

though such evidence did not turn up during my interviews. Interstate 35 literally splits the city

in half, and is often used as a reference point in discussions of local geography (Map 1). This

highway is also of interest because it runs all the way south to the Mexican border and thus

provides easy access for immigrants (Map 7).

During my interviews, mainstream Olathe people perceived their Hispanic neighbors as

working at jobs where the labor was hard and needed little education (Table 10).

Table 10: Categories of work occupied by Hispanics

Type	Can Include
Construction	painting, roofing, framing, pool installation
Custodial Maintenance	
Day Labor	
Factory	distribution, manufacturing
Food Service	food handling, fast food
Housekeeping	nursing home, hotels
Landscape	hotel, commercial and residential, agricultural
Run or Work in Latino Store	

Source: Interviews by author

These positions were often thought of as things that American adults, not to mention teenagers,

did not want to do, often outdoors where working conditions, especially in the summer, can be

excruciating. As school district official Ruth Nelson stated (pers. comm.):[16]

> They run our fast food businesses anymore. Our construction business couldn't do
> without them—you know for the framing and roofing—in all aspects . . . . They're
> critical to our construction business. Of course they're in the landscape business.

It is true that some of the migrant/immigrant workers do have little education. However,

other Hispanics are well educated, but with skill sets not applicable because of different

professional tests needed to practice their trade or a lack of English speaking ability. Principal

Cathy McDonald shared one of her experiences about a family at her school (pers. comm.):[17]

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[16] Ruth Nelson (then assistant director of community development for Olathe School District), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, November 7, 2008.

[17] Cathy McDonald (Principal Havencroft Elementary), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, November 19, 2008.

The mom was a medical tech in a hospital setting, [but] here she is cleaning houses. The dad is a skilled carpenter and here he is doing menial labor landscaping and painting and that kind of thing. They [Hispanics] have skills often, but our community often doesn't necessarily give them credit for the skilled training that they have had.

CHAPTER 4
CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

Culture is the lens through which our interpretations and perceptions of people, places, and spaces are viewed. It impacts how we understand the world around us, interact with people, and move between spaces. It consists partly of things as easy to understand as the type of food consumed and language used, but also reaches higher levels of complexity when addressing such issues as acceptable gender relations and social behaviors.

Culture is a man-made amalgamation that is continuously changing. Said explained it as never being "just a matter of ownership, of borrowing and lending with absolute debtors and creditors, but rather of appropriators, common experiences, and interdependencies of all kinds among different cultures" (1993: 217). Such interconnectivity is important because "all cultures are involved in one another; none is single and pure, all are hybrid, heterogeneous, extraordinarily differentiated, and unmonolithic" (Said 1993: xxv).

Pamela Shurmer-Smith has added to Said's explanation, saying how it is dangerous to think of culture as something that is owned by a group of people. Instead:

> It is what people *do*, not what they have, and they keep doing different things in different ways, with different other people all the time. Wendy James puts it concisely when she maintains that we should think of culture as being "adverbial" rather than "nominal" (1993: 106). Culture, then, is the communicating, sense-making, sharing, evaluating, wondering, reinforcing, experimenting qualifier of what people *do*. (2002: 3)

In addition, culture continuously reconstructs itself as the place in which it exists evolves (Bhabha 1994). For this reason, I take into account the location of my study when analyzing identified cultural variances.

When a group of people moves to a foreign land, inevitably they will transform aspects of that area to reflect what they left behind (Said 1993), and this modified landscape (visible and

invisible) provides a measure of their impact on the area. Homi Bhabha has stated that: "cultural differences must be understood as they constitute identities" (1994: 234). It is within these identities that adaptions by the majority and acculturation by the minority take place. Both actions need to happen as the old space melds into a new area and culture, thereby influencing how people, places, and spaces are perceived.

Cultural differences alter how one group of people treats another. In the case in Barbados, for example, indigenous people have been shown to resent nationals who return home after spending time in Great Britain (Potter and Phillips 2006). Even though Olathe's issues do not involve individuals coming back to a motherland, life there still involves a migrant subset bringing differences in how they view and act in daily affairs. And when such newcomers do not assimilate quickly, they may get labeled negatively as *other*. With the example of British-born Barbadians, even something as simple as continuing the habit of walking in the rain or sun can prompt the reaction (Potter and Phillips 2006).

When immigrants are made aware of labeling and judgments on the part of the majority population, it can make them feel out of place. By identifying people as *others*, the host group is asserting a form of control, which if continued, can fester and in some cases "lead to the feeling of being forever the outsider" (Potter and Phillips 2006: 595). For the purposes of effective public policy and this dissertation research, it is important to identify cultural differences perceived to exist between newcomers and locals in Olathe. From those differences I can evaluate where othering is taking place.

When studying cultural difference, perspective is critical. Did a given point of view arise through my own filter or that of an informant? Homi Bhabha (1994) spoke of the "colonial signifier in the narrative," (127) meaning that the colonizer's power provides the lens through

which behaviors and language are assigned values of "normal" or "different." In my study, mainstream, Anglo culture dominates Olathe, and interviewees used this status to communicate behaviors and landscapes that they considered nonconforming, items I discuss as cultural differences. Basically, Olatheans are using their American cultural norms to distinguish opposing behaviors. And, since I am part of this norm, it is important that I remain aware of my own cultural lens during this process. As Pamela Shurmer-Smith has explained: "culture is inherently theoretical, and to comment upon it is to theorize about theory. It requires that one becomes self-reflexive, conscious of one's own viewpoint when trying to understand viewpoints in general" (2002: 12).

Inevitably, Olathe's culture evolves and would continue to do so with or without the influx of Hispanic residents. For my study, however, a particular snapshot of time has been captured that unearths the city's interaction with this ethnic group.   The dissimilarities revealed are intriguing in their own right. For the purposes of this dissertation, they also provide insight into the relationships between immigrants and the host community, city image and perceptions, and community stability. These alterations and relationships include, but are not limited to, the cultural landscape and reputations of various neighborhoods; how organizations display or convey information; programs offered; movement between spaces; increased value of individuals who are bilingual; and increases in Hispanic products sold in stores. Debbie Swinney, for example, shared with me how the increased availability of authentic Mexican food products has impacted Olathe (pers. comm.): [1]

> If you go out in that area [south and west sides of Olathe] and look at restaurants and stores . . . , they're adapting. They'll have more of the peppers, more the Spanish-type foods. Which is great because I like to cook Mexican food . . . . [You now] can always find the poblano peppers and the Anaheims.   Things like that before, you know

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[1]Debbie Swinney (insurance agent), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, December 5, 2008.   This was her response when asked to identify parts of town that have a lot of Hispanics or strong Hispanic influence.

habanera, couldn't get 'em. . . a few years ago. Now you can go get all the peppers and the cactus and the things most people wouldn't [have before] and corn husk . . . just to give you an example. And it used to be that it was very difficult to find and now, particularly, the Price Chopper on Santa Fe and Mur-Len and the Price Chopper on Santa Fe and 7. You know they'll have everything you need. So it's great. We had to go to Malena's or Art's [on Southwest Boulevard] to get some products that you can now get at [local] grocery stores. I love it.

Cultural Differences Recognized between Olatheans and Newcomer Hispanics

From the beginning of my interviews, it was clear that cultural differences between Olatheans and Hispanic newcomers were significant enough to affect individuals and businesses. As I talked with the seventy-seven participants, sixty-seven of them (87%) easily could list distinctions between the two groups. People of all backgrounds agreed to this, whether they be long-time Olatheans relying on American cultural norms to answer the questions or Hispanic people relying on their own. Some cultural disparities, such as the concept of time, were easily identified by all groups.

When I mapped the interview results, I saw that, of the respondents who had noticed cultural differences, thirty-four (51%) worked in census tracts having large Hispanic populations and another ten people (15%) in areas with moderate concentrations of Hispanics (Map 8). The remaining twenty-three people (34%) who observed cultural distinctions worked on the borders of my study area, but usually had jobs that either took them into the study area or were in locations that Hispanics would travel to regularly, such as the local hospital.
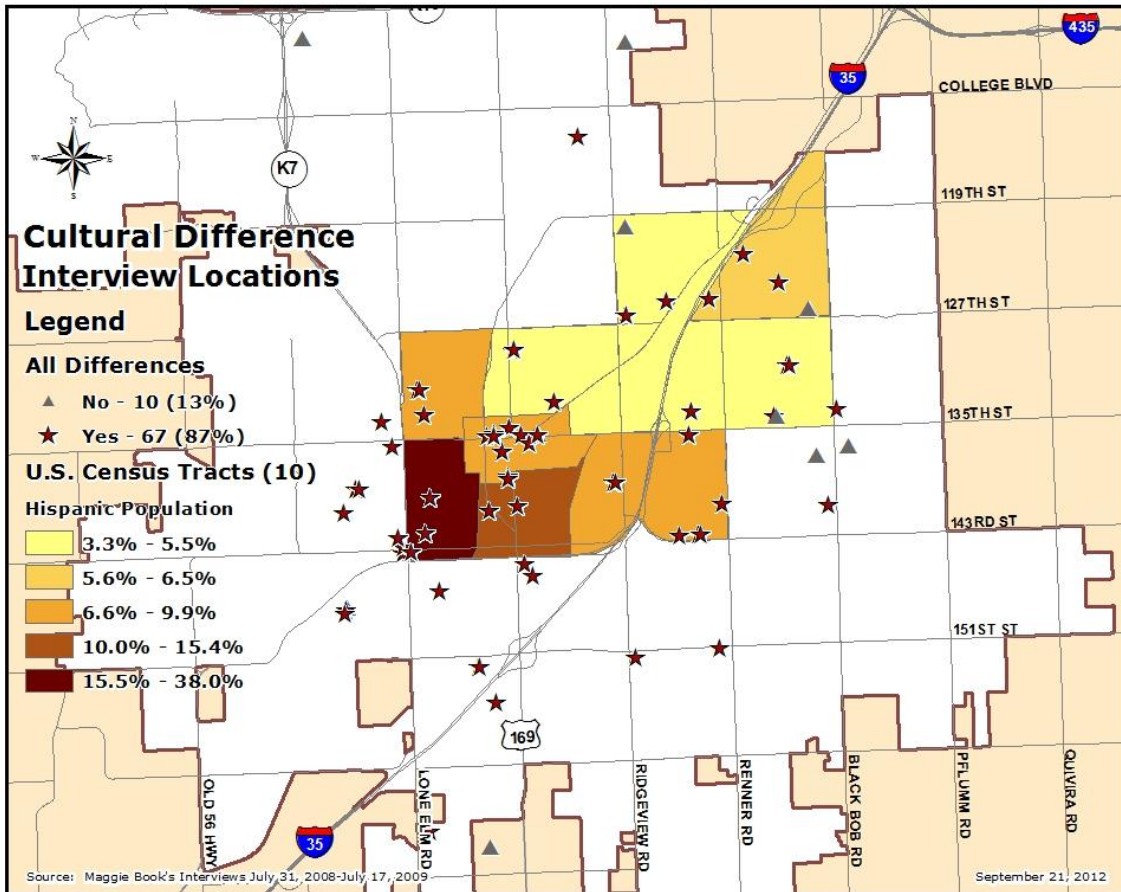
Map 8: Respondents who observed cultural differences, regardless of Hispanic density, between incoming Hispanic residents and the general Olathe community.

Cultural dissimilarities need to be understood as immigrants and host communities coalesce because they affect how well the two groups will interact with one another. A local educator with a Hispanic background summed up the case well with regard to the school system (pers. comm.): [2]

> Hispanics . . . form part of our community, but then they feel . . . separated from the school because there are many things that they do not understand. So my job besides being a translator/interpreter of the language is being a translator of the culture—from them to us and from us to them.

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[2] Identity confidential (bilingual elementary support staff), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, December 10, 2008.

As conversations with my interviewees developed, it became clear that their responses about cultural differences coalesced into four categories: foods or goods, language, gender roles, and social behavior. I will discuss each of these in turn as well as why groups, businesses, and members of the community need to be aware of them.

Food or Goods

Many of the most easily identified cultural indicators are material goods that people use on a regular basis. Food, for example, often serves as a means to start conversations about other cultures as it gives insight into daily life, special occasions, and cultural fusion. Claudia Ramirez, a first-generation Mexican-American who has strong Hispanic cultural ties, provides an example as she finds herself wanting to blend American fare into her family's traditions. Noticing how some American families she knew would serve hot dogs and hamburgers for a child's birthday, she wanted to do the same for her own child. But her Mexican family expected her to have a more elaborate production, and one that would include rice and beans (pers. comm.).

Another special-occasion food example occurs during American Thanksgiving. It is common for Hispanics in Olathe to serve tamales with sweet baked goods, meats, and peppers on this occasion instead of the Yankee standard of turkey with mashed potatoes, cranberry sauce, and green bean casserole. Ramirez said that she has tried to incorporate the American dishes into her holiday meals and to serve Kansas City's specialty barbecue on other occasions, but her Mexican in-laws will not eat any of them. Her husband has told her it is because they are not used to the flavor (pers. comm.).

As for everyday foods, interviewees who have direct contact with Hispanics in grocery stores noticed that Hispanics prefer fresh produce to canned items and use of a variety of hot

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peppers, for example poblano and Anaheim. Other items identified in their palate were cactus, corn husks for cooking, tortillas, pigs' feet, tripe, cow tongue, Mesa-brand flour, bread products by Bimbo, frijoles, hot sauce, Abuelita-brand hot chocolate, jaica (or "Mexican potato"), chorizo, Jarritos-brand soda pop, Jumex-brand nectars (including coconut, mango, strawberry, tamarind, guava and banana), V&V Supremo-brand queso (such as queso fresco and Chihuahua), special flavors of snack chips (chile & limón, fuego, habanero, carmeladas, chile & queso, guacamole) and roasted chilies.

Photo 3: Display of Hispanic-preferred food items in a store.

One interviewee who owns a convenience store in a Hispanic area noticed a preference for Coke products in 12-ounce glass bottles. His Hispanic customers told him that glass yields a different tasting product, one with more carbonation (pers. comm.). Additionally, during a phone interview, a man of Hispanic descent who worked for a local grocery store, shared that his favorite way to eat a jaica, or "Mexican potato," is to cut it into strips, then put a little lime juice,

chili powder, and salt on it. He indicated it is especially refreshing in salads (Identity

confidential-grocery store employee, pers. comm.). As I will discuss further in a subsequent

chapter, being able to identify such differences impacts how stores stock their shelves.

Other examples of Hispanic product preferences are Latino genre music, cowboy boots

and shirts, Ariel-brand dishwasher detergent, Foca-brand laundry detergent, Catholic vigil and

votive candles, and prepaid phone cards specifically to Mexico, Central America, and South

America. Ron Kollman, who has daily interactions with Hispanics in his radio equipment store,

added that Hispanic men prefer high-end stereo equipment (pers. comm.). Jim Miller, the

manager of a Wal-Mart store located on the West-side of Olathe, near Kollman's radio store,

added to this list (pers. comm.): [3]

> Other things we learned from the Hispanic population is . . . making sure we have the
> right sizes in clothing, gloves, and shoes. Usually shoe sizes are anywhere from 7 ½ to 8
> ½. Gloves are . . . small to medium. . . .Waist sizes are usually 30-31 . . . and lengths
> anywhere from 28 to 30 . . . . In [Virginia where I used to work,] we had a lot of poultry
> plants. So there was a lot of request for gloves, a lot of request for nonslip shoes, a lot of
> request of steel-toed boots, a lot of request for Dickies jeans in those sizes, and even the
> Dickie shirts were always 14 ½ and the small 32-inch sleeve lengths. So that's things
> there that I learned. Soccer was really big. Things that we learned there are things that
> we look at here too.

In my interviews, although only thirteen people (17%) said they could notice a cultural

difference regarding food and goods, Map 9 shows that those thirteen were mainly located in or

near tracts with high concentrations of Hispanics. This correlation supports the idea that people

dealing most directly with Hispanic residents will benefit most from knowing cultural

preferences in food and other material goods. Specifically, of those interviewees who observed

differences associated with food and goods, 38% worked completely within tracts defined to

have a high Hispanic population, while another 50% of them occupied the perimeter of that same

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[3]Jim Miller (Wal-Mart Store Manager), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, February 20, 2009.

area. For those who worked in non-Hispanic parts of town, one is of Hispanic descent and the other is a reading teacher who has hands-on experience with Hispanic students in her classroom. Of the thirteen respondents who said "yes" to the difference question, the racial breakdown is as follows: 31% Hispanic, 8% Asian, and 62% White.
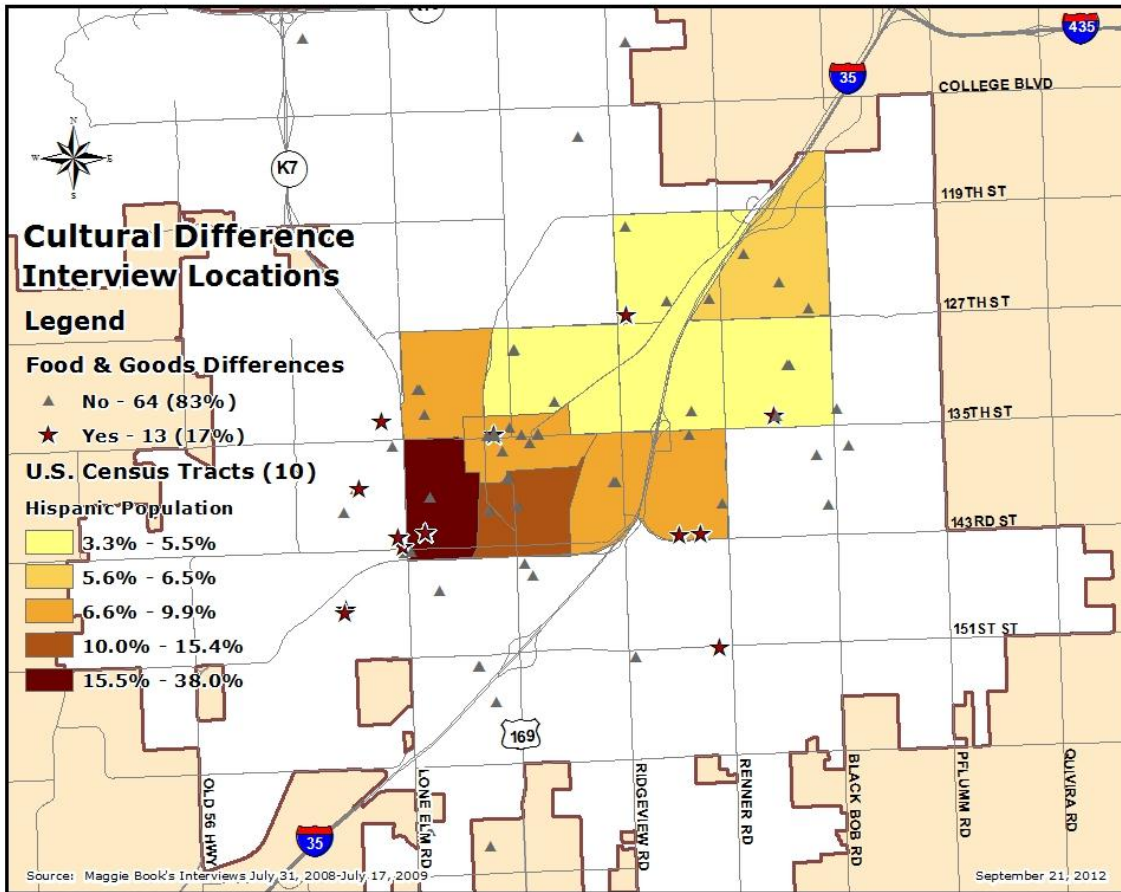
Map 9: Respondents who observed cultural differences in food and other material goods between incoming Hispanic residents and the general Olathe community are found in or surrounding dense Hispanic areas.

Gender Roles

During interviews, when I asked about perceived cultural differences between Hispanics and American culture, the answers frequently involved gender-specific duties. Many of the roles

fulfilled by men and women, boys and girls, mothers and fathers are strongly influenced by their culture, and the norms of one group can seem out-of-place or even alarming to another.

My interviewees who were involved with public education routinely recounted how Hispanic men and women were expected to conform to traditional roles. Men were to be breadwinners and heads of households, so boys trained to learn these particular skills. Conversely, women were expected to take care of the household and children with girls learning the same arts. Dennis Pine, a friendly, soft-spoken white male, has had interactions with all types of residents via his twenty years working for the City of Olathe. Part of his job involves visiting residents' houses to talk about city code violations on their properties. Code enforcement officers, he told me, interact much more frequently with Hispanic women than men because women are the ones at home during the day, taking care of children and domiciliary chores. In contrast, at the end of the work day, he would observe Hispanic men hanging out together outside the homes (pers. comm.).

Traditional gender roles are particularly strong for families that are planning to return to Mexico. One primary-level educator who works in a high-concentration Hispanic area, said that such families consider a girl's education unimportant because they expect girls to marry somebody who will take care of them. This same general idea was expressed in two stories shared by another educator who works closely with the Hispanic families (pers. comm.): [4]

> The difference between girls and boys and how important it is for boys to get an education . . . [is that the boys] are going to be the providers, but . . . girls, not so much. We had a [female] student that was an A+ student . . . . In one of the meetings . . . the mother said "what is point of making so much effort for my daughter to continue in [the gifted] program. She is going to graduate from high school and that's going to be the end of it. There is no point in working so hard toward her education because she is going to be a wife, she doesn't need an education."

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[4] Identity confidential (bilingual elementary support staff), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, December 10, 2008.

> I had a case of a family that had a boy and a girl. The mother was always talking to me about how important it was for the girl to help her with the chores at home. She needs to be picking up the living room, making it neat so when visitors come they always see everything is in place . . . . She needs to do this, and that, and needs to take care of her little brother. I asked her, "So what is the boy doing?". . . . [She said], "Oh, no, he's a boy. What can you expect from him?"

For the most part, of course, these ideas are the opposite of how American households are run where boys and girls, men and women, are encouraged to get educations and be equal partners in taking care of the house, family, and income.

One high school principal from a Hispanic area had a countering set of insights regarding Hispanic education. First, girls are more likely than boys to graduate and go on to college. If a Hispanic girl should happen to become pregnant while in high school, they will marry, but then are strongly encouraged by their new husbands to finish high school. Hispanic boys in contrast, do not always understand the long-term value of a high school diploma. The lure of making seemingly good money at a part-time job may interfere with them graduating (Identity confidential-high school educator, pers. comm.).

Another gendered cultural difference is that newcomer Hispanic females tend to be more reserved than other Olatheans. This was observed by participants in a variety of sectors. One longtime resident, Ron Kollman, who is accepting yet aware of cultural differences, said that he initially had a hard time understanding behaviors of Hispanic females. They did not make eye contact with him, for example, and always spoke softly. After discussion with his Mexican wife, he soon learned that reserved behavior for women was part of Hispanic culture (R. Kollman, pers. comm.). Similar behaviors were experienced by elementary school teachers. I spoke with one who described immigrant Hispanic girls as very quiet and extremely compliant in the classroom. American girls may be quiet, too, but they can hold their own with the boys. (Identity confidential-educator, pers. comm.).

Hispanic men, as family providers, work a lot of hours. When they get home, they typically go outside with their friends to drink and talk. They also function as decision-makers for the family and disciplinarians for the children (even though they have a fairly hands-off relationship with the children otherwise). One educator told me, for example, that since Hispanic fathers have the last word, she sometimes has to call the father and convince him about an action that needs to take place (Identity confidential-bilingual elementary support staff, pers. comm.). Understanding the difference in gender roles can eliminate confusion on family dynamics, misunderstandings on how an individual is personally being treated, and help schools, organizations, and businesses learn how to interact better with the incoming population.

A difference in gender roles was mainly noticeable in areas that had higher concentration of Hispanics. Fifteen of the seventy-seven people I interviewed (19%) noticed such disparities (Map 10). Of these fifteen, 40% were found in areas of high Hispanic density and 47% in surrounding zones. Two "yes" replies came from tracts that had low percentages of Hispanic residence, but both of these informants worked for the public school district and had direct interactions with Hispanic families in that capacity.
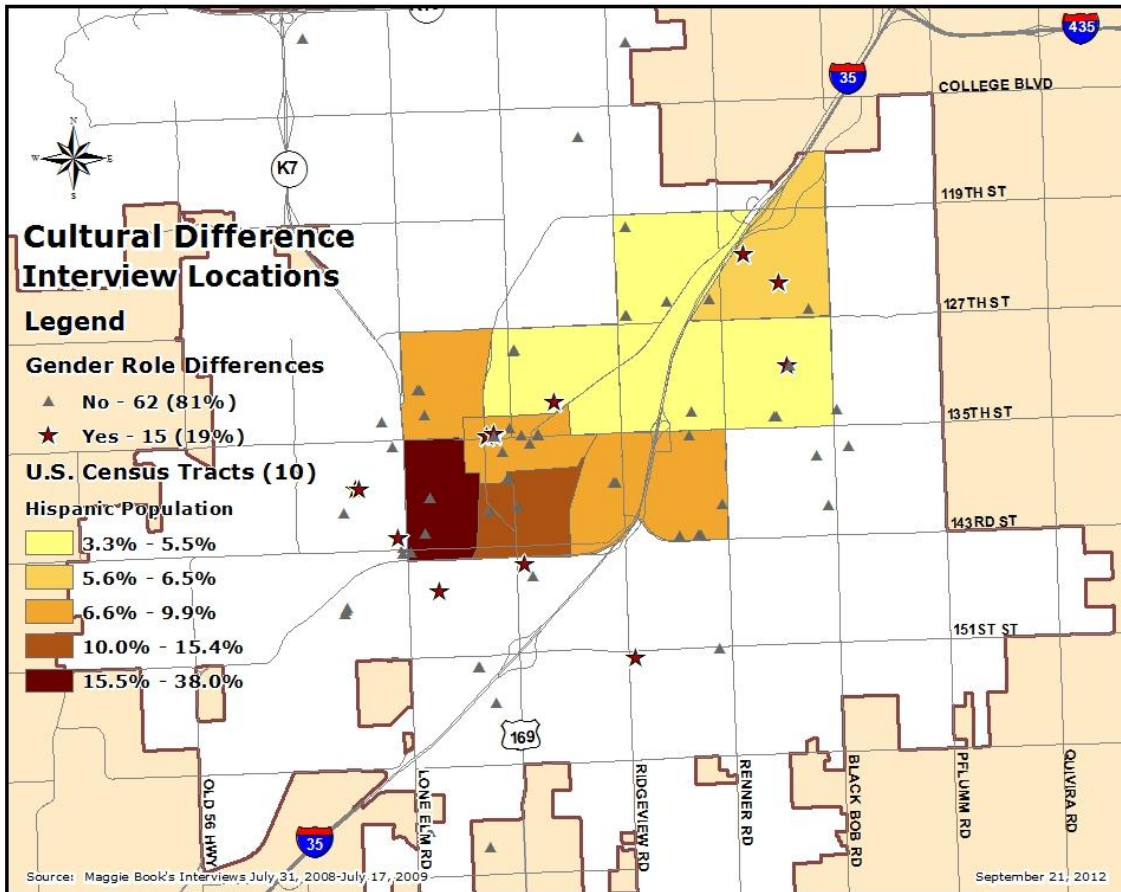
Map 10: Respondents who observed cultural differences pertaining to gender roles between incoming Hispanics and the general Olathe community are found mainly in areas of high or very high Hispanic density. Participants in lower Hispanic population areas had frequent interaction with newcomers.

Language

Language acts as a medium for the movement of culture from one person to the next. Not knowing how to speak the language of the majority population or even simple misuse of words can act as barriers for the incoming group, making them isolated and unable to understand the daily interactions needed for survival in the host community. Inversely, continuing use of their native tongue by an immigrant group can sometimes make residents of the host community feel self-conscious as well, and perhaps suspicious that the newcomers are speaking ill of them.

Several Anglo workers told me, for example, that they feel uncomfortable when passing a business that has display signs written in a language they cannot understand.

Cultural differences can have a direct impact on an immigrant's ability to learn in the American school system as well as relate to other people. When I asked an early education teacher about this matter, she said it was indeed important. Take something as simple as the name of an animal, she said. Maybe they didn't have that animal where they came from—so they don't have a word to translate it into English. This can be hard on the teacher and the student.

Grammatical syntax between English and Spanish is different. This can make it difficult to learn a new language and for people to understand one another. Nancy North, who has been a reading teacher for six years and a resident of Olathe for sixteen years, told me that the Spanish sentence structure impacts the way her Hispanic students try to decode words while learning to read (pers. comm.). Being aware of such differences can assist organizations in communicating with the incoming population, even with commonplace activities such as knowing when children are out of school or understanding the logistics of trash day.

Participants consistently identified two language-based cultural differences regarding Hispanic adults: some of them were illiterate in their own language and they used their children as English interpreters.[5] Children functioned as translators in many different venues, and were often taken out of school to help their parents. Those occasions included taking care of car repairs, dealing with banking issues, helping understand city code violations or service issues, and communication with coaches about sports and with doctors about health issues.

One reason many parents lack Spanish literacy is their background in rural Mexico where no need exists for this competency. Claudia Ramirez explained to me that most people from

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[5] Participants referenced adults from Mexico in particular.

such pueblos (i.e. small towns) have only completed fourth grade which does not include reading or writing (pers. comm.). This same scenario was echoed for deaf children from poor areas in Mexico as shared by, Lori Colwell, a long-time liaison to the deaf community in Olathe. Colwell, who now works for the Kansas School for the Deaf (KSD) as the interpreter coordinator, said that when Hispanic deaf students come there, they have no language skills at all—Spanish, English or Sign (pers. comm.).

Of the seventy-seven interviews, twenty-eight (36%) recognized cultural differences in language. These people were located mainly in the Hispanic areas of Olathe—the most southwest portion of my study area (Map 11). Specifically, 57% worked in a densely populated Hispanic tract, while 29% were found on the perimeter of this area. The two "yes" respondents who were located in areas of low Hispanic consolidation were educators. Two others located on the east side of the map have had direct interactions through the banking industry and local school system. The idea that language differences are most recognized in areas with higher densities of newcomers is useful for all entities that exist in these locales to be aware of ways they can best communicate.
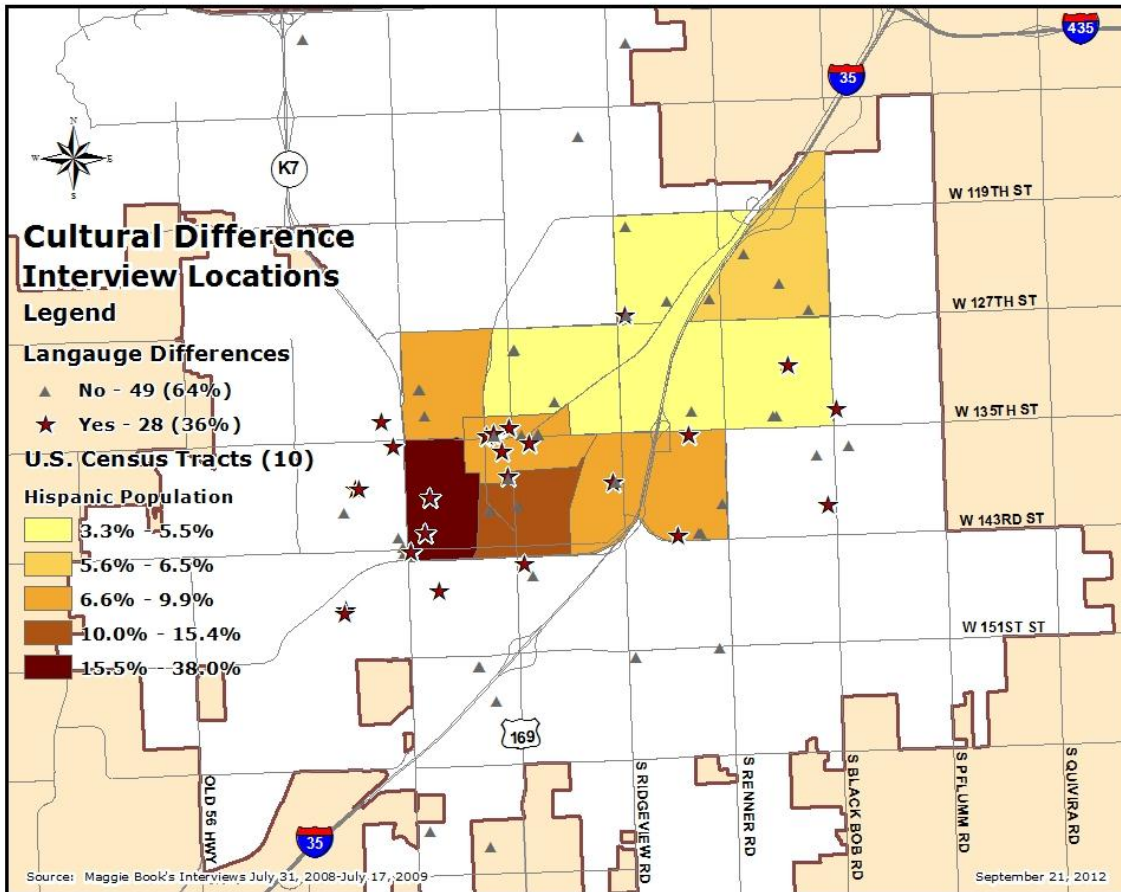
Map 11: Respondents who observed language cultural differences between incoming Hispanics and the general Olathe community are clustered in the southwest portion of my study area where a significant Hispanic presence is located.

Social Behavior

Social behaviors are an outward expression of culture and so could be identified relatively easily by members of the host community. When such behaviors run counter to the majority population, problems can result. This can occur in the work place or at school. It can also affect gender interactions, and if not mitigated, make a neighborhood an unpleasant place for everyone to live. In one interview, a long-time resident turned prominent community leader, summed up the larger issue when sharing a conversation she once had with the former Olathe police chief, Art Mabrey: "Once we can better understand their [Hispanic] culture and why they

do what they do, then we will be better able to understand and accept their presence in our community."[6]

My interviews revealed seven observed categories of social behavior: personal traits based on feeling, personal traits based on actions, personal social wherewithal, family roles, holidays and vacations, views on education, and different comprehension of social rules and laws. First, regarding personal traits, of people who come directly from a Latin country, participants most often mentioned a different sense of time. This can be seen in terms of the start of the school day, a missed appointment by thirty minutes, and the expectations for a start or end of a party. Cathy McDonald, an elementary school principal described the Hispanic sense of time as fluid. She gave as an example how parents often arrive later than a set time for a conference (pers. comm.). Another educator, of Hispanic heritage who maintains close communication with other Hispanic natives in Olathe, elaborated on this concept (pers. comm.):[7]

> Oh, punctuality! In the Hispanic culture being punctual is not good. If you invite somebody to come to your house, let's say for a party . . . . Well, the party is going to start at four. We never say when it's going to end, because it ends when you are tired of dancing and eating and you want to go home. We never tell you to go because that's rude. So let's say that I invite you to come to a party at my house at four o'clock and you show up at four o'clock. That is very very rude for you to show up at four because I am not ready at four o'clock. I told you to come at four o'clock just so that you know more or less when the party was going to start but that doesn't mean it's going to start at four o'clock. I will see you as a very rude person coming to my house at four o'clock when I'm not ready yet. So I expect you to come between 4:30 and 5:00. That would be the most accurate time. So, if you are Hispanic, you will understand that four o'clock is not the time you need to be there. Then, here in America not being punctual is very disrespectful. So it's hard to make Hispanic people understand that punctuality is very important for Parent-Teacher conferences, for example. We only have 25 minute slots. So if they are not here on time—if they come 20 minutes later, there's only five minutes for them to spend with the teacher talking about their child. It's very different.

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[6] Identity confidential (a long-time resident turned prominent community leader), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, August 12, 2008

[7] Identity confidential (bilingual elementary support staff), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, December 10, 2008.

For Hispanics, a slower pace is just how a person's day moves along. This is a hard concept for American society to understand as we are always trying to get as much done as possible—NOW. Ruth Nelson, a soft-spoken, highly respected woman who is deeply involved in the Olathe community, shared her understandings of this impact of Hispanic culture gained through involvement with Olathe's sister city, Ocotlán, Mexico. She noted how hard it is for Hispanics to think that lunch can be taken care of in only thirty minutes. Their days are structured differently than ours, with longer lunches and working late into the night (pers. comm.). This particular attribute can lead to the perception that Hispanic people are lazy by nature—which I will address in the chapter covering perceptions.

Interviewees routinely told me that Hispanics put premiums on personal responsibility, gratefulness, and loyalty. [8] If a person from the host community helped a Hispanic immigrant, then the newcomer would feel the need to do something in return. An example might be if a church helped with rent money or food, then the individual would feel obligated to participate in the church. Conversely, if a Hispanic person were to do something to help out in the host community, they would not expect a reciprocated favor. It is just their duty—a form of spreading good karma (pers. comm.): [9]

> [In Hispanic culture] family is not only mom, dad and children. Family is cousins, uncles, godparents, . . . grandparents, nephews, nieces, everybody. When you are in that environment, you care about everybody and everybody cares about you. Even your neighbors are part of your family. They care for you, they offer to do things for you and they never expect anything back. That's the other difference with the American culture. In the American culture, if I do something for you, then you feel like you have to do something for me. . . . It's this philosophy that people from Hispanic culture have, if I do something for you today, tomorrow I might need from you or someone I love might need

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[8] This is one of the traits that can be seen as both cultural and perceptual. Some interviewees provided concrete examples that exhibited the connection and it is those that this discussion is based on. For the people whose examples were anecdotal or feeling based, they are grouped in chapter five covering perceptions.

[9] Identity confidential (bilingual elementary support staff), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, December 10, 2008.

from you, and you might be able to provide for them or help them in any way. Because it's like a chain.

During my interviews with Olathe School District educators, it was clear that Hispanic children had different activities that held their interest. Teachers had to be aware of this difference to get them involved in school or, in the case of the higher grades, to keep them out of trouble after school. Interviewees expressed the importance of dance in the Hispanic culture and how this is something that parents really wanted their boys and girls to know. Soccer and photography club are other interest. In addition, boys like drawing and working on cars while girls like baseball, basketball and plays.

My interviews revealed contradicting information regarding a work ethic. Some people felt that a strong predisposition toward hard work was inherent in Hispanic cultures, while others thought that it was something that had to be taught, particular habits such as coming to work on time and not talking back to a supervisor. I do not have enough data on this point to come to a firm conclusion. Some of the work issues perceived may be the result of people from rural backgrounds needing to adjust to modern industries. If that is the case, such distinctions can be found within any culture or race.

Three more personal traits based in feeling appeared during my interviews: importance of outward appearance, lack of trust with officials, and comfort found in a familiar contact. First, Hispanics simply see value in having a nice outward appearance, an aura that often seems overly formal to American eyes. An example is dressing-up for seemingly mundane things such as cashing one's check on a Friday afternoon or having dinner at a fast-food restaurant.

A second trait, more serious for group interaction, is the lack of trust for police officers and other people in the public sector. Some of this hesitancy undoubtedly stems from the reality that some Hispanics are in Olathe illegally, but the situation is more complex than this. The

behavior sometimes is exhibited by avoiding interaction with police and sometimes by not being forthcoming with information. The then Olathe police chief, Janet Thiessen, told me about an incident involving a disturbance call in a Hispanic neighborhood. When police officers got to the locale, they found blood all over a parking lot and in one house. But when they went to talk to people, nobody knew or saw anything (pers. comm.).

Similar skepticism exists when dealing with officials of any type, at least on initial contact. One example concerns their lack of trust in the safety of their money. A local bank representative of Hispanic descent, confirmed this from her experience with newly arrived immigrants. Perhaps because of problems with banks in Mexico, they are afraid they will lose their money in the banking system. It is hard for them to trust the organization (pers. comm.). Such assumptions about people and organizations can be difficult to overcome. Sylvia Romero, pastora at Center of Grace Church located in the heart of the densely populated Hispanic area, told me that when you are an immigrant coming from a place where the police are corrupt, you are not going to trust a local policeman just because people say you should. Such a negative image is hard to shed. Both sides need to sit down and talk to achieve understanding (pers. comm.).

Finally, a third personal trait is that newcomer Hispanics feel more comfortable when they have the name of a person whom they will be speaking with in an organization or place of business. In other words, personal contact aids the building of trust. With this in mind, businesses have started to put a person's name and direct phone number on brochures instead of simply a business's generic front-desk information. For banks this change can make the difference in whether or not a Hispanic customer returns. Certainly it helps profit-based

businesses to build clientele. For a non-profit, like a school, it is an aid in making sure Hispanic families are not isolated.

A second category of personal behavior traits involves physical outlets that display differences between American mainstream culture and incoming Hispanic values. These include: the role of cash, the importance of verbal communication, and the outward expression of feelings. Cash, for example, is a strong cultural identifier. Hispanics are known for carrying large sums of money to pay for rent, court fines, or expensive material goods. On payday it is common for employers to provide cash to their Hispanic employees. If this is not possible, workers will go directly to a bank to cash their entire checks. A bank representative from Olathe's Hispanic area confirmed this behavior as common. Few Hispanics, she said, open a checking account or possess an ATM card (pers. comm.).

Another cultural difference is that the favored means of communication is verbal, such as word-of-mouth, radio, or through translators. Part of this preference derives from points noted previously, that a large number of incoming Hispanics do not speak English and are illiterate in their native tongue. Partly, however, it is purely a cultural preference for how to communicate. Because of this, according to Dale Janicki, who emigrated from Mexico when she was a child, it is essential a person does what they say they are going to do to maintain the trust of the Hispanic community (pers. comm.). In addition, Tamra Brandes, an assistant program manager for the Catholic Charities agency, does not need to advertise the help they provide because the Latino community is effective in spreading the message by word-of-mouth (pers. comm.). This information is important to the many businesses, schools, local government, and social-service agencies that work directly with newcomer Hispanics.

Hispanic people, in general, are expressive with their feelings. It is common, for example, for people to hug out of appreciation or in greetings. Knowing this can eliminate a sense of personal space invasion and help in understating relationships. An educator in the Olathe school district told me that she has gotten more hugs from her Hispanic moms than anybody. It was their way of saying "thank you so much or thanks for helping out or thanks for seeing the good in my son or daughter."[10]

Dance is a related form of expression, and as mentioned earlier, is important in Hispanic culture. Linda Wilson, an African-American woman who has taught elementary school in the Olathe school district for thirty-six years and seen the city make many culture adjustments, gave one example. A Hispanic boy would sometimes do little dance steps in her class. At first she thought he was fooling around, but then learned that is how his culture celebrates (pers. comm.). A Hispanic educator echoed this sentiment, saying that, in her culture, when a person is happy they want to share how they feel with everybody. For her personally, she will use loud music to express her happiness when she is cleaning her house (Identity confidential-bilingual elementary support staff, pers. comm.).

Another trait is that Hispanics never want to appear disrespectful or offensive. This sometimes leads them to say yes when they mean no. Susan McCabe, who works closely with the Hispanic community on developing English abilities, found that they always said yes, regardless if they intended on actually participating in something. They would rather agree than tell you bad news (pers. comm.). If existing residents know that this is part of the incoming group's culture, it can help to avoid undesirable situations. Two other differing cultural behaviors cited during my interviews, ones not necessarily affecting interactions within the

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[10] Identity confidential (educator at Santa Fe Trail Jr. High), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, November 14, 2008.

larger society, were Hispanics' tendency to walk or ride bicycles as modes of transportation (versus driving cars) and to utilize home remedies for ailments.

Personal information and knowledge sets can also affect how individuals go about their daily lives. Interviewees conveyed three such items to me as prominent identifiable differences: surname disparity, not keeping track of birthdates, and lack of awareness about other information that is commonly known in the Anglo world. In regards to last names, "many Spanish speakers use a traditional naming system in which a person has two surnames. . . the first surname . . . from the father's side; the second from the mother's" (Martin 1991: 37). Women will drop their mother's surname and then replace it with their husband's father's surname. This will cause the two heads of household to have different last names. In addition, "because of the naming pattern that combines father's and mother's names . . . children . . . have a different surname from either parent" (Martin 1991: 37). This will be a combination of both parents' father's surnames.

Liby Valiente is a white woman from Johnson County who married a South American man and owns Eagle Pointe Apartments (also known as "Little Mexico") in Olathe. She shared with me one of many interesting details about her encounters with their Hispanic residents. Valiente goes through a screening process when people request to move in. This involves a computer check on a potential tenant's name to see if he or she has been evicted elsewhere. For one Hispanic male with a double last name, she searched on each surname individually. Not finding any wrongdoings, his family was granted an apartment. Eventually, after the man was evicted for not paying rent, Valiente realized what she did wrong. She had not run the two surnames together. After doing so, she got a hit for them being evicted elsewhere (pers. comm.). Latin dualistic naming convention would be useful for any company or agency that utilizes

record management such as hospitals. Schools could use this piece of information to better link siblings and parents together.

Some factual items explicitly commonplace for mainstream Americans can cause confusion among Hispanics. These include one's birthdate, address, and phone number. One day Tamra Brandes, who has regular interaction with Hispanic clients, wondered why so many of them did not know their own birthdays. Upon discussion with a fellow coworker who also had in-depth understanding of Hispanic culture, she was reminded that, if you live in a small rural community in Mexico, how many people are asking you to write down your birthday? Similarly, in such an environment you are not going to have street names. This helped Brandes to remember her own experience in rural Mexico and she once again was able to find her needed compassion (pers. comm.).

Family roles can be markedly different between cultures. Several of these were observed by my interviewees: Hispanics having a strong sense of family; the whole family participating in activities; and, not least, expectations and delivery of discipline for children. Drawing on her own background and that of newcomers, Romero stressed to me that family is highly valued and that a conscious effort is made to do as many things as possible as a family group (pers. comm.). An educator whose school is in a Hispanic area agreed that Hispanic families form a tight unit that takes care of each other. Once you get to know them really well, they will pull you into that inner circle (pers. comm.).

Activities are done as a family both recreationally and dutifully. A child's soccer game will be attended together, for example, or on a Sunday afternoon you will find mom, dad, children, grandparents, and others all having a picnic in a park. Some activities provided through the school district and intended as parent-only soon become ones in which the whole family

attends. A similar thing happens regularly at doctors' offices when an individual has an

appointment. Two hospital faculty participants told me about this during our conversations at

Olathe Medical Center. They went on to say that the whole family is involved in the decision-

making process (pers. comm.). It can be intimidating for staff, but obviously important

knowledge so people planning an activity can be prepared for the attendance or make needed

announcements, i.e. only two additional family members of a patient in the doctor's office at a

time.

The type of behavior expected from a child while he or she is being disciplined is very

much culturally related. Atop the list is eye contact. In American culture, children are expected

to look at the person disciplining them. Hispanic culture is just the opposite. Hispanic children

are given less freedom regarding decision-making—that is the parent's or teacher's role. One

Olathe educator who has an especially strong understanding of the both cultures summed this up

best (pers. comm.): [11]

> In the Hispanic culture children are supposed to be obedient versus, I would say, letting them grow and make choices of their own. We do not allow that in our culture. Children are supposed to be obedient. So you tell your child what to do. In America, they give children options. So when a child comes from Mexico and hears a teacher giving him two or three options, he doesn't know what to do. He doesn't know what to choose. He depends on somebody else telling him what to do. So that is very hard for them to adapt to.
>
> And it's also hard for the parents to deal with it, because at home they discipline their children differently than the way that we do in America. Disciplining children in the Hispanic culture is more physical than anything else. We don't know anything about privileges. You don't take TV as a privilege. You don't take away from the child this or that. You just punish the child. So when they come to America it's really hard for them to try and understand and adapt to the American way.
>
> There is something else I have noticed in the students. It's hard for them to make eye contact with the adults. In our culture you're supposed—if you look at an adult you challenge him so you're supposed to always look down when an adult is talking to you—

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[11]Identity confidential (bilingual elementary support staff), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, December 10, 2008.

not looking into his eyes for example. And those are very small details that mean a lot to a teacher because the teacher would say, "You know he doesn't make eye contact with me. He doesn't connect with me." Well he's not supposed to. Teachers are up there, children are down here.

Such differences can cause strife for everyone trying to meld two very different worlds. Parents' child-rearing methods become challenged by school systems using American cultural norms. This can cause an unbalance at home and a sense of not belonging to the greater community. In addition, having insight into this behavior helps teachers understand behavior that may be misconstrued as overbearing by parents or as defiant and disrespectful by children.

Education is very much influenced by culture in terms of how it is implemented, the logistics of school, what information is taught, expectations in the classroom, and, among other things, the relationship between parents and educators. Teachers, principals, and support staff all have come to realize that a majority of the newcomers originate from rural small towns, places without many amenities where an elementary school education is considered adequate, a leniency toward attendance exists, rain causes school to be cancelled, and school facilities are minimal. One educator shared a specific instance where an incoming Hispanic student came from a rural school that held classes under a tree. They did not have blackboards, chalk, or books, and their lesson plans consisted of reading, writing, and basic addition and subtraction (Identity confidential-bilingual elementary support staff, pers. comm.). Nancy North, another teacher, told me about her Hispanic students' reaction to rain and also added information about the curriculum they were used to in their native schools (pers. comm.): [12]

> Some of the kids talk about school systems in Mexico are different, the way they work. One of the things we notice, I teach summer school—I run the summer school program actually for one of the reading rally programs, in the summer we notice a lot of times that, when it rains, they don't come to school. And that's a cultural thing. In Mexico they don't really go to school when it rains a lot of times, they just don't go to school.

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[12]Nancy North (reading teacher at Indian Creek Elementary), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, February 4, 2009.

Kind of like how we have snow days, they have rain days. So you have to call and tell them "no you need to be at school even though it's raining" . . . . Some of my kids have told me, in their schools in Mexico, they don't spend as much time reading and other things. So the culture of school is different for them too.

Educators have also learned about cultural differences in parents' roles and expectations in the school system. Hispanic parents tend to elevate teachers to a higher platform than do their American counterparts, so much so that teachers are not to be questioned. This observation was shared in many of my interviews. During one with Stephanie Dansco, the principal of Central Elementary, she noted how, in American culture, parents question teachers and want to know what is going in the classroom and their child's learning path (pers. comm.). Hispanic cultural norms counter this set of expectations.

It was cited to me by several people that Hispanic culture not only places teachers on a pedestal, but it also draws a distinct line between teacher and family, home and school. The parent's job is in the house while educators are responsible for learning. This obviously is different in the United States where the line becomes blurred and teachers and parents are expected to work together. In the United Sates, it is desirable for the students to bond with their teachers. In Hispanic culture the relationship is more formal. Being aware of these cultural differences can make it easier for educators to incorporate immigrants and their families into the American learning system.

Many of the jobs Hispanics have in the United States are seasonal. This leads sometimes to a cycle of returning to their native countries during the fall and winter either for additional work or family visits and then re-entering the United States for more employment. Such trips south can span anywhere from two weeks to two months, a break that is especially disruptive in the school system. One educator who has a number of Hispanic families attending her school agreed that their absence is noticeable during the cold months (pers. comm.). Brent Yeager, who

is a principal at Fairview Elementary where forty-five percent of the students are Hispanic, spoke

about the need to educate immigrants about attendance expectations (pers. comm.): [13]

> One of the things that we deal with a lot here at school is, and especially Fairview, is a lot
> of the times our Hispanic families will go back to Mexico to visit family members. And
> we'll have kids gone from school for three weeks, four weeks, that kind of thing. And we
> try very hard to kind of let them know that this is what the results are when kids are gone
> for three or four weeks. Their reading levels decrease. Their math levels decrease. And
> that it's really important for them to be in school. And we talk about that's why we have
> structured breaks in our school year over winter vacation, and spring break and things
> like that. And that's really when we prefer for those kinds of trips to happen.

Many of my interviewees noted a series of holidays that have special significance for

Hispanics: Cinco de Mayo, El Día de los Niños, Day of the Dead, Mexican Independence Day,

Hispanic Mother's Day, a first birthday, Quinceañera, and celebrations surrounding Our Lady of

Guadalupe.[14] These festivities are occasions for large family gatherings with traditional foods

(as described in the food section in this chapter) as well as music and dancing. Claudia Ramirez,

who has experience with these holidays from her own background and the work she does

through her church, shared details about how Hispanics celebrate Our Lady of Guadalupe (pers.

comm.): [15]

> Our Lady of Guadalupe on December twelfth . . . is the feast day of the Virgin Mary
> because of when she appeared in Mexico . . . . It's a celebration . . . [that starts with] the
> Novena on December the third and . . . ends on December eleventh. Every evening from
> December third to eleventh at seven o'clock, people come and pray the rosary . . . . A
> family is assigned each night to pray the rosary and to bring either hot chocolate, hot
> cinnamon tea, Mexican sweet bread or even some people bring food so after the Novena
> we can eat. Then that day, the family who was assigned that day, then takes the
> pilgrimage image of Our Lady of Guadalupe to their home and brings it back the next
> day—[this goes on] until December eleventh. December eleventh in the evening we have
> Matachin dancers . . . . It's what the indigenous would do to give gifts to Our Lady, the

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[13] Brent Yeager (principal of Fairview Elementary), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, December 17, 2008.

[14] Cinco de Mayo, the fifth of May, marks an important victory of the Mexican militia over the French army. El Día de los Niños, day of the child, recognizes the importance of children in society, while the Day of the Dead, November 1, celebrates one's ancestors. Mexican Independence Day is September 16th while Hispanic Mother's Day takes place on May 10th. Quinceañera is the celebration of a girl moving to womanhood at age fifteen.

[15] Claudia Ramirez (secretary at St. Paul's Catholic Church), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, November 12, 2008.

Virgin Mary, because they wouldn't have anything else to offer her. So they would dance to her . . . . They dance at night between ten to eleven. Then there's prayer. Right at midnight, we bring . . . a Mariachi to sing . . . what the Hispanics would sing for a happy birthday to Our Lady of Guadalupe.

At holiday celebrations a special set of social expectations exists for how people are invited and when they leave. First, everyone is welcome. The person entertaining may invite a specific guest, but that partaker can extend the announcement to someone else, and so on. All of those people would be welcome. At the party, everyone will eat, drink, and dance until they are ready to leave; there is no assumption of an end time. This is true for any occasion, even a child's birthday party. For the majority population, awareness of Hispanic celebration tradition is important in that they may impact work schedules and even influence the type of goods requested at local stores at specific times.

Learning about cultural differences is always interesting, but when two cultures coexist in one space, some cultural differences have the potential to generate major problems that can lead to intervention by police or code enforcement officials. Olathe has certainly experienced these consequences at times, including phone calls made because local people did not understand the incoming culture—even though no laws were being broken. Sometimes grievances can escalate to hostile situations for all parties involved. Such differences can be grouped into two basic categories: personal conduct and living conditions.

One point that rubs long-time residents the wrong way concerns the number of people who live together in an apartment or house. In American culture, each family unit is expected to have its own living quarters just as a group of roommates are presumed to each have their own bedroom. Hispanic peoples in Olathe often have a different view. In the course of my interviews, a number of people said that it was common to see, especially for males, more than the expected number of roommates at a given site. For example, six men might be residing in a

three-bedroom townhome. In some instances this could mean people sharing not only rooms, but also extra mattresses on the living room floor. Sometimes as many as eight or ten people might share a two to three bedroom unit (D. Pine, pers. comm.). In addition, Hispanics embrace the custom of an extended family living together. This can include aunts, uncles, grandparents, and cousins of varying ages. Janet Thiessen noted why it is important to pay attention to this difference during her interview (pers. comm.): [16]

> It may be acceptable within many cultures of immigrants coming here to have lots of people living in a rather small apartment or small house. That's not the norm for Olathe and that becomes disturbing to neighbors. Especially if the hours are different, if there is lots of socialization that involves alcohol, loud partying, [and] fighting.

With an increase in the number of people living in a unit comes more cars, and then another cultural difference regarding where those cars should be parked. In mainstream Olathe, the expectation is to place cars in a driveway or garage. For the newcomer Hispanics, it is common to see vehicles parked on the front yard.

My discussions also revealed social differences in standards of upkeep for homes and lawns. Most Johnson County people expect to see lawns trimmed, the outside of houses in good repair, and trash stowed in containers. To this end, Olathe has residential codes for keeping weeds under control and grass mowed, the maintenance of structures, the disposal of inoperable vehicles, contained garbage, and the kind of furniture allowed in outside locations. Dennis Pine, a city code enforcement officer, told me that the Hispanic people see yards and upkeep in a different light. While the insides of their houses are generally kept very tidy, the outsides often are messy (pers. comm.). Money availability exacerbates this cultural tendency, of course, and so does the reality of renting versus owning. Most of my study area has relatively low incomes

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[16]Janet Thiessen (then Olathe police chief), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, October 7, 2008.

and it was more common for Hispanics to rent rather than own properties. Lack of maintenance clearly was at least partially a result of landlord negligence.

Viewed through an American cultural lens, the Hispanic newcomers in Olathe definitely have a lower living standard. Cockroaches are common in the house, clothes hang on balconies, and many people often share a home. Stephanie Dansco, for example, told me about a Hispanic family that used sheets to partition a garage into rooms as their home (pers. comm.). Another educator with direct contact with many Hispanic families described their backgrounds in Mexico as ones of extreme poverty. This can mean bathrooms that literally are holes-in-the-ground. Though problems may exit with their living conditions in Olathe, these settings are almost always a big step up for these families (Identity confidential-bilingual elementary support staff, pers. comm.).

The last set of social cultural differences to explore has to do with "appropriate" personal behavior based on American cultural norms. This includes locations for parties, how agreements are handled, outward expressions of men to women, and driving procedures. As stated previously, Hispanic people like to celebrate when they are happy. Many parties may cause no problems, but others may annoy neighbors, especially when men gather in front yards after work listening to loud music, drinking, and smoking. This is not to say that mainstream Americans do not celebrate, but the location of their noise-making usually is more private. It is important to understand this set of behaviors because it can affect property values and neighbor relationships.

Victor Glover, the then human relations manager for the City of Olathe, spoke with me about cultural differences that sometimes led to complaints of discrimination or unfairness. One investigation involved a landlord not fixing a leak for a Hispanic family. The family said they had told the landlord, who in turn had agreed to fix it. But the landlord not only failed to make

the repair, but also would not pay the tenant's $1000 water bill. The cultural difference here is that Hispanics assumed the repair would be made based on a verbal agreement and handshake. That is not the American culture—it needs to be in writing (pers. comm.). Many situations similar to this exist.

My discussions also revealed instances where men treated women in ways not socially accepted in the United States. These cause problems for local police officers. One example involves Hispanic males "cat-calling" women. Another concerns the idea of older men dating underage girls. Both behaviors raise eyebrows in the United States.

Cultural differences in terms of driving habits also came out in my interviews. First, driving while (or just after) drinking alcohol is often seen as culturally acceptable by Hispanic peoples in Olathe. In addition, immigrants often do not halt at stop signs or red lights late at night because they learned in their home countries that such stops often lead to muggings. Finally, children are not required to wear seatbelts in Hispanic countries, and making the adjustment to American law is difficult (Identity confidential-bilingual elementary support staff, pers. comm.). Obviously, immigrants need to understand the host community's laws and protocols.

In my interviews, a large percentage of people (58 or 77%) saw differences in social behavior between Hispanic and American culture (Map 12). Of these 58 responses, 53% worked in census tracts having high concentrations of Hispanic residents. Another 29% worked near those same areas with the remaining 19% recognized cultural distinctions even though they had little daily contact with Hispanic peoples. Further analysis of Map 12 reveals that "yes" responses were made by 67% of the participants found in census tracts that had smaller concentrations of Hispanics. The same can be said for 69% of all interviewees that surrounded

my study area. Obviously, the high Hispanic areas feel the impact as has been seen for other

cultural differences. Social behavior clearly shows a different, much more widespread pattern

than that of other cultural differences.
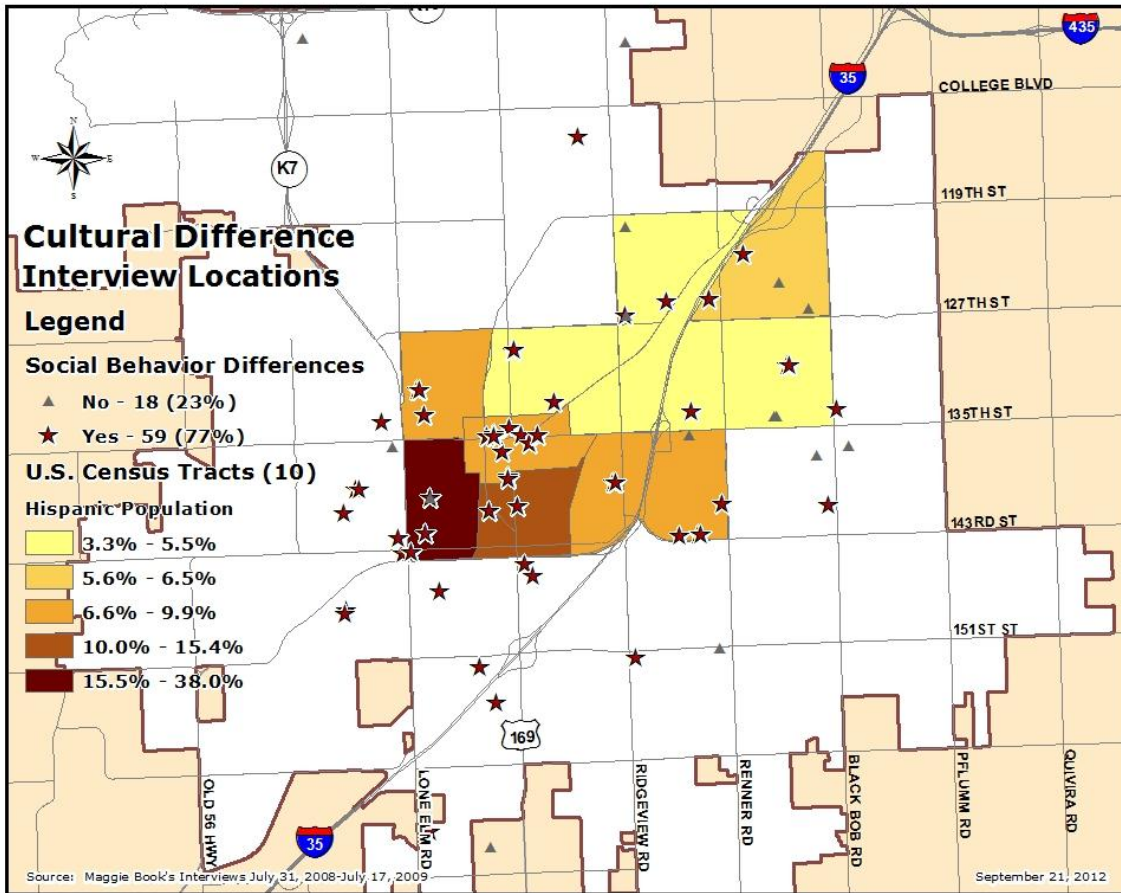
Map 12: Cultural differences in social behaviors between incoming Hispanic residents and the general Olathe community were widely observed by respondents regardless of their proximity to dense Hispanic areas.

CHAPTER 5
PERCEPTIONS OF THE HISPANIC POPULATION

Perceptions act as the platform on which we develop thoughts about people and places, how we move between places, and how resultant stereotypes develop. During my interviews, participants often recognized that perception affected their daily workings. For example, Assistant City Manager Susan Sherman valued having a Hispanic voice on boards and committees to provide insight into their culture and to dispel some of the majority's ill-conceived perceptions and stereotypes (pers. comm.). Another interviewee, Janet Thiessen, then police chief, explained the important role perceptions play in the daily cycle of law enforcement. Those perceptions, true or not, often underlie decisions whether or not to call the police regarding actions of Hispanic residents (pers. comm.).

Because Olathe's racial make-up has changed rapidly in recent decades, too fast for the new reality to be fully processed and understood, perceptions based on incomplete information become the rule. Linda Wilson, an elementary school teacher for thirty-six years, has had a front-row seat to the evolution. When the newcomers first arrived, they tended to cluster in particular neighborhoods and sometimes their teen-age children formed "gangs." Both actions were ways to find comfort and acceptance in a very foreign place. As time passed, the newcomers and native groups became more comfortable with each other and thereby more welcoming and inclusive. Ultimately, she was amazed at how Americanized each of the immigrant groups became (pers. comm.).

Just as challenges are observed when newcomers enter a community, differences also can be seen to add value and variety to a formerly homogeneous population. A manager of a local

store, for example said: "at the risk of sounding hoity-toity—it gives you a more worldly view."[1] Char MacCullum, a local real estate professional, added that having different ethnic groups in an area helps you learn different ways and keeps life interesting. She went on to say: "Diversity is one of the most treasured gifts we have to pass on to our children. You don't have that diversity unless you have different cultures here."[2]

Interviewees generally agreed that Olathe needed to assist Hispanic acculturation so that all residents might have a sense of community and access to the same resources. A good example was provided by a mortgage professional and longtime resident. From his perspective, one benefit of reaching out to help Hispanics become home owners is because owners are more likely than renters to take care of their community (pers. comm.). A similar viewpoint came from Ruth Nelson, then assistant director of community development for the Olathe School District. She said that there would be a lot more disenfranchised children and families if the Hispanic immigrants were ignored (pers. comm.).

In this chapter, I analyze my research results to reveal how the majority perceives the Hispanic population. First, I look at general perceptions of Hispanics. From there, I turn to areas perceived as having a large Hispanic population concentration or having been influenced by the newcomers. I also will look at interviewees' personal feelings in terms of likes and dislikes and of perceived safety in areas of Hispanic concentration. Finally, I examine the extent to which *othering* is taking place, in particular neighborhoods.

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[1] Identity confidential (local store manager), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, January 23, 2009.
[2] Char MacCullum (president/CEO of Char MacCullum Real Estate Group, Inc.), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, April 17, 2009.

Majority's General Perceptions of Hispanics

The majority population in Olathe generally perceives the Hispanic immigrant minority to be polite, friendly, kind, and grateful. City workers, for example, told me that Hispanics were respectful to them and would regularly wave or say hello (pers. comm.). Hispanic immigrants also were viewed as hard workers who take pride in their job. Dan Simon, former editor of the Olathe News, laughed at the stereotype of the "lazy Mexican" as he shared an experience in his former neighborhood: "These guys worked their butts off . . . . They would get there before I left for work. They'd be there hammering and drilling and stapling on top of the roofs long after I got home. These guys were amazing and prolific. They built that neighborhood [in no time]."[3] Generally speaking, even though my interviewees knew that Hispanic immigrants sometimes struggled and received assistance through community agencies, their perception was that Hispanics wanted to achieve success though their own merits. They received community help only with reluctance and humility.

Overall, Hispanics were seen as poor, living in areas of cheaper apartments or townhomes and usually renting their abode. Their cars were perceived to be older and in need of frequent repair, observations made in part by interviewees frequently seeing Hispanics patronizing auto parts stores and working on their own engines. The majority's impression was that most newcomers regularly sent money back to their homeland to take care of extended families.

My interviewees saw the newcomers as feeling comfortable and safe within the schools and among the staff. One administrator's personal encounter exemplified these perceptions: "[Hispanics] tend to be very supportive of the school and . . . [they] see the school as a place to

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[3] Dan Simon (former editor of Olathe News), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, July 17, 2009.

come for help, not just [for] academics . . . .We've [assisted] families who had their water turned off [as well as] families who lost their refrigerator."[4] She added that teachers and administrators see little difference between the needs of English- and Spanish-speaking families of similar income levels, the only distinctness is language.

As it is hard for new immigrants to find their way into a community, it can similarly be difficult for the existing group to deal with differences, especially language. Interviewees felt that the Hispanics needed to learn English, but they were okay with providing transitional material until immigrants had language skills sufficient to function amongst locals. Progress on this front was seen as generally good. Teachers said that students were trying hard to learn English in the school system. On the other hand, some of my interviewees felt that adult Spanish-speakers pretended not to know English on occasion when it was convenient for them.

Exploitation was a significant theme in my findings. Some participants said local businesses took advantage of the immigrants. A car dealership, for example, reportedly charged high interest rates for car loans to Hispanics. Cherry Cummins, a bank manager, said that such businesses take advantage of anybody without credit history, but they have been noticeably doing so to Hispanics. As she shared: "[Hispanics] have the money down [and] they have the job, but because they don't have credit history, they have to pay a higher interest rate. No one is giving them a chance." Cummins continued with a story of a previous client: "[A loan] I just redid not too long ago, [a Hispanic family] came in. Oh, my gosh! What they were paying! They had never missed a payment on it. They'd been [paying] for a year on this vehicle and, of course, didn't get anywhere with it. Actually, they had banked with us for several years . . . .

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[4] Identity confidential (educator at Santa Fe Trail Jr. High), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, November 14, 2008.

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This is a no brainer [to give them a better loan rate] . . . . Those poor people. They didn't know they could go anyplace else."[5]

My interviewees saw newcomers being wronged by landlords charging too much for rent and not maintaining properties, by companies exploiting illegal immigrants in regard to their job duties, and by general discrimination in pay. Char MacCullum, a local real estate professional, provided a specific example of lower compensation for Hispanics: "I think there [are] *a lot* of people taking advantage of the Hispanics . . . . Some of my [Hispanic] tenants, they'll work for somebody and then they don't get the money. They say they're legal, we ask the question, but then they can't fight for [their earnings]. So then they work for nothing. I don't think they're getting their fair pay. And it trickles down to me, because if they don't get paid, they don't pay their rent. I've had churches help people out . . . . I think [Hispanics] work hard and they're not getting paid."[6] Interviewees also felt that more subtle discriminations took place. I address these later in this chapter during a discussion of *othering*.

Perhaps not surprising, people provide less empathy and understanding toward illegal immigrants. Heather Oliva-Martinez, then a bilingual student services coordinator with the local school district, told me that some English-speaking families do not understand why the district is doing so much for families that do not speak English. These are the same people for which immigrant documentation is a hot-button issue (pers. comm.). Janet Thiessen, former police chief, added to this point by describing experiences where local residents feel the city is getting so overrun by Hispanics that they want the police to arrest all the perceived illegals (pers. comm.).

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[5] Cherry Cummins (bank manager), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, November 5, 2008.
[6] Char MacCullum (president/CEO of Char MacCullum Real Estate Group, Inc.), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, April 17, 2009.

Still another example involves a local paint company whose owner, John Gutierrez, shared how his business had been affected by illegal immigrants. Such people get paid less money. This allows the companies who employee them to offer cheaper services. Gutierrez, in turn, has to lower his prices in order to compete, making a notable impact on his profit margin (pers. comm.)

Mental Maps of Hispanic Impact and Placement

Mental (or cognitive) maps are a great tool for turning people's perceptions into a tangible format (Gould and White 1974, Soini 2001). In this instance, I employed them to help quantify what areas in Olathe are perceived to be influenced by Hispanics and how these perceptions relate to reality. To assess this, I compared participants' drawings depicting their perceptions with the actual values for each census tract in my study area.[7] I found that the two highest Hispanic-populated tracts (15.4% and 38%) were identified by 89 percent of participants as having large Hispanic impacts. In addition, 91 percent of respondents perceived Hispanic influences in the tracts that actually contained between eight and ten percent Hispanic populations. Clearly, perception matches reality for these tracts.

However, I was surprised by two other findings. Tracts that I defined as having low Hispanic concentration via the census figures, values less than or equal to five percent, had an astonishingly strong showing of 66 percent of interviewees who thought that the area was changed by or had a large concentration of Hispanics. Even more shocking, one tract with 6.5 percent of its residents Hispanic, which I had included in the higher Hispanic concentration category, had only 20 percent of interviewees that recognized it in such a way.

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[7] Seven people did not provide mental maps, and I lost one. Of the seven, two were the result of interviews being conducted by email or phone. The other four involved people with jobs that prohibited them from reporting such observations. Calculations used throughout this section are based on seventy respondents.

I grouped the census tracts by percent Hispanic into four zones: *Area 1 very high* – with Hispanic populations between 15.4 and 38 percent; *Area 2 high* - adjacent to Area 1 and with concentrations of 8.1, 8.7, 9.2, and 9.9 percent; *Area 3 low* – with concentrations of 3.3, 4.3, and 5 percent; and *Area 4 high* – with 6.5 percent Hispanic newcomers but spatially separate from the other two areas having denser Hispanic concentrations (Map 13).
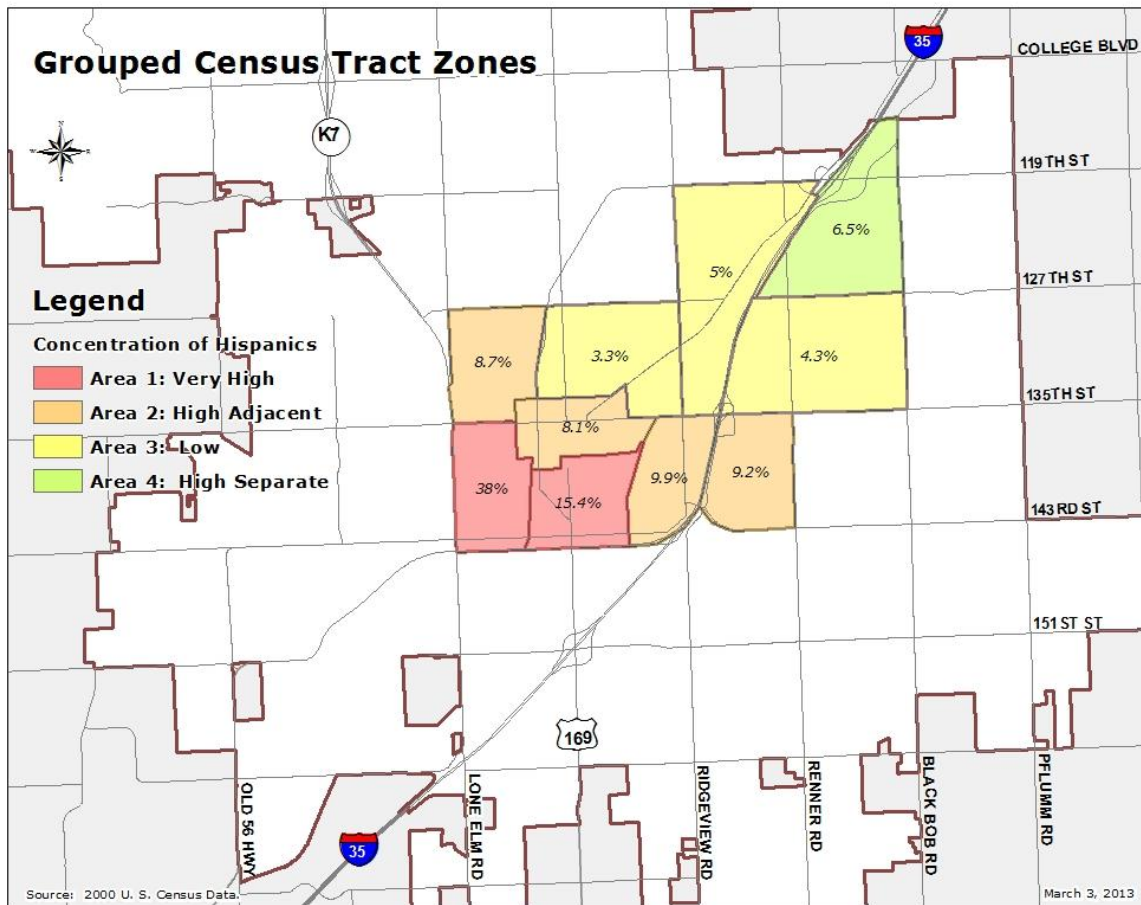
Map 13: U. S. census tracts grouped by Hispanic population density.

It was common for participants' depictions of where Hispanics resided and made impacts to cross census-tract boundaries. The results fell into two categories. The first has to do with six minor scenarios provided by thirteen interviewees. The second involves the three most common perspectives comprising of fifty-seven people (Table 11).

Table 11: Nine scenarios regarding participant-perceived Hispanic-affected areas.

Category	Scenario	Hispanic Influenced Areas	Number of Participants	Percent
1	1	1	3	19
	2	1, 2, 4	2	
	3	2	2	
	4	2, 3	2	
	5	2, 4	1	
	6	Outside of Study Area	3	
2	7	1, 2, 3, 4	12	17
	8	1, 2, 3	32	46
	9	1, 2	13	19

Source: Maggie Book's interviews July 31, 2008 - July 17, 2009.

The first scenario, in Category 1, had three people who saw Area 1 as the only place where Hispanics had an impact. These participants all were located near or within this most densely populated section and had frequent contact with Hispanics as well. Scenario 2 included two participants who had knowledge about the Hispanic population and who felt Areas 1, 2 and 4 were altered. They were among the few people to recognize a very specific residential location in Area 4. Scenario 3 had two people who described only Area 2 as being affected. One of these, self-admittedly, had very poor knowledge of Olathe and gave her best guess. The other individual drew a very small location that referenced the area where he worked. Scenario 4 had two interviewees who identified Areas 2 and 3 being modified and populated by Hispanics. One of these people drew around, but not in Area 1. She works in the more heavily newcomer populated section of town. The other individual works in the same vicinity and identified particular locations to this category. Scenario 5 had one participant who found Areas 2 and 4 as the most influenced. She drew fairly specific areas based on her knowledge of schools receiving assistance and Hispanic student residents. Finally, Scenario 6 was recognized by three interviewees who drew mental maps that did not even intersect my study area. Two of these

people identified large areas to the west while the other sketched in a few small locations. I was surprised at one of the individuals who said western Olathe had been modified because she had specific interaction with and knowledge about the Hispanic community.

The second category includes Scenario 7, 8, and 9 (Map 14).
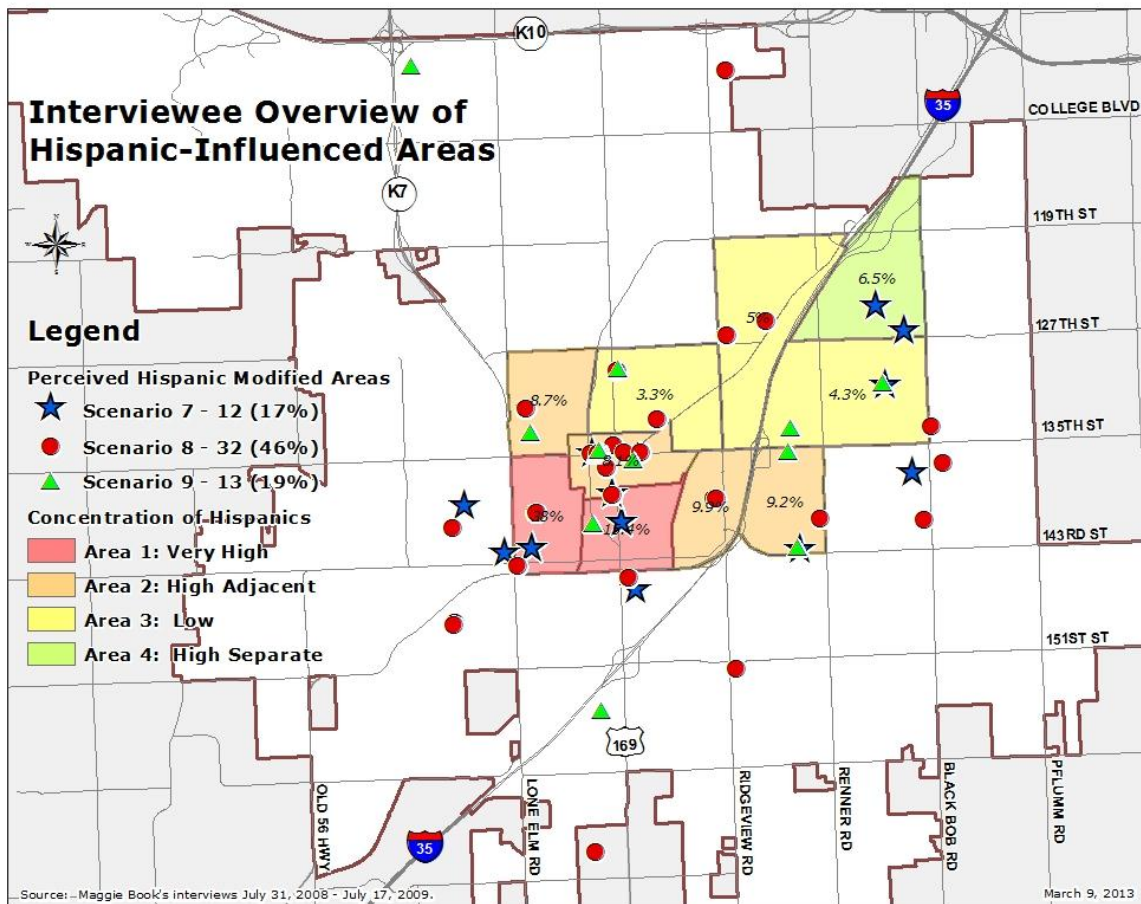
Map 14: Interviewee perceptions of high Hispanic areas and where they have changed Olathe. Twelve participants (17%) in Scenario 7 who perceived impacts in all four areas based their drawings on personal experience. Over half of these interviewees worked for or with the public school district. They based their drawings on school locations known to have either a high enrollment of Hispanic students and/or an English Language Learner (ELL) program. Map 15 is an interviewee's mental map representative of the school-based perceptions.
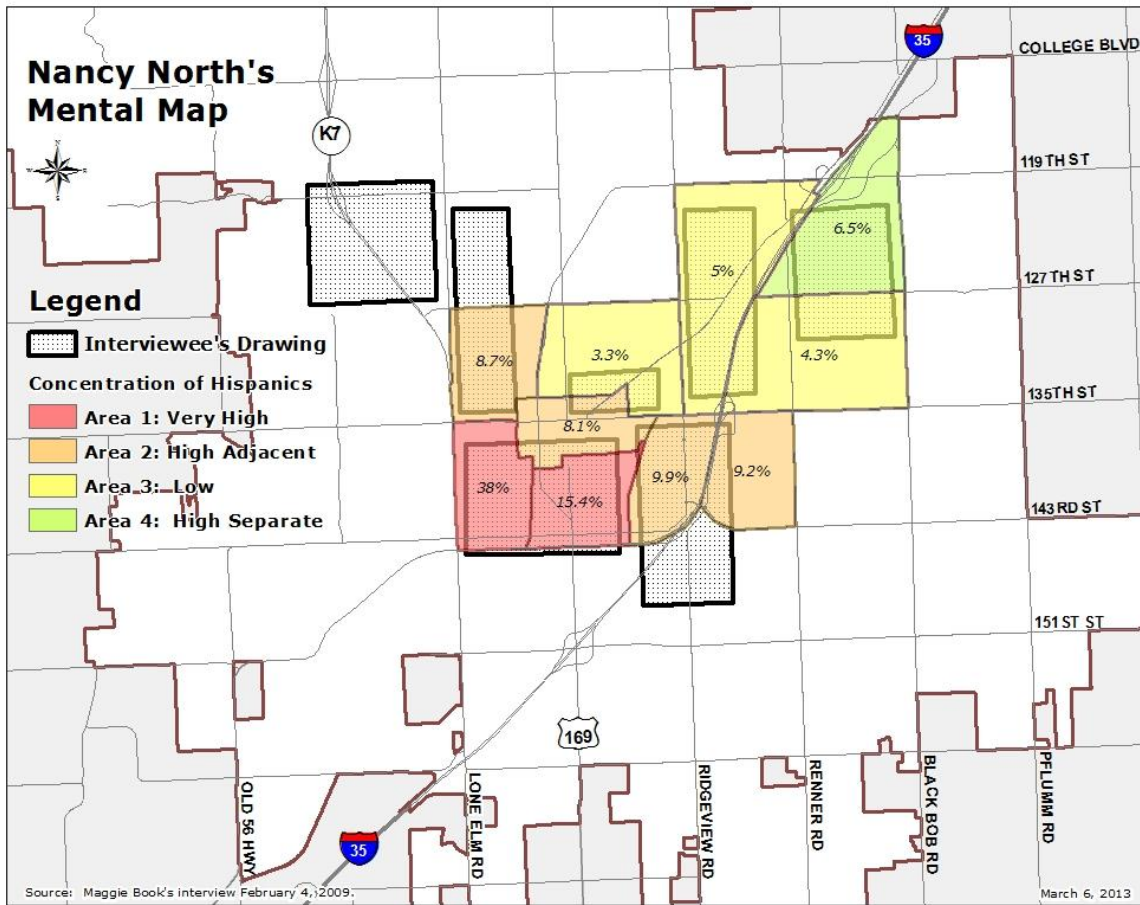
Map 15: A mental map based on an educator's knowledge of densely Hispanic populated schools and ELL sites.

The other, nonschool people in this grouping based their locations on either observing apartments heavily occupied by Hispanics or seeing Latino businesses. Map 16 is an example for such a scenario.
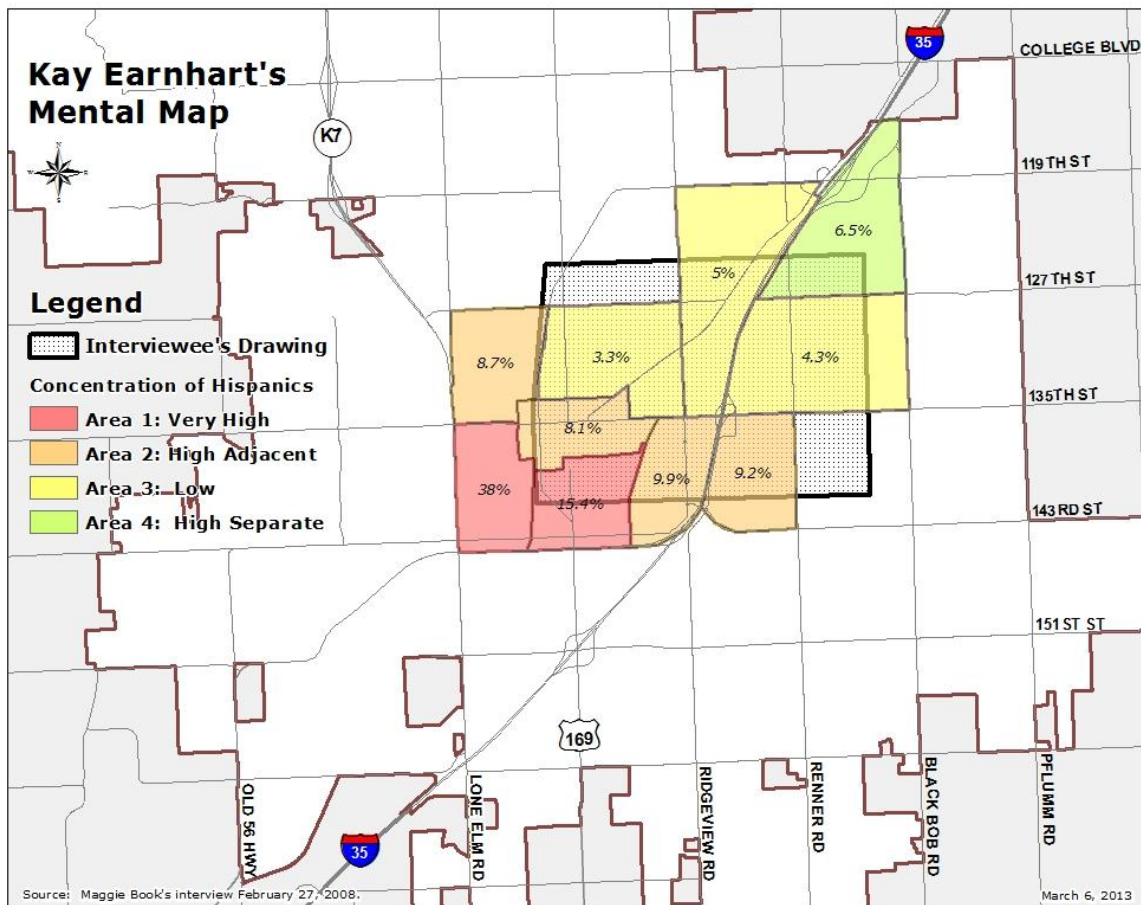
Map 16: A mental map based on the location of apartments and lower income areas.

Sylvia Romero, the Pastora at Center of Grace Church, explained why her mental map regarding where Hispanics lived and have changed Olathe encompassed areas in all parts of town (pers. comm., Map 17):[8]

> One of the things that [has] been interesting is that, when I first started working, I could pretty much tell where people lived. And as the years have gone by they have spread out all over. So even though there are still a few concentrations, I mean, I go on home visits and people are everywhere. Some are still in apartments, but some are in duplexes and some are in houses. So, it's harder to pinpoint anymore. And that has been interesting because it seems as [Hispanics'] lives get easier and better, as they make a little more money . . . they move from the apartment to a bigger place and a bigger place and a bigger place.

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[8] Sylvia Romero (pastora for Center of Grace Church), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, November 19, 2008.
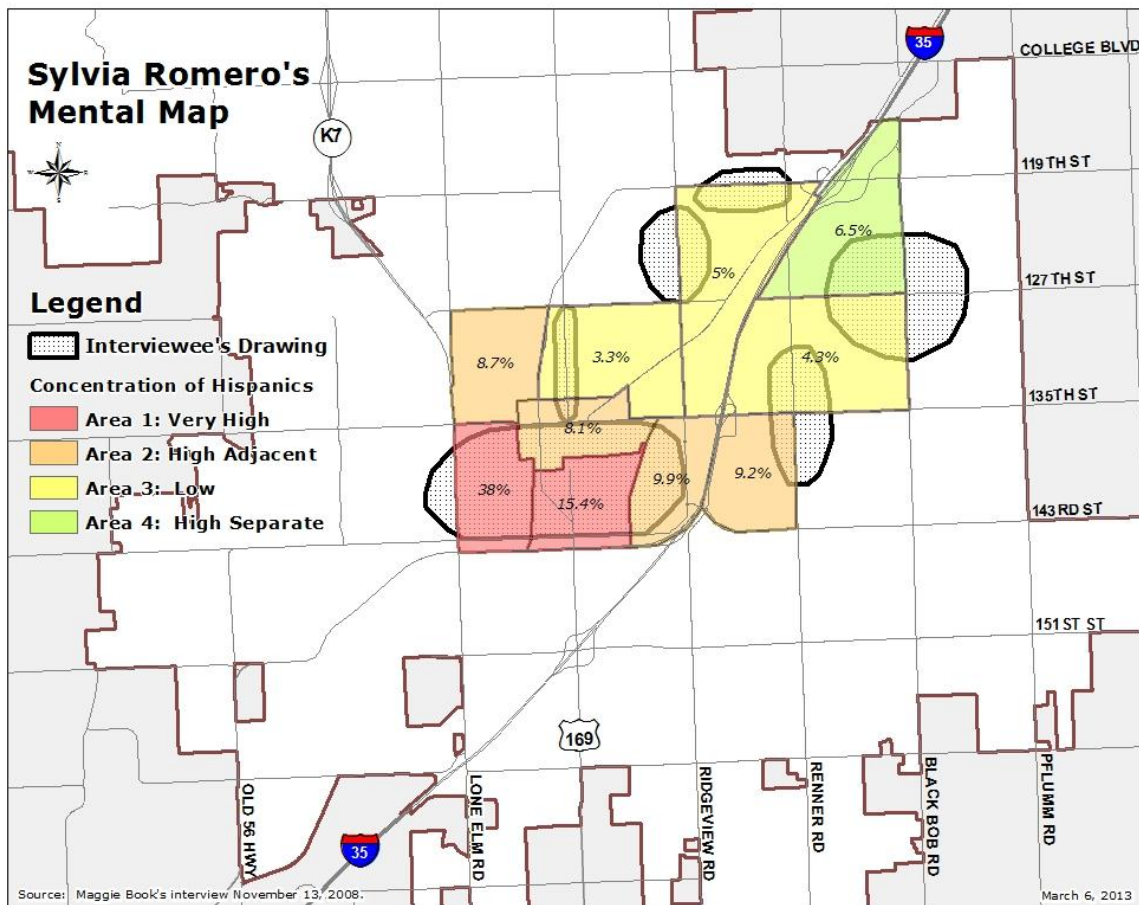
Map 17: A mental map suggesting a broad dispersal of Hispanics throughout Olathe.

Nine of my twelve interviewees who perceived all four areas were modified worked in or adjacent to tracts defined as very high or high Hispanic concentration areas. I expected that only parts of town found in Areas 1 and 2 would have been chosen by these individuals. Instead, their maps suggest that direct and frequent personal experience acquired by traveling to specific residences or knowledge of school attendance demographics plays a bigger part in an individual's perception of the city than does proximity to high concentrations of Hispanics.

Almost half of my interviewees, thirty-two people (46%), recognized Scenario 8, made up of Areas 1, 2, and 3, as heavily populated or influenced by newcomers. This was by far the most popular scenario. Participants based their drawings on the reasons mentioned previously,

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but they also included criteria such as lower economic areas and recognizing cultural landscape differences between the majority and newcomer populations.

Within this big grouping and similar to my earlier experience, interviewees involved with the public school district based their decisions on knowledge of the diversity within various schools and ELL locations. However, they were even more likely to identify particular schools with exceptionally high Hispanic numbers. Also congruent with prior discussion, seeing Hispanic people out-and-about was for them a definitive way to classify an area. Such personal knowledge was based on directly dealing with Hispanics for work, economic assistance, or adapting one's business to meet the changing clientele's needs.

Interviewees provided more locational references based on economics. This was done by incorporating the assumption that Hispanic newcomers were most likely to reside in lower income areas. In addition, people's drawings were swayed by the presence of stores obviously directed at the Spanish-speaking population (i.e. Spanish-language signs and advertisements for imported goods). Two Price Chopper grocery stores that stock large selections of Mexican products were noted in particular. Authentic Mexican restaurants and frilly balloon decorations were other indicators. Chapter six will contain more details about cultural landscape identifiers.

One interviewee, a social-service worker who dealt directly with Hispanics, created a mental map that is an excellent example of how personal knowledge of landscapes and people generated perceptions for members of this group (Map 18).
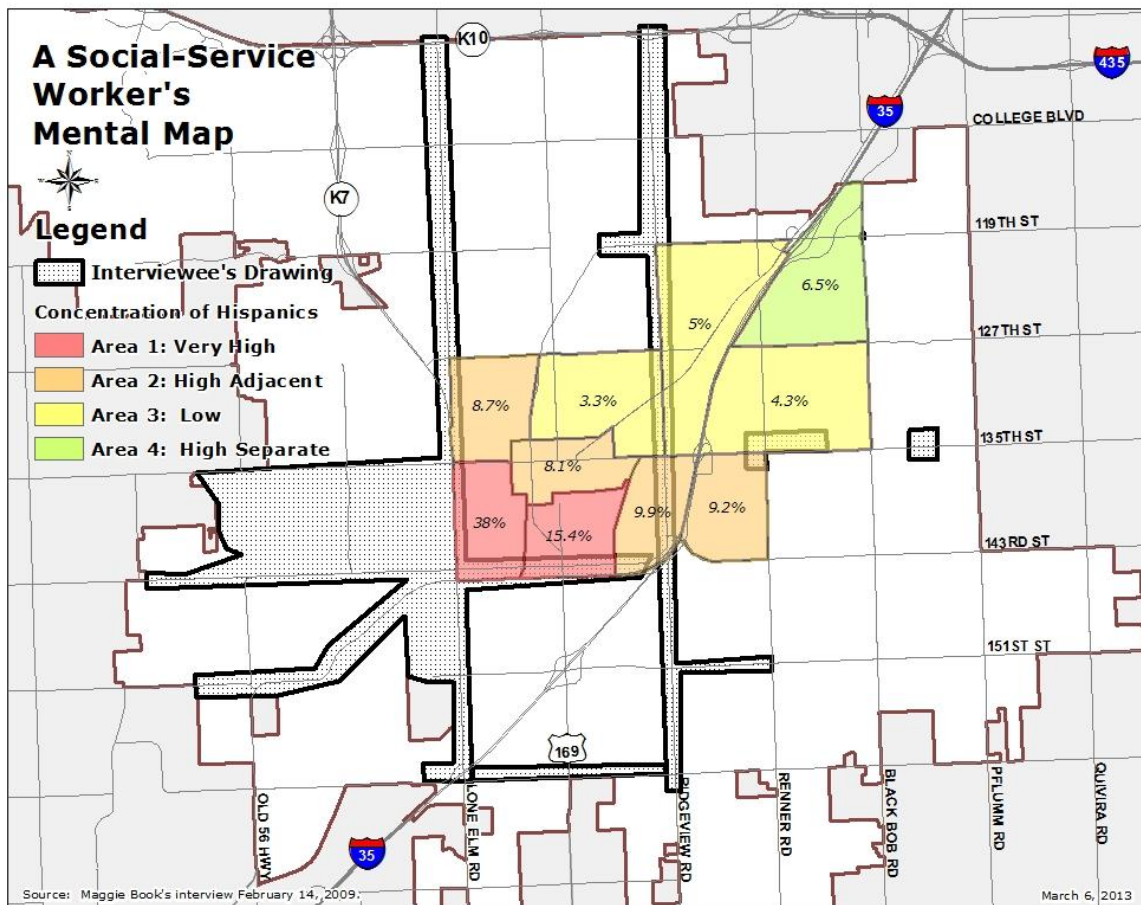
Map 18: A mental map based on personal knowledge of cultural landscapes and people.

She noticed Latino shops, stores selling Mexican products, concentrations of Hispanic families

needing rent assistance, a Quick Trip store where Hispanic male labors often ate breakfast, and

elementary schools with large Hispanic populations (pers. comm.). Another participant who was

a mortgage professional used similar criteria plus signs displayed in Spanish, Hispanic goods

sold in specific Price Chopper and Wal-Mart locations, and the whereabouts of Hispanic

borrowers (Map 19).
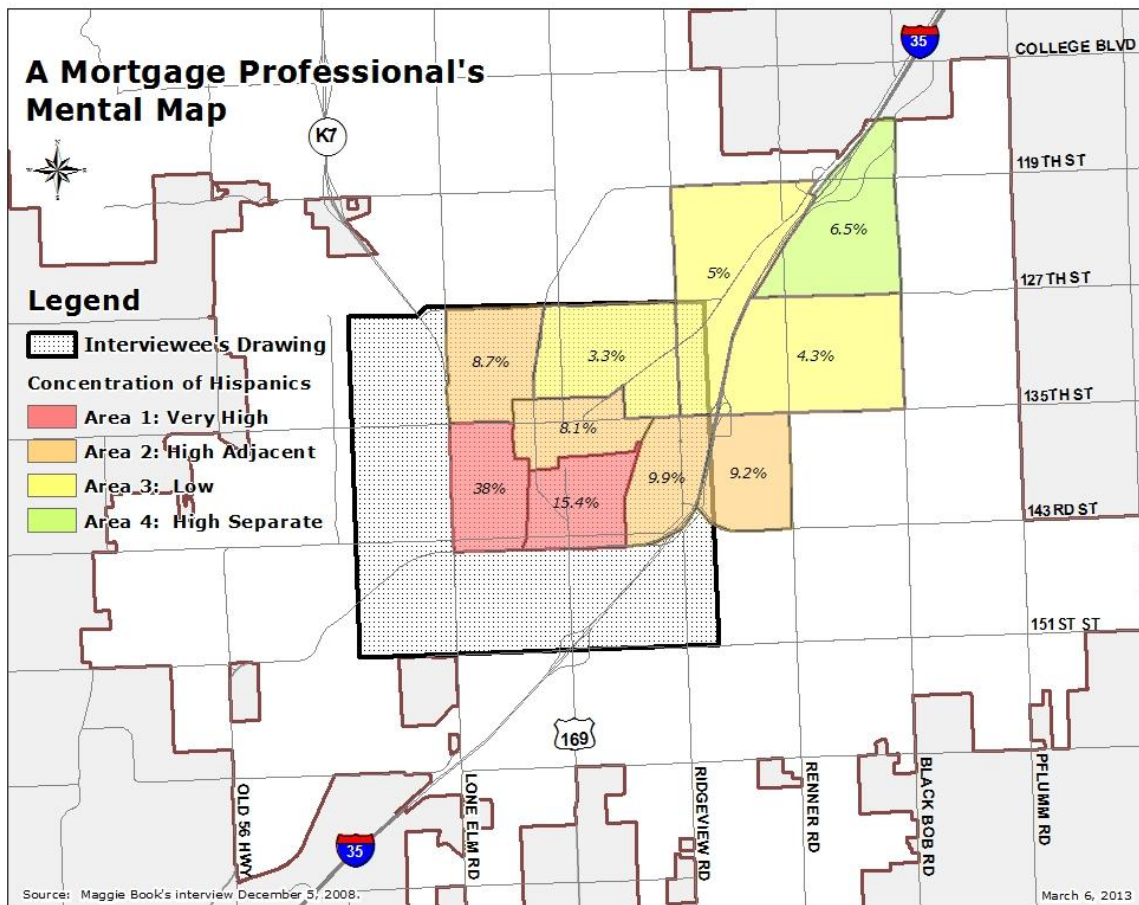
Map 19: A mental map based on personal knowledge of cultural landscape and people plus seeing Spanish language displays and being cognizant of where Hispanic goods are sold.

Interestingly, within this group of people who identified Areas 1, 2, and 3 as densely Hispanic, a small subset referenced a location called "Little Mexico."[9] This site focused on a set of apartment and duplex complexes nearly or entirely filled with Hispanics. It also included the surrounding area where participants noted a relatively large number of authentic Mexican restaurants, Latino specialty shops, numerous displays of the Spanish language, and not least, a number of majority stores selling Hispanic goods. This topic will be explored more in the *othering* discussion at the end of this chapter.

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[9] Of the seventy interviews that generated mental maps, six people used the actual expression "Little Mexico." Five of these were in the group who considered Areas 1, 2, and 3 as densely Hispanic.

Scenario 9, consisting of Areas 1 and 2, is the last grouping that stands out as having high concentrations of or being influenced by Hispanics. I was surprised only thirteen people (19%) focused on these two areas because they are densely (8-38%) Hispanic. As with the other categories, participants noted that actually seeing Hispanics was the best indication of their presence. What set this group of interviewees apart, however, is their specificity in definition criteria. Like other participants, they recognized a connection between Hispanics and lower-income areas, but they saw one part of town, Old Olathe, as a primary location. Participants also mentioned St. Paul's Catholic Church, the Great Mall of the Great Plains and a Price Chopper grocery store when creating their maps (Map 20).
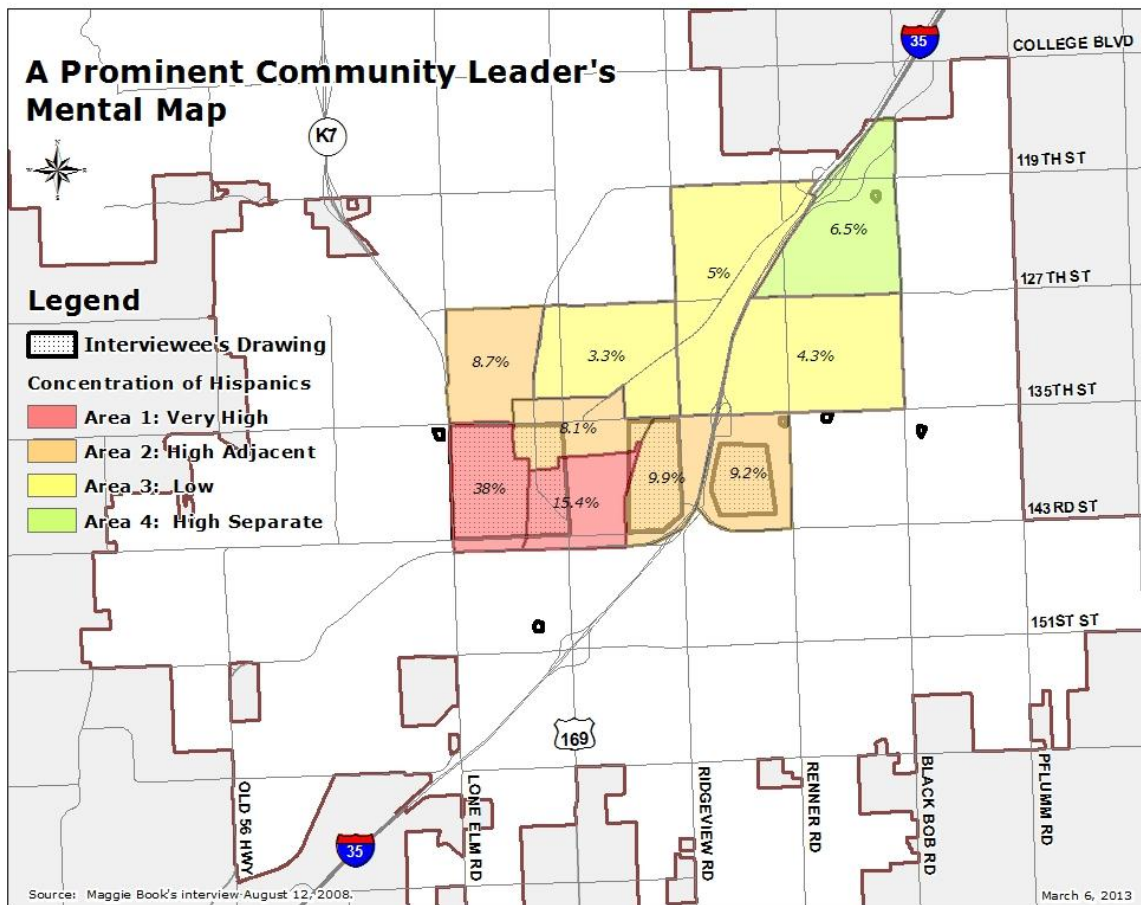
Map 20: A mental map created by a long-time resident turned prominent community leader based on personal experience and noting specifically old-town Olathe and St. Paul's Catholic Church.

Finally, participants in this group were also more specific about which schools enrolled the most Hispanic newcomers. Regan Veach, a fifth-grade teacher, said that her mental map was based partly on the locations of Ridgeview, Central, Westview, Fairview, and Rolling Ridge elementary schools. She also noted seeing Hispanic kids frequently hanging out at the Great Mall and at the new Wal-Mart in old-town Olathe (pers. comm., Map 21).
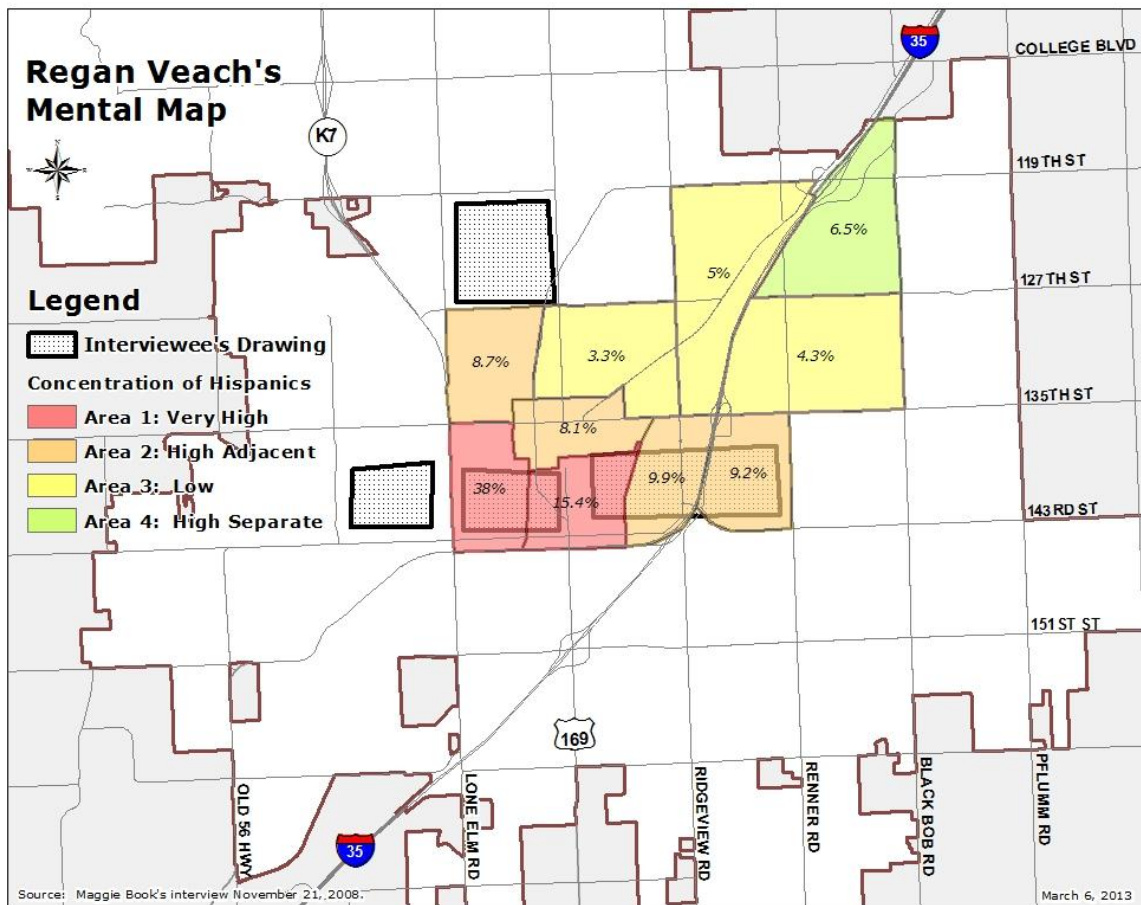
Map 21: A mental map based on knowledge of specific schools and other places.

Based on Scenarios 7, 8, and 9, one can conclude that perceptions vary depending on who an individual interacts with and where they spend their personal and professional time. Seeing people out-and-about plays a strong role in defining perceptions about space. In addition, some people use locations of lower-income areas as a surrogate measure for Hispanic newcomers. Beyond these issues my findings also support the common-sense observation that, the more intimate a person is with the Hispanic newcomer community, the more accurate is his or her mental map of dense Hispanic areas.

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Majority's Perceptions of Hispanic-Modified Olathe

During the interviews, I asked participants to indicate if they felt Hispanics directly affected any parts of Olathe. A large majority—fifty-five or 74%—said "yes" (Map 22).[10] This viewpoint held true regardless of their proximity to the high Hispanic concentration areas.
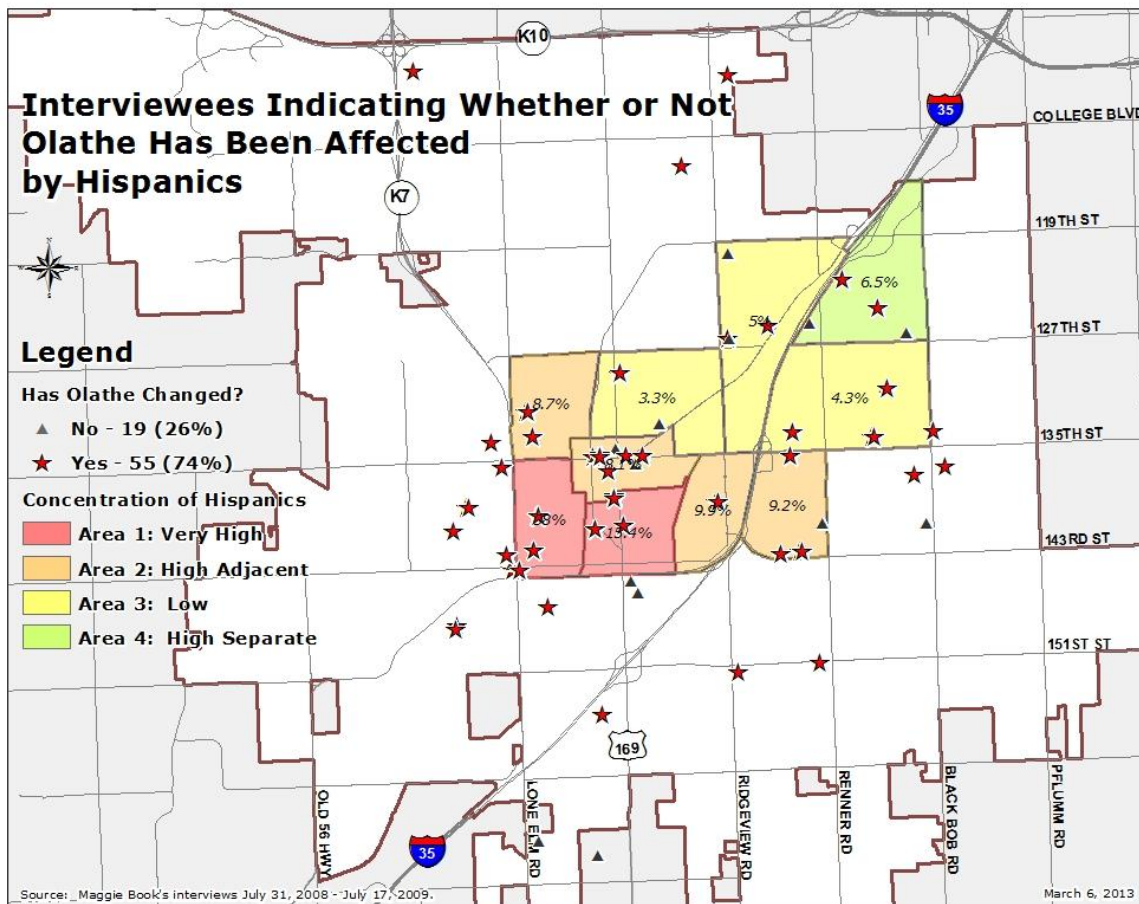
Map 22: Respondents' feedback indicating that the majority of participants feel that Hispanic newcomers have changed Olathe despite their proximity to dense Hispanic areas.

Among the fifty-five whom said that Hispanics affected the look and feel of Olathe, three categories emerged based on how they perceived that impact to have occurred. One group said the pressure occurred mainly through people's individual presence, while a second thought it

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[10] Of the seventy-seven interviewees, three were not able to comment on this line of questioning because of their jobs. Percentages are based on seventy-four people.

came largely via the cultural landscape. The third said it was a combination of the two. The first category includes the increased existence of Hispanic people working in local businesses, changes in the type of products and services offered (such as an increase in money wiring), and changes within public schools. More details about types of services and products will be discussed in chapter seven dealing with adaptation. The second category, cultural landscape impacts, includes Spanish language displays, Hispanic store names, mom-and-pop Latino specialty stores, and property maintenance neglect. This concept will be delved into further in chapter six. A "both" response was used when participants recognized that the two descriptions were applicable.

Twenty-four (44%) interviewees thought that Hispanics influenced Olathe largely through their physical presence (Map 23). This group was widespread throughout the study area, sans only the southwest corner where the two highest Hispanic populated census tracts are located. The combination of those who only noticed the physical presence of the Hispanics and those who saw this plus cultural landscape change (89% of interviewees) shows how widespread the influence of this minority group was felt throughout the city (circles depicted on Map 23). This perception occurred in all census tracts, even ones with low levels of Hispanic population density, and suggests that discrete or overt organizational modifications do indeed affect how the majority population perceives the areas changed by Hispanics.

Only six (11%) participants saw cultural landscape as the only major way that Hispanic peoples modified the look of Olathe. Four of these responses were limited to Area 2, also a source for high Hispanic population values. The other two people commuted frequently into the high concentration areas. However, twenty-five (45%) interviewees felt that, together, the presence of Hispanic individuals and Hispanic cultural landscapes transformed Olathe.

Interviewees' awareness of outward cultural displays is mainly found in denser areas having eight percent Hispanic population or greater. In addition, a person's travel into these same areas seems to influence spatial cognizance about what areas have been altered by newcomers.
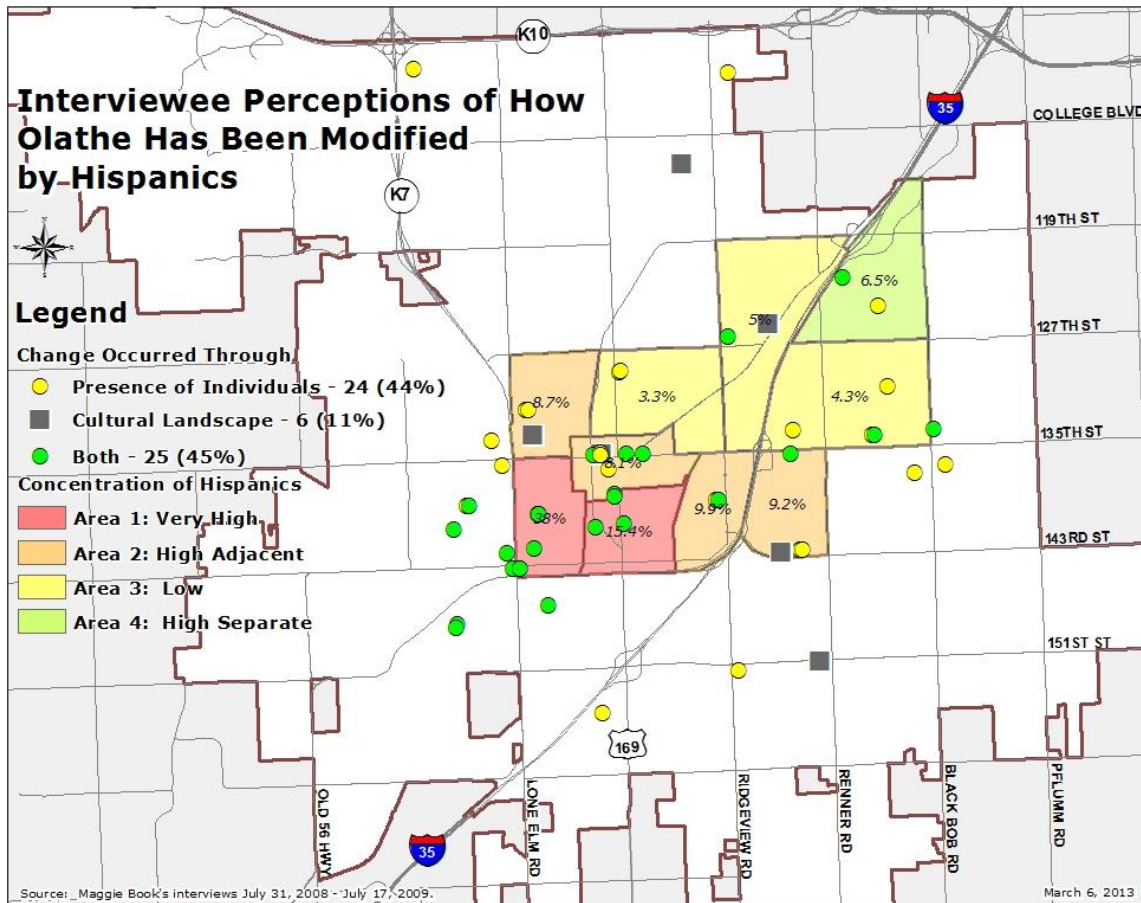
Map 23: Interviewee perceptions that the presence of Hispanics altered Olathe are widespread. Participants that felt that Olathe was changed by a modified cultural landscape as well as the combination of the newcomers' existence and cultural landscape are tied to dense Hispanic areas.

Another way to understand people's perceptions about the impact of Hispanics on Olathe is to focus on where changes are thought to have taken place. Two answers stood out: the older part of town cited by twenty (36%) participants and the west side cited by twenty-two (40%) (Map 24). Since the west side can be considered to be anything west of I-35, and the "older part of town" or the original town area, is also west of this interstate route, the two terms obviously

overlap. Given this reality, I grouped the two categories so that forty-two (80%) people can be said to see the older-west side of Olathe as changed by Hispanics. From this, it is clear that proximity of an individual to actual high Hispanic concentration areas is not influential in their formation of spatial perceptions.
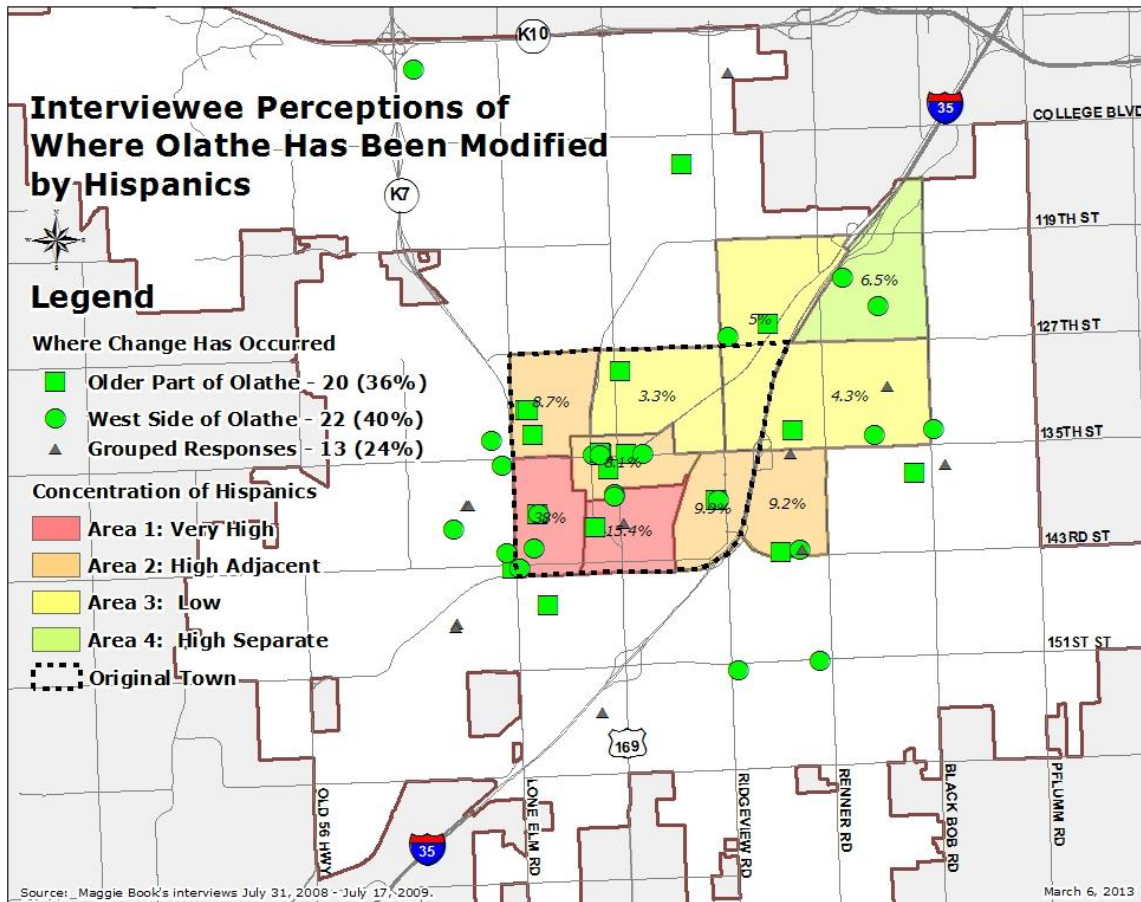
Map 24: Interviewee perceptions showing that the older-west side of Olathe has been modified the most by Hispanics.

A few participants listed other locations as being altered by Hispanics. One person noted the east side of town while another said the south. Neither of them had a strong connection with the Hispanic community. Another five interviewees were ambiguous about their answers, making it impossible to nail down a specific locale. I found this lack of detail odd because each of these individuals had frequent personal interaction with Hispanic newcomers. Finally, six

people said all of Olathe was affected. Two of these do not have strong ties to the Hispanic community in Olathe. For ease of map display, these interviewees' replies are shown as the "grouped responses" category (Map 24).

I also asked participants if they thought that city or neighborhood traditions had changed because of the increased Hispanic population.   For the most part, both yes and no responses were spread equally over the study area (Map 25).
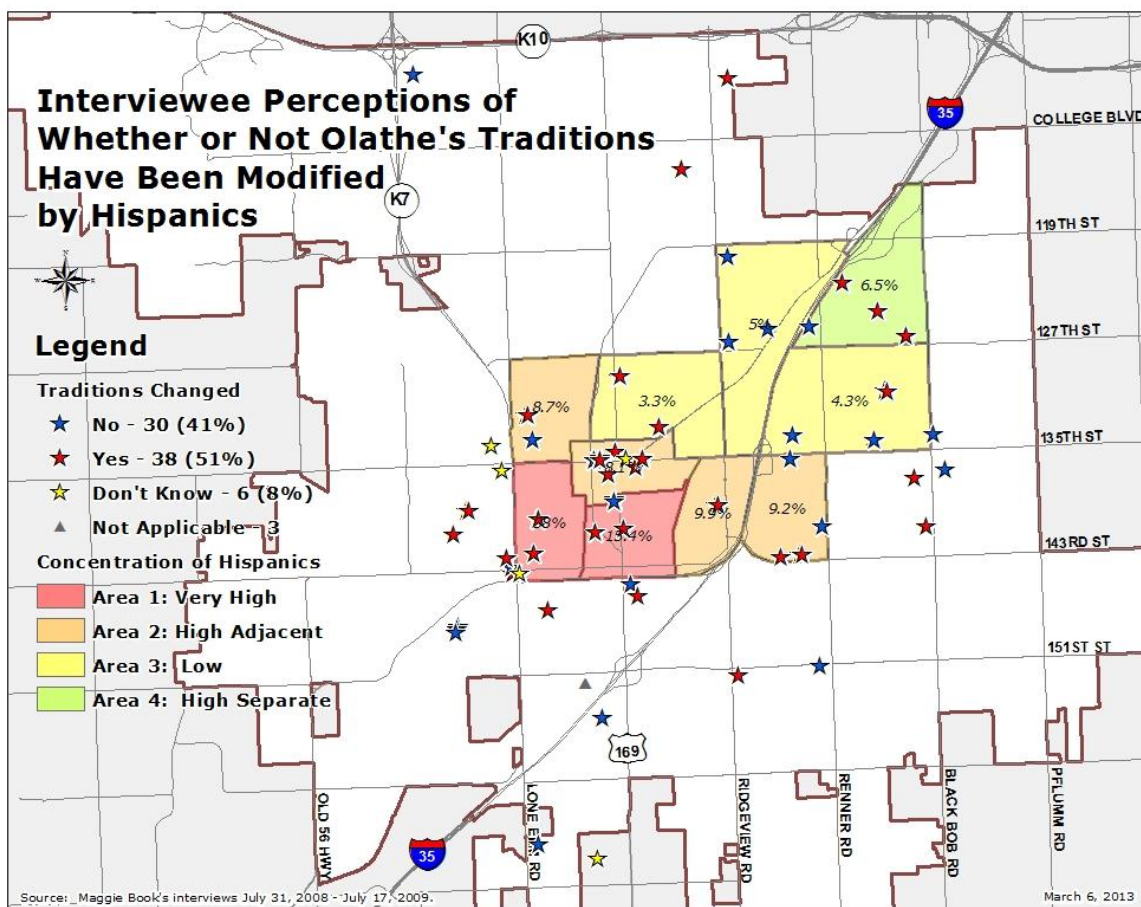
Map 25: Interviewee perceptions showing a close divide of whether or not Olathe's traditions have been modified by Hispanics.

Of the seventy-four people who responded, thirty-eight (51%) said yes, thirty (41%) no, and six (8%) said that they did not know. These last six were unexpected considering five of them had

jobs in or immediately adjacent to densely populated Hispanic areas and all six worked closely with the newcomers.

Within the "yes" responses, thirty-one (82%) people noticed an increase or change in the city's festivals or celebrations (Table 12). Specifically, participants cited Mexican-related celebrations including one South American interviewee who said that she never knew what Cinco de Mayo was until she came to Olathe (Identity confidential-bilingual elementary support staff, pers. comm.). Another interviewee, a principal at an elementary school with a large Hispanic student population, shared that his school now celebrates Mexican Independence day on September 16th with a family potluck (Identity confidential-elementary principal, pers. comm.). People also noticed how previously Anglo celebration traditions had changed in high Hispanic concentration areas by including mariachi bands, piñatas, and Hispanic dancers (pers. comm.). In addition, several interviewees suggested that the city-sponsored multicultural festival, Americana Jubilee, was a direct result of the increased Hispanic population (pers. comm.).

Table 12: Perceptions of traditions created or modified by Hispanic newcomers.

Types of Traditions Changed	Value	Percentage
Festivals/Activities/Celebrations	31	82
Food	7	18
Language	3	8
No Specifics Provided	2	5
Family Values	1	3
Lack of Peaceful Communication	1	3

Source: Maggie Book's interviews July 31, 2008 - July 17, 2009. Note: Some interviewees provided more than one answer.

The types of foods available through various venues were another way in which interviewees thought traditions had been modified. They reported that tortillas, burritos, enchiladas and tacos were now common in grocery stores, restaurants, and on school lunch

menus. They even thought that more ambiguous cultural traditions, such as how people interact with one another, were affected. One participant said an increase in Hispanics has helped improve residents' family values, while another said it had inhibited people's ability to communicate peacefully (pers. comm.). Three people felt that language was an affected tradition through an increase in bilingual people and services.

The Safety Issue

I asked participants if they thought any parts of town were unsafe.   Of the seventy-seven interviewees, seventy-two were able to answer, and of those, fifty-six (78%) felt Olathe was safe (Map 26). Some participants' perspectives were influenced by their previous experiences in more treacherous areas such as Chicago; Kansas City, Kansas; or traveling through a gypsy encampment (pers. comm.). Ten interviewees said that, even though they felt Olathe was safe overall, they would not travel at night by themselves. This was often attributed to general smart travel behavior.

People who felt Olathe was safe are scattered throughout the study area (Map 26). This suggests that an individual's proximity to dense Hispanic populations does not impede him or her from thinking Olathe is safe. Those who think that Olathe has parts that are unsafe primarily work in Areas 1 and 2. This, of course, is the older, lower economic area of town. The two people located in Area 3 cited lower economic standing as the reason they identified particular locales as unsafe. The participant located on the north side indicated he had personal knowledge that drug activity was occurring off Dennis Avenue past the railroad tracks (R. Ramirez, pers. comm.).
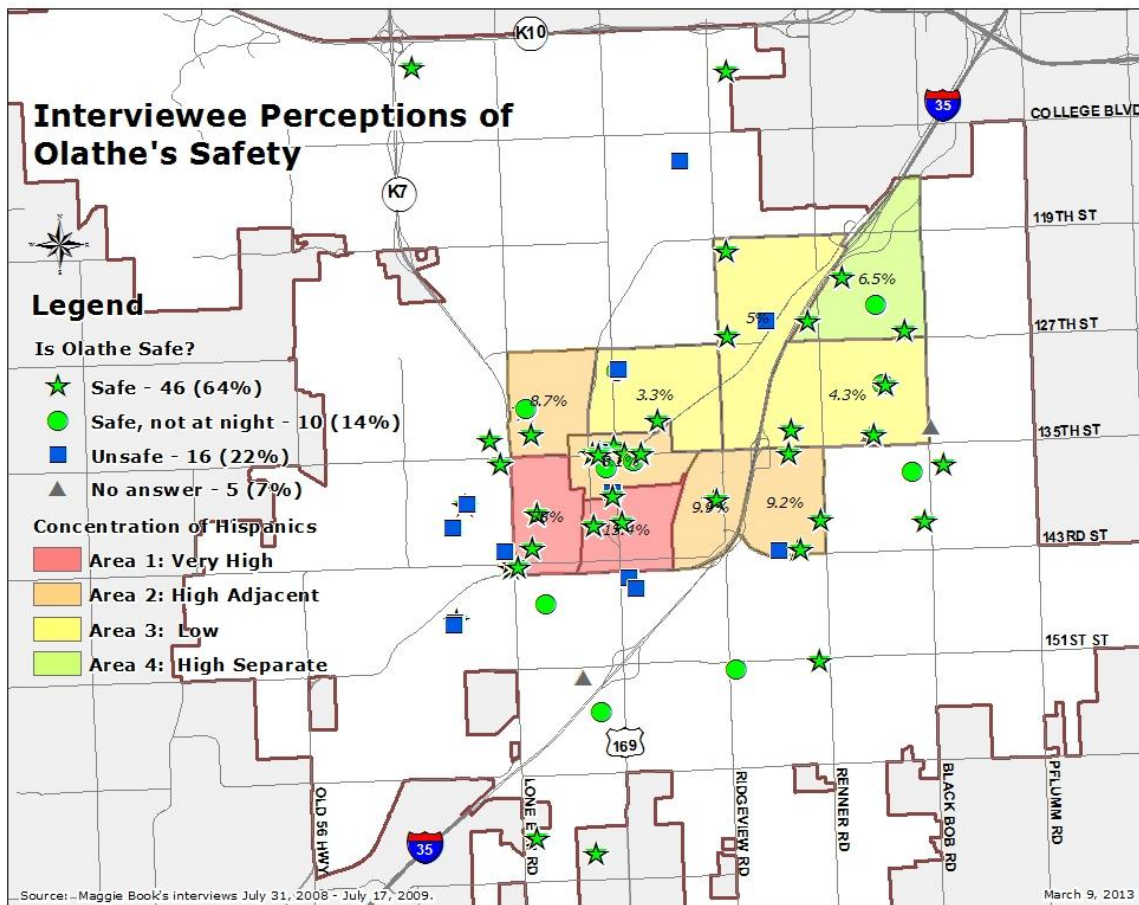
Map 26: Interviewee perceptions showing that the majority of respondents felt Olathe was safe are spread throughout the study area.

Sixteen (22%) interviewees thought that parts of Olathe were unsafe (Map 27). Nine (56%) of these participants listed poverty and multifamily housing as their main reasons. They repeated the theme that lower-rent areas attract residents who would be more likely to engage in fights or illicit drug activities, regardless of race. A neighborhood-knowledgeable city-service worker indicated that the duplexes on Grant Terrace were particularly bad because of trash in the yards and being totally run down (Identity confidential-city worker 2, pers. comm.). I can personally vouch for this assessment, for Grant Terrace was one of two areas I felt uncomfortable in during my field work.
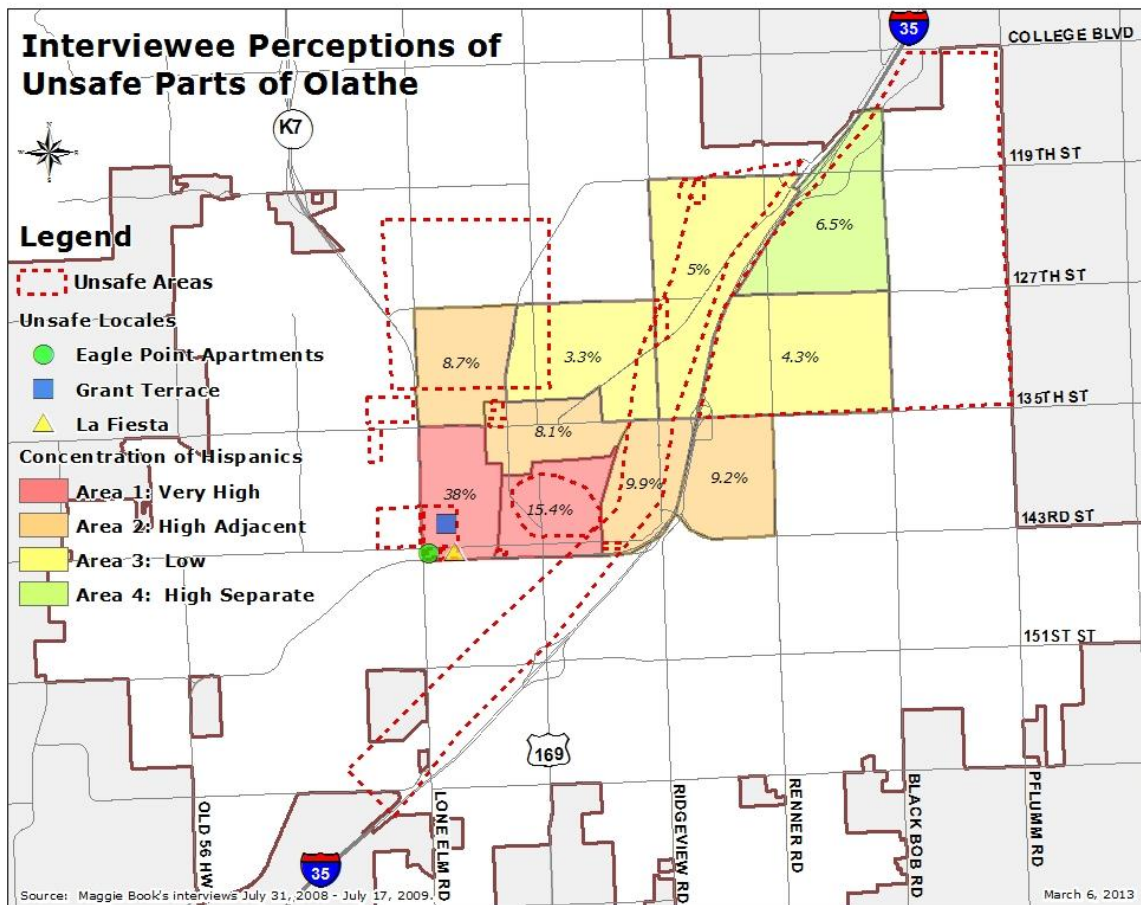
Map 27: Interviewee perceptions of unsafe parts of Olathe are ubiquitous the study area. Three specific sites were noted found in the densest Hispanic census tract.

Five (31%) of the interviewees who felt parts of Olathe were unsafe mentioned La Fiesta restaurant and night club as well as Eagle Point Apartments. Eagle Point Apartments retains an old image of being a Hispanic trouble spot. La Fiesta, immediately behind Eagle Point Apartments, is thought of more as a bar. As with any watering hole, rowdy behavior is possible especially as the night wears on. In addition, this area is older with large trees that make it difficult for streetlights to keep walkways well lit. Shadows add to the perception of this being an unsafe area. Two (13%) participants indicated the area east of I-35 as being unsafe based on what they heard over police scanners. In summary, economics and advanced age of particular

Olathe neighborhoods may be more critical in identifying unsafe areas than race or density of the Hispanic newcomer population.

Where and How Othering Is Taking Place

Othering is a judgment by one group of people (usually the majority or those in control) that the cultural practices of another group (typically a minority or those not in a power position) make this second group inferior (Bhabha 1994, Carli et al. 2003, Parameswaran 2002, Said 1993). When someone is recognized as the *other*, generally speaking, they are stereotyped in unfavorable ways. They are put on the receiving end of negative remarks, segregated spatially, and otherwise treated unfairly. Labeling people as the other can be based on almost any difference, but common discriminators include language, everyday behaviors, physical appearance, and cultural landscape displays.

To assess people's perceptions of if they felt *othering* was taking place in Olathe as a result of new Hispanic population, I asked questions about how participants characterized the areas they worked in. Was there anything they liked or disliked about it? Why did they feel parts of town had a large Hispanic population? Did they perceive any areas as being unsafe? How did they feel about programs offered for Hispanics? Did they think parts of town were being modified by Hispanics and, if so, how did they feel about it? And finally, did they think traditions were being changed, and if so, how did they feel about that?

As I reviewed interviewees' responses from an *othering* perspective, I looked for answers that covered ideas of inclusion, feeling excluded, disparaging remarks, ideas perpetuating stereotypes, and observations about differences in cultural practices between the majority and newcomers. Based on my personal knowledge, I saw Olathe not only accepting of the Hispanic population, but frequently doing things to help newcomers become part of the community.

Because of this, I was surprised that fifty-two (70%) out of seventy-four participants made remarks that indicated *othering* was taking place (Map 28).[11]
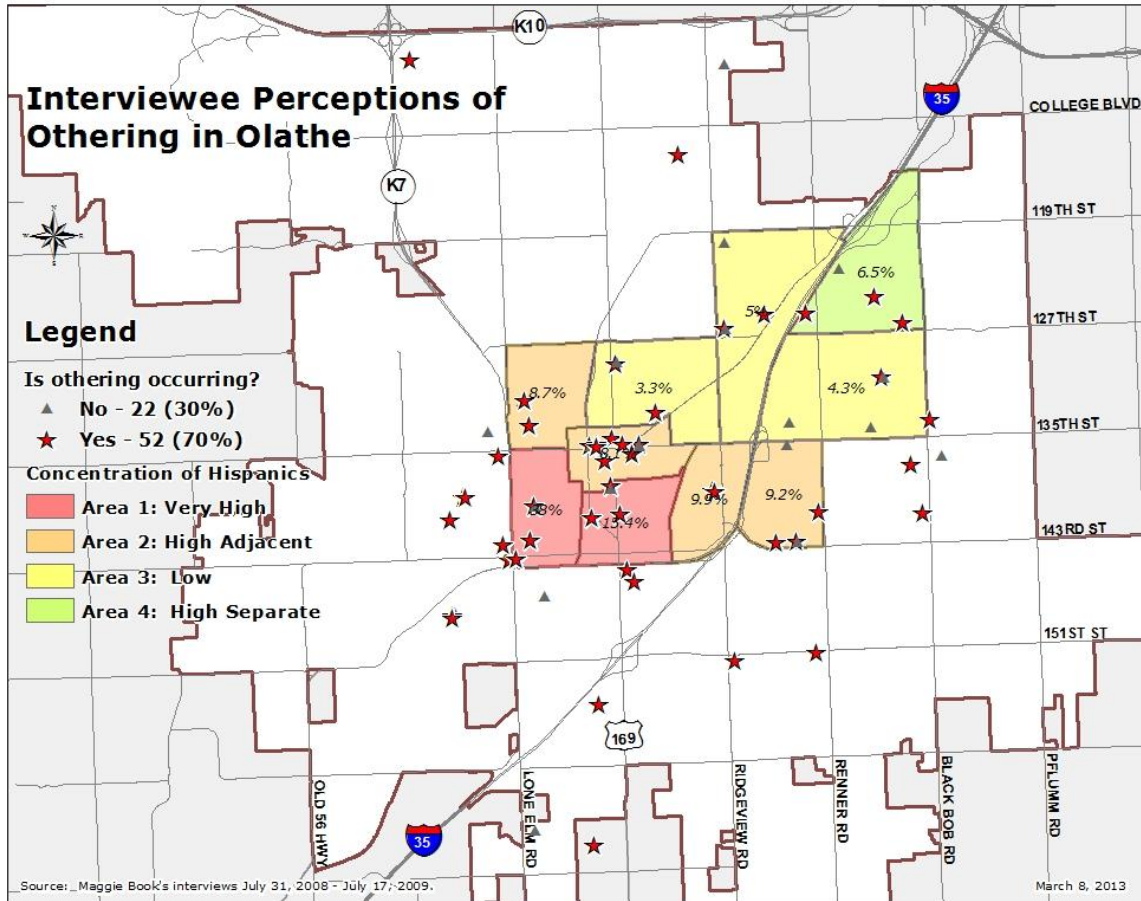
Map 28: Interviewee perceptions' indicating that othering was commonly occurring in Olathe was found mainly in dense Hispanic areas.

The breakdowns of participant responses are interesting because of the similarity in percentage values of yes-to-no answers for each area (Table 13). For the interviewees located within either Areas 1, 2 or 4 (the Hispanic concentrations), seventy-five percent expressed that *othering* occurred. Area 3 had a more equal split. More intriguing, perhaps, interviewees who worked outside the three Hispanic areas had responses similar to those who worked within, with

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[11] Three out of seventy-seven interviewees were unable to respond due to their jobs.

sixty-nine percent noticing *othering*, twenty-four percent inferred it was not present, and seven

percent had no opinion on the matter.

Table 13: Participant perceptions of *othering* taking place in Olathe sorted by Hispanic density
areas.

Hispanic Density Areas	Yes % *(value)*	No % *(value)*	No Response *% (value)*
Area 1	75 (6)	25 (2)	
Area 2	75 (18)	25 (6)	
Area 4	75 (3)	25 (1)	
Surrounding Area	69 (20)	24 (7)	7 (2)
Area 3	42 (5)	50 (6)	8 (1)

Source: Maggie Book's interviews July 31, 2008 - July 17, 2009.

The fifty-two participants who recognized the *othering* phenomenon in Olathe specified

six different types of mechanisms: language disparities, derogatory remarks, cultural differences,

overabundance of Hispanic people, stereotyping, and plain old ignorance (Table 14).

Table 14: Types of *othering* conduits perceived to exist in Olathe.

Othering Mechanisms	Value	Percent	Areas Modified
Language Disparities	36	69	1, 2, 3, 4
Derogatory Remarks	20	38	1, 2, 3
Cultural Differences	17	33	1, 2
Dense Hispanic Population	16	31	1, 2, 3
Stereotyping	12	23	1, 2
Ignorance	8	15	1, 2

Source: Maggie Book's interviews July 31, 2008 - July 17, 2009. Note: Some interviewees
found *othering* occurred in multiple ways.

The most popular response given by thirty-six (69%) interviewees was that *othering* materialized

through language differences. Of these, nineteen (53%) respondents said that the majority is the

one who becomes the *other* as a result of not understanding Spanish. Four (11%) others took the

opposite view, saying that Hispanics are the *other* because of their lack of knowledge about

English. Finally, thirteen (36%) people recognized that both the majority and Hispanics can

become the *other* at some point in time as a result of not understanding the alternative language.

Language difference was the only mechanism noted that branded the majority population as being the *other*. Participants revealed that it was intimidating not knowing how to speak or understand Spanish. It kept them from going into Latin specialty stores and made them feel uncomfortable in densely populated Hispanic areas. Lorie Hyten, a reference librarian responsible for city's library Spanish collection, understands the importance of word-of-mouth advertising in the Hispanic community. She talked about how she wanted to promote the library's Spanish-language materials, but because of her own lack of language skills, found it difficult to go into the needed Latin stores: "[The] problem I have [is that] I don't have hardly any Spanish. So I'm always kind of shy about taking my stuff in [the Hispanic stores], because I can't convey to them what it is I want."[12]

The language barrier can hinder or lead to misconceptions in person-to-person relationships. In the school setting, this causes some English-speaking parents to be slow to interact with their Spanish-speaking counterparts. In addition, some interviewees felt that, at times, the Spanish-speaking students were talking about them (pers. comm.). One school official who worked in a setting that has a large Hispanic student representation shared her experience (pers. comm.): [13]

> [Some] teachers who . . . [are around the Spanish-speaking] populations . . . are not sure how to deal with it. I think sometimes they wish that the students wouldn't speak as much Spanish because they don't understand. You are always fearful of what you don't understand. Are they talking about me? Are they saying something rude? . . . The idea of your own not knowing makes you feel uncomfortable. So I think there could be some places that where they would say we don't want the students to speak Spanish at all from 8-3. I don't really subscribe to that . . . . We do ask when [Hispanic students] respond or if there is time for social conversation in class that they do speak in English. Because I'm the teacher and I need to know what it is you are saying and what's happening and making sure things are appropriate.

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[12] Lori Hyten (reference librarian—Olathe Public Library), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, August 14, 2008.
[13] Identity confidential (educator at Santa Fe Trail Jr. High), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, November 14, 2008.

Some interviewees expressed that English is the language spoken *here*. Newcomers should learn *our* language, not us *theirs*. Susan McCabe, the executive director for the English-as-a-second-language program at Johnson County Community College, said that Hispanics should be able to teach their children their language. "I think being able to be bilingual is a beautiful thing. I do think they should be able to speak our language. *I'm* willing to do something about it."[14]

Interviewees were willing to learn key phrases in Spanish to help them accomplish their jobs, but they were not keen on the idea of having to learn Spanish so the Hispanic newcomers could understand how daily processes worked in Olathe. As two city workers told me (pers. comm.):[15, 16]

> Worker 1: If I'm going to be totally honest, again I don't want to sound racist or anything like that. I think it is [the Hispanics'] responsibility to learn how to speak English. I don't think it's our responsibility to learn how to speak Spanish. I'm sorry, but that's how I feel.

> Worker 2: I agree with you but . . . I wouldn't mind having a card or something that says the Spanish version of "I'm here to turn your water off. Turn it on. You don't have a leak. You do have a leak." Just key phrases.

> Worker 1: I could see that.

> Worker 2: Just to smooth our job along a little bit more. Because it's really frustrating sometimes trying to find different ways to explain to them that "Hey, you've got a toilet leaking. Or you need to call the city and talk to them about your bill." Or something like that.

> Worker 1: The point that I'm trying to make is, if it gets to the point where we have to go and take lengthy courses to actually learn how to speak Spanish, I don't think that's fair.

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[14] Susan McCabe (executive director for Johnson County Community College English as a second language program), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, January 7, 2009.
[15] Identity confidential (city worker 1), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, November 13, 2008.
[16] Identity confidential (city worker 2), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, November 13, 2008.

Worker 2: I agree with you. If they want to discuss with me in detail . . . something about their service, then yes, I agree. It's their responsibility. We're in America and English is the language. I agree with that. I have gone to some classes but that's just to smooth my job along. I don't think I need to learn fluent Spanish for my job.

Another example was provided by Stephanie Dansco when she discussed parents' responses to

the implementation of a district-wide policy for all students to learn Spanish (pers. comm.):[17]

Two years ago we instituted an international language. And the language we chose was Spanish. Every child has an hour of Spanish instruction every week. When we began that program I heard a lot at that point. A lot of parents on the surveys, they turned in a lot of negative responses. "Why do we need to learn Spanish? They need to learn our language." That kind of thing.

However, other interviewees recognized that English speakers became uncomfortable

when Spanish was spoken in their presence. One person, who worked with the Hispanic

population in the school system, shared her experience with interpreting during parent-attended

events (pers. comm.):[18]

[We had a parent-teacher meeting]. The speaker was right there in front of the whole audience talking. I had the Hispanic families sitting toward the back so that I would be interpreting simultaneously as the speaker was talking. At this point there were many, many children also among the audience. And they were very loud. And I don't speak very loudly so I had to raise my voice in order to be able to pass along all the information to about forty Spanish-speaking people that were there.

Some parents toward the front, after the meeting, they were commenting about me interpreting simultaneously. I was interrupting them. They couldn't really concentrate on what the speaker was saying. So the correction for that was that I started interpreting consecutively. So I would let the speaker say two or three sentences, then they will give me some time to interpret for the Spanish speaking families. That worked better.

When that happened at that specific meeting, I could sense they [the English-speaking parents] were a little bit upset because they felt like they were being disrupted by the situation. But see, we need to accommodate both cultures. We need to give service to the Spanish-speaking families, then at the same time, respect and not interrupt what is being said in English.

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[17] Stephanie Dansco (principal at Central Elementary), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, December 3, 2008.
[18] Identity confidential (bilingual elementary support staff), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, December 10, 2008.

Heather Oliva-Martinez, then the bilingual student services coordinator for the Olathe

School District, shared a story about how she tried to convey to Hispanic Club students why it

was important for them to be aware when they spoke Spanish (pers. comm.): [19]

> One of the classes [in the Hispanic Club] that we spent time talking about last semester was, . . . [about not wanting] to have a club because of Latino Pride or more power to us. We don't want to make other students feel intimidated because they can't understand what we're saying.

> I said you want to use your bilingual abilities as an asset that you have when you go out to the world to look for a job or when you go to college to be able to put that on a scholarship application, things to that effect, but not because you want to use it as a power thing over other kids. I know they are working really hard on that.

> I said you guys don't understand that sometimes . . . if you are in a group in the hallway just speaking Spanish it can be intimidating to other kids. You have to be able to open yourself up to just be willing to tell kids, "You know that it's no big deal. We can make sure we are speaking English when you are around. And welcome to our group."

> And then I think it is also an education piece for English-speaking teachers and students that they need to understand that for bilingual people it's very easy, in their comfort zone, to want to fall back to their native language. And it doesn't mean they are talking about you. They probably aren't. Most likely they are talking about the weekend or whatever cute clothes someone is wearing or who is dating who. You know, what typical teenagers talk about in high school.

It does not seem that Hispanic newcomers have intentionally done things to make the majority

feel out of place in their own community. Instead, as Hispanics strived to create a space for

themselves that was comfortable, they inadvertently created an invisible barrier to non-Spanish

speakers.

The perception that the majority is the *other* because they do not understand Spanish is

distributed widely throughout my study area (Map 29). Participants who recognized Hispanics

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[19] Heather Olivia-Martinez (then bilingual student services coordinator for the Olathe School District), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, November 19, 2008.
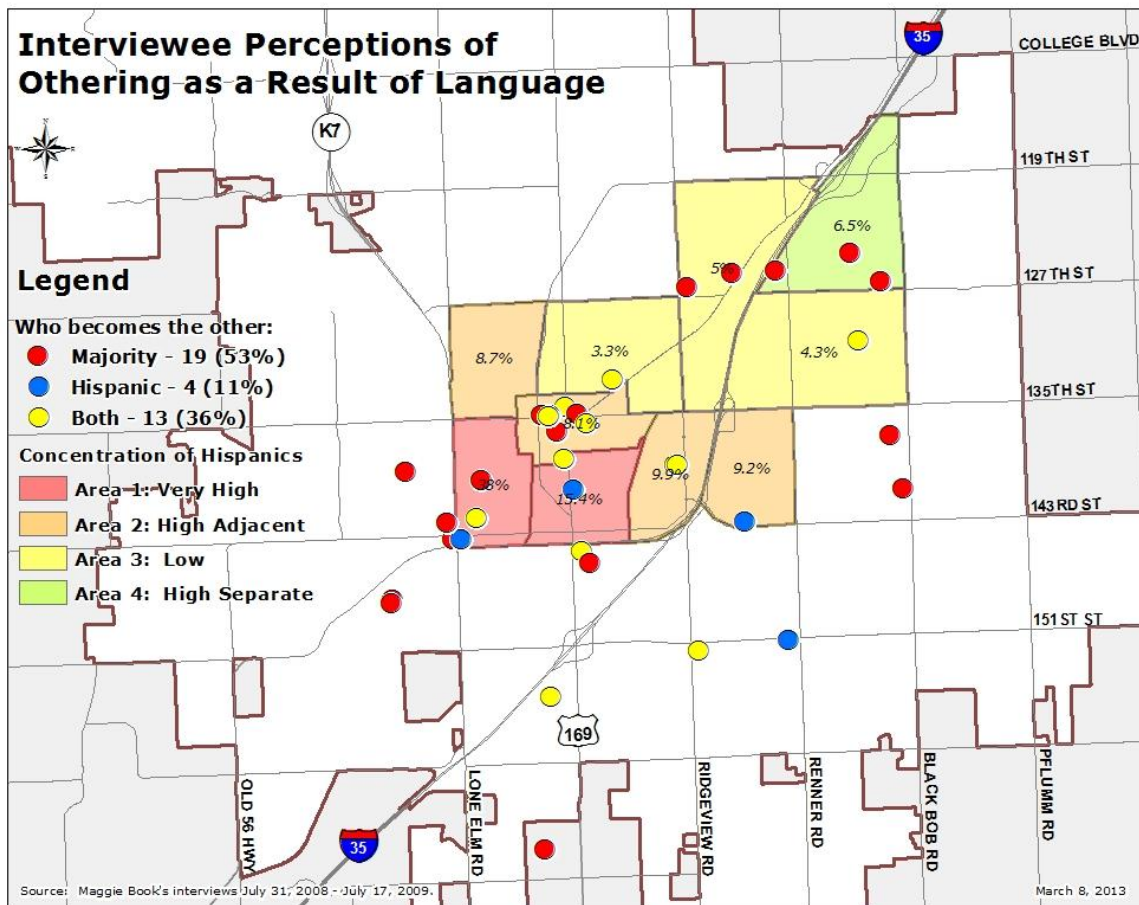
Map 29: Interviewees' perception that language differences cause the majority to become the *other* is widespread in the study area. These same disparities cause Hispanics or both Hispanics and majority to be the *other* in Areas 1 and 2.

are the *other* because they do not know English and people who see both groups acting as the

other at some point in time are concentrated in Areas 1 and 2. Two individuals in Area 3 thought

both groups are outcasts because of language differences. These two individuals work in

Olathe's school system and frequently dealt with translation services. Through their jobs they

were able to experience both groups' realities. These data suggest that, the greater the Hispanic

population density, the more likely there will be the perception that Hispanics are the *other*

because of their poor English abilities. However, the perception that the majority is the *other* as

a result of language disparities is not directly tied to high Hispanic concentrations.

Participants noted derogatory remarks and dense Hispanic population concentrations as additional means of *othering*. Twenty (38%) interviewees had observed negative comments aimed at the Hispanic population, most often in subtle ways with conversations between people. One person, for example, noted how majority students are not getting the needed attention because educators have to spend extra time with Spanish-speaking students (pers. comm.).

Outright hostility toward Hispanic in Olathe seems to be restricted to a few people. Some of them have called local government officials and the local newspaper to share their views. One long-time resident, whose home is on the edge of a high Hispanic concentration area, was pointed out to me by four interviewees including the former newspaper editor. This critic regularly referred to the newcomer population as "damn Hispanics" (pers. comm.). Dan Simon, the former editor of the Olathe News, added that he also had received a very harsh call from another resident (pers. comm.):[20]

> [I got a phone call from] this guy chastising me about: "You're jamming this Hispanic population down our throat and we don't want to hear about it. If all those people would just go home then Olathe would be a better place." It was heartbreaking, but then on another front, just eye-opening that anger and resentment existed as that [Hispanic] population grew.

Rick Dryden, special events coordinator for Olathe, shared a similar complaint he received regarding the city co-sponsored 2008 Easter Egg Hunt. A major grocery store had helped plan the event, and they sought assistance for advertising and entertainment from the local Spanish radio station and Dos Mundos newspaper. As a result, a large Hispanic crowd turned out. This crowd, in turn, prompted a non-Hispanic resident to submit the following internet message to the events coordinator:[21]

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[20] Dan Simon (then editor of Olathe News), interview with the author, Lawrence, KS, July 17, 2009.
[21] David and Angela Ward, complaint submitted on-line through City of Olathe, KS Citizen Request System, http://www.olatheks.org/citizenconnect, request identification number 16032008-214249-297, March 16, 2008.

This COMPLAINT is regarding the "Easter Egg Hunt" held at the Great Mall on Saturday, March 15th. . . . The most bothersome issue was that there was a Spanish-speaking AM radio station broadcasting live from the event from blaring loud speakers. It is bad enough that the City of Olathe did not choose an English-speaking station, but to have the former blasting out at a very high volume made me and my family feel out of place . . . . [I] hope that the next event will cater to all LEGAL residents of this city that we call home. Our experience Saturday made us question, for the first time, if Olathe is the place we should raise our children.

Subtle actions of discrimination also exist in Olathe. I have written previously about Hispanics being taken advantage of through car loans, but similar incidents can be found in other realms. Dennis Pine, for example, a senior code enforcement officer for the city, conveyed how the majority population reacts differently to trash issues for Hispanic newcomers: "I see it. We can go down the street and there could be the same car without a tag or some items in the yard and it's a white person. They don't complain about it" (pers. comm.).[22] Similarly, long-time and successful Hispanic residents sometimes report being treated with suspicion during check-out at a grocery store or hear comments of surprise that they live in a nice home. In addition, interviewees in the public school system told me that some white families left their schools and neighborhoods because of a perceived threat associated with the increased numbers of Hispanics in the school boundaries (pers. comm.).

The responses for derogatory remarks and dense Hispanic population, not surprisingly, cluster in Areas 1and 2 and carry over to Area 3 (Map 30). Seven of eight participants that surrounded my study area or are in Area 3 identified derogatory remarks as a way of *othering*. They worked closely with the Hispanic and majority populations. The eighth person based his response on comments he had heard from neighbors (pers. comm.). All three of the participants in Area 3 who noted that *othering* is seen where a dense Hispanic population exists are educators

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[22] Dennis Pine (senior community enhancement officer—City of Olathe Codes Enforcement Department), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, November 7, 2008.

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in schools with large Hispanic attendance. They have firsthand experience with negative

community responses to the increasing minority.
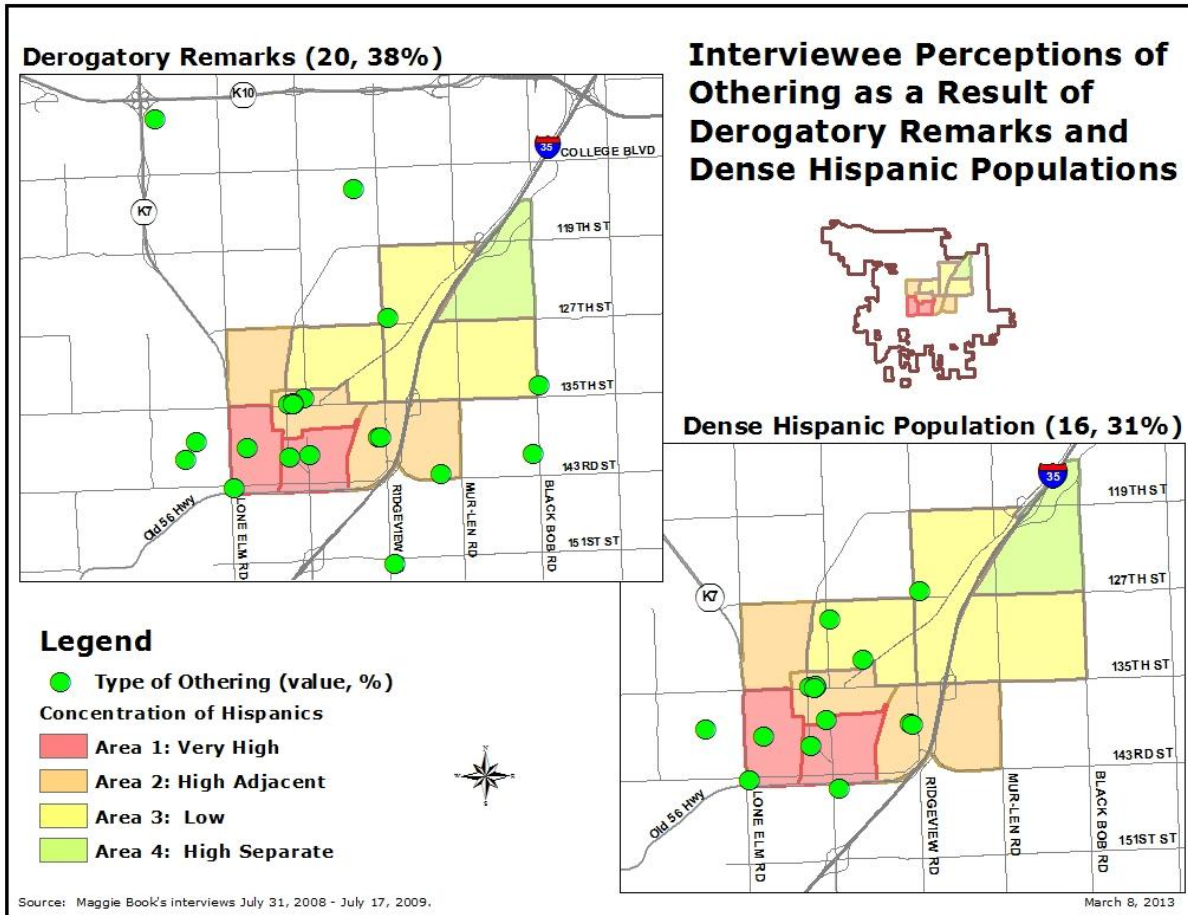
Map 30: Interviewee perception of derogatory remarks and dense Hispanics populations
identifying Hispanics as the *other* are tied to highly populated newcomer areas.

For both categories, the greater the number of Hispanics in a location, the more likely the

occurrence of negative comments and uneasiness toward newcomers. In addition, if people

spend time in these said areas, they are more likely to notice these means of *othering*.

Finally, participants noted that *othering* was also taking place through cultural

differences, stereotyping, and ignorance. In chapter four, I discussed cultural disparities between

the Hispanic newcomers and the majority. Recognition of such dissimilarities is one of the basic

ways to define the *other*.

Stereotyping occurs when the majority makes assumptions about newcomers, whether stemming from a grain of truth or none at all. Either way, it separates the groups from each other. My interviewees reported, for example, that the majority assumes that anyone who is Hispanic is also Mexican. They also often assign personal characteristics to the entire Hispanic population. Hispanics, the generalizations assert, do not own car insurance, are bad drivers, are afraid of the police, lie, cannot speak English, are poor, travel in large groups, carry guns, are uneducated, do not take care of property, take jobs from the majority population, do illegal things, and are illegal immigrants (pers. comm.).

Such images reveal ignorance, of course, and can cause Hispanics to become the *other* unnecessarily. Heather Olivia-Martinez, then bilingual student services coordinator, expressed that some parents do not comprehend how the service her office provides to Spanish-speaking families affects Olathe's big picture (pers. comm.):[23]

> First of all, [free translating is] a service that we need to provide because our parents need to be partners with us in educating that child because, ultimately, they are our future. And if we can't get them to be positive, contributing members of society, then we've failed. It's not just about teaching them math and reading.

Ron Kollman, a business owner in the most densely Hispanic part of Olathe and husband to a Mexican woman, shared his experience with a customer who was not aware of the impact his words carried (pers. comm.):[24]

> You get some knuckleheads that come in here every once [in] a while that say something. They pipe up not even thinking about it. "I thought this was Mexican run." No. Yes. My wife is part owner.

Kollman then shared the offender's response when he confronted him:

> Kollman: And what would you say to her if she was here?

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[23] Heather Olivia-Marntinez (then bilingual student services coordinator for the Olathe School District), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, November 19, 2008.
[24] Ron Kollman (owner Kollman Radio), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, January 7, 2009.

Customer: Oh, I didn't mean to offend you.

Kollman: Well, what did you mean?

Customer: I'm sorry man.

And Kollman conveyed how it made him feel:

Well, you know, what you gonna do? He didn't even think about it. He has to think about it . . . . You don't want to get mad at them because they're ignorant, but you have to remind them that there are other people around than just them.

The process of othering via cultural differences, stereotyping, and ignorance is found mainly in or directly adjacent to Areas 1 and 2 (Map 31). This suggests that these mechanisms have a strong connection to high Hispanic densities. The cultural difference outlier in Area 3 is a public school educator who is attuned to cultural disparities and how they affect people's interactions. The ignorance outlier by 143rd Street and Black Bob Road is an educator of Hispanic descent who works closely with newcomers and the majority. Because of her background, I think it makes it easier for her to recognize ethnic comments based on lack of knowledge. Finally, the stereotyping outlier is a participant who teaches immigrants English. Personal experience helps her to spot grouped perceptions that may not always be true.
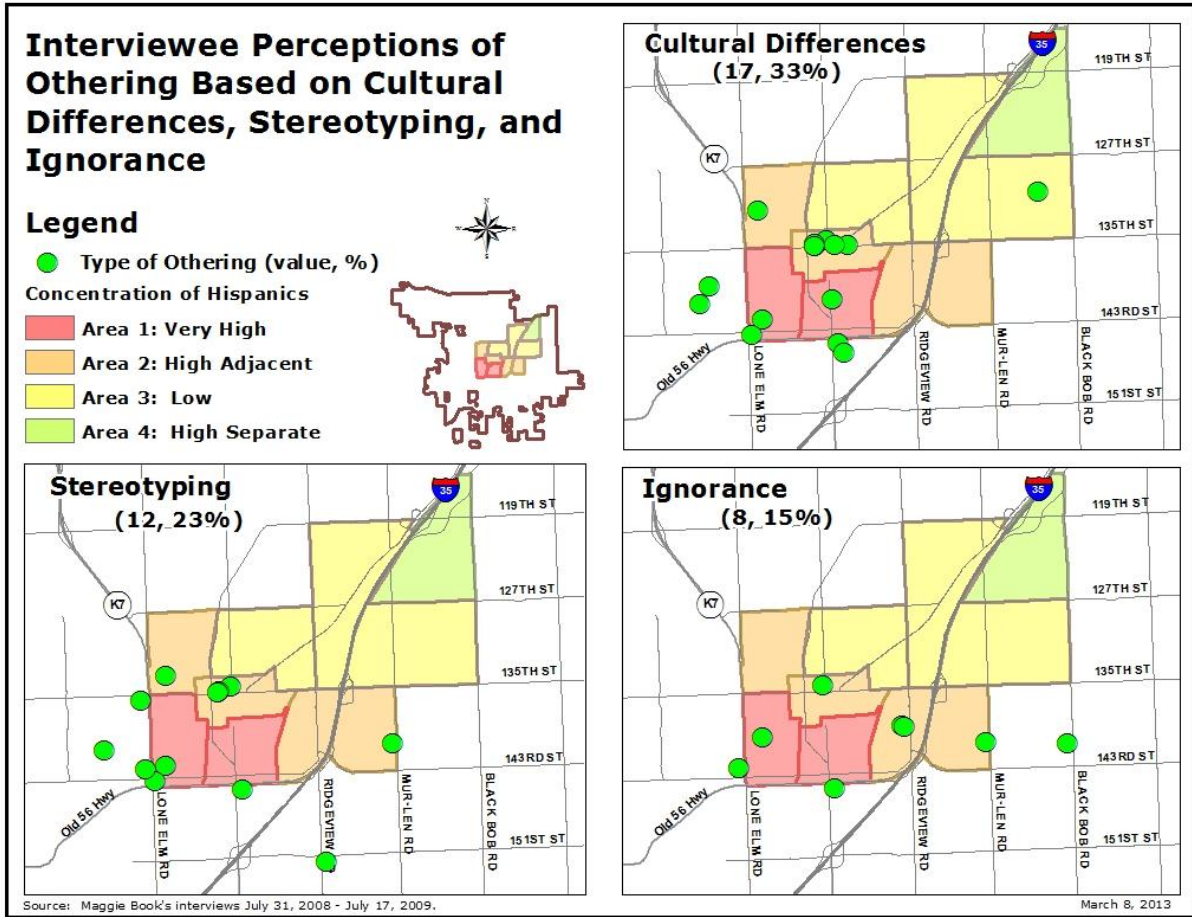
Map 31: Interviewees perceptions of cultural differences, stereotyping, and ignorance identifying Hispanics as the *other* are found in or next to Areas 1 and 2.

CHAPTER 6
CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

Landscapes provide material expressions of cultural values. A person who looks carefully at elements as varied as architecture, foreign-language displays, yard ornaments, vehicle embellishments, and types of businesses found in an area can learn much about an area's identity. Carl Sauer emphasized that cultural landscape is an essential part of cultural geography as early as the 1920s (Sauer 1963). His phenomenology roots used observation of the natural environment to identify how humans have modified the landscape. More recently Dennis Cosgrove and Don Mitchell have expanded on this idea (Cosgrove 1989, Mitchell 2000). By decoding everyday landscapes they give clues to how people interact and move through space.

By looking at cultural landscape I am able to learn more about Hispanics in Olathe. Do people perceive any differences in the cultural landscape of areas dominated by Hispanics versus those that are not, and if so, do they distinguish between areas with higher versus lower concentration of Hispanics? Does the cultural landscape impact any sense of *otherness* by the majority? Does the Hispanics' influence on the cultural landscape impact the majority's perception of those areas? And finally, does the cultural landscape give any indication as to whether cultural change in Olathe is being driven more by the majority or by the Hispanics?

Field Observations

My husband, Dana, and I drove through each of the ten censuses study tracts on Sundays from July 17, 2008, through August 30, 2009. We selected Sundays so as to maximize our chances of finding people at their domicile and therefore to observe their home-based activities. I was looking for evidence revealing the relationship between Hispanic concentrations and Olathe's identity, which group had power, and what this all meant. As Dana drove, I took pictures and recorded notes about differences between majority and Hispanic populated areas. I

mapped the varying landscape types, and then I compared these results against interviewees' perceptions.

My previous experience suggested that I might find distinction in the frequency of religious statues, total number of vehicles, work trucks or vans, Spanish-language or religious decals, unkempt property, Hispanic-origin flags, satellite dishes, and other Spanish-language displays. Nine types of cultural landscape identifiers were observed during my landscape analysis, all of which confirmed what my interviews had suggested (Table 15). Religious statues, however, did not prove to be a significant cultural landscape criterion.

Table 15: Nine cultural landscape types observed during landscape analysis.

Cultural Landscape Types Identified	Instances Observed	Percent
Excessive Vehicles	108	40
Work Trucks and Vans	75	28
Spanish-Language Display	64	24
Satellite Dishes	51	19
Unkempt Property	41	15
Hispanic Businesses	31	11
Car Decals	7	3
Hispanic-Origin Flags	5	2

Source: Maggie Book's landscape analysis July 17, 2008, through August 30, 2009. Note: totals taken from 271 observances. Some sites contain more than one entry.

Excessive vehicles (defined as four or more automobiles located on a residential property) were the most frequently encountered type of cultural landscape change (Photos 4, 5). In the suburbs of southern Johnson County, it is commonplace to see one or two cars parked in a driveway or garage (Photo 6). On occasion you will see four cars at a property, usually because of teenage drivers, but this is rare. It also is looked down upon when cars are routinely parked on the street. So, when a neighborhood includes several houses that have more than four vehicles parked in a driveway that then overflows into the street, it clearly diverges from the mainstream. Oftentimes the vehicles I observed were work trucks, vans, or sport-utility vehicles.

Photo 4: An example of an excessive concentration of vehicles with four SUVs and one car.
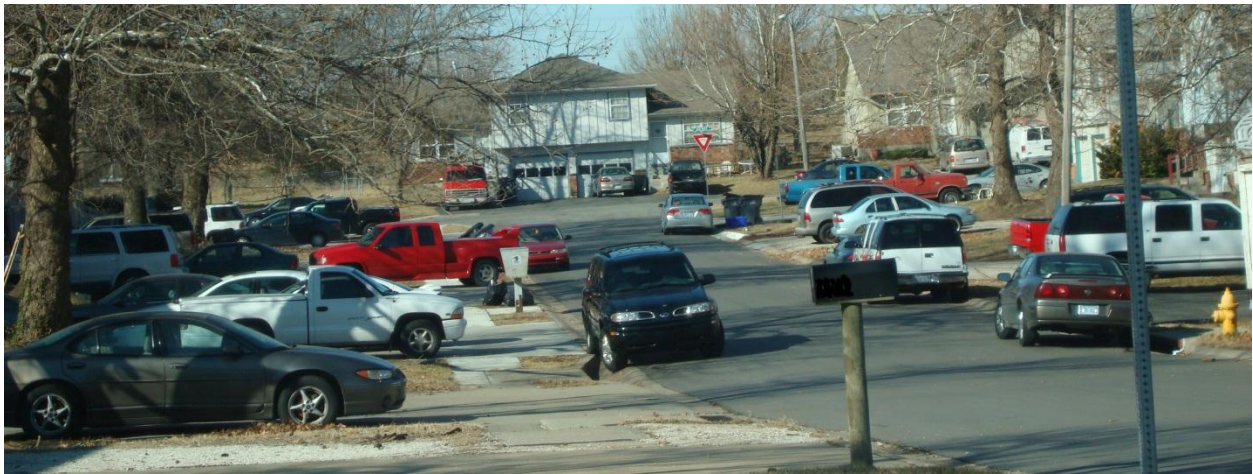
Photo 5: An excessive concentration of vehicles in a dense Hispanic area. Note the numerous work trucks, vans, and sport utility vehicles encompassing two streets. Many of these vehicles displayed Spanish-language or religious decals.

This display easily fits the Hispanic stereotype of multiple, blue-collar workers living at a single

locale.

Photo 6: A typical streetscape in a southern Johnson County, Kansas, middle-income suburb. The norm is one vehicle per driveway with street parking kept clear.

In these same general locations, I regularly sighted religious (Virgin Mary or Our Lady of Guadalupe) or Hispanic decals (individual's last name or various Mexican states). These sometimes appeared on cars, but were most commonly found on trucks or sport-utility vehicles (Photos 7 and 8). This phenomenon also sharply diverges from the norms of the majority, white, middle-to-upper-middle class. Automobile decals there, if present at all, would more likely celebrate patriotism, a loved one, schools and activities, or stick-people representing the family itself.

Photo 7: A stereotypical Hispanic car decal. A Hispanic last name is written in Old English style adorned with red flames.

Photo 8: A Hispanic-owned vehicle with religious decals and script writing.

When I mapped the locations of where I saw excessive vehicles, work trucks, vans and

Hispanic-influenced decals, clusters were clearly evident in the densely Hispanic census tracts.

These locational patterns also mimic where I saw Hispanic people (Map 32). In Area 3, where the Hispanic population concentrations are lower, I found some smaller clusters of excessive vehicles, work trucks or vans, and decals.
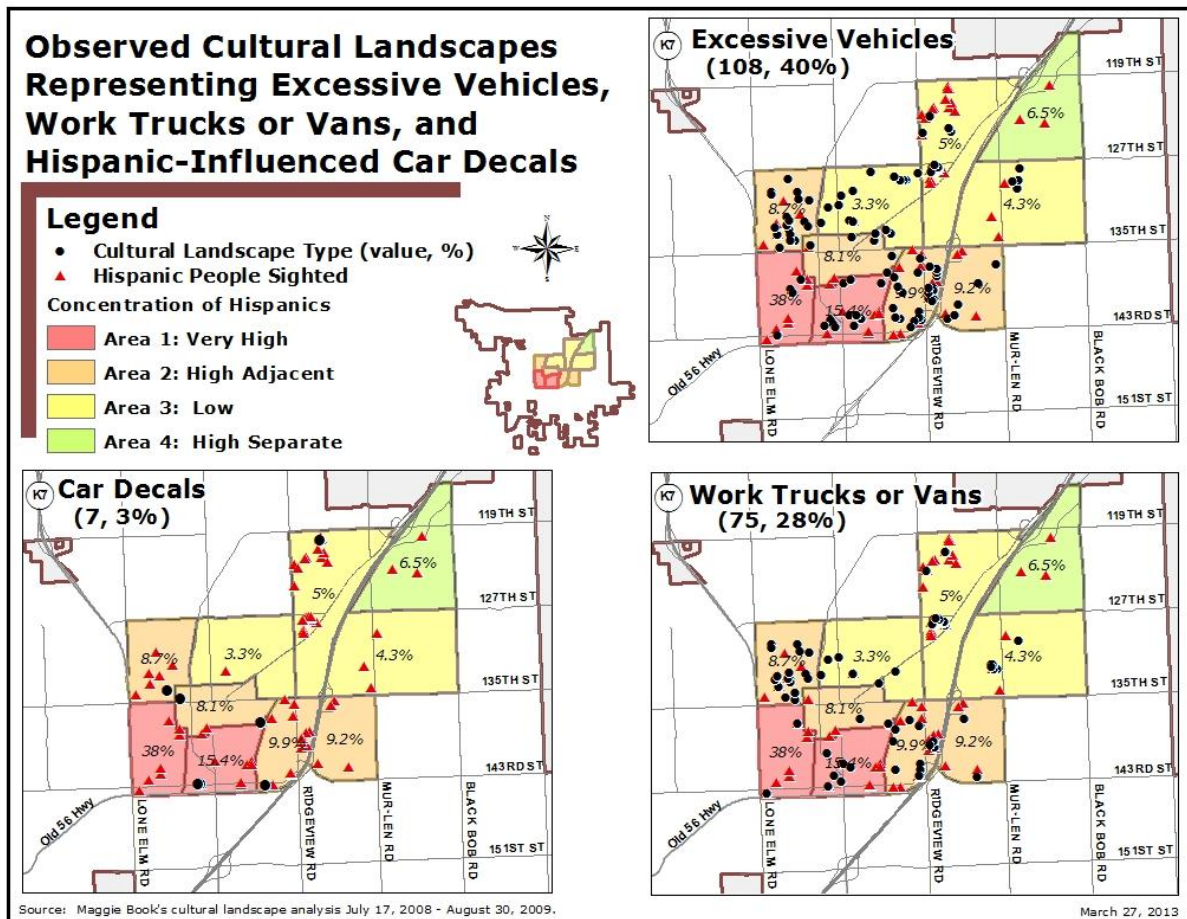
Map 32: The cultural landscape of excessive vehicles, work trucks or vans, and Hispanic-influenced car decals in densely populated Hispanic census tracts. The sighting of Hispanic people during landscape analysis supports this association.

The next set of cultural landscape identifiers deals with language and the display of ethnic pride by hanging Hispanic-origin flags. First, Spanish-language signs are an obvious change from the English-language norm that really provides a sense that the area is influenced by the newcomers (Photo 9). Oftentimes, these signs were bilingual, an indication that the new group's business was being sought. Others of them detailed rules and regulations, which suggested that the new

group needed to be educated on local customs and that their English was not proficient enough to understand existing English-language signs. In some instances, such signs were worded only in Spanish (Photo 10). These displays definitely changed the sense of place, and made the English-speaking majority the *other*. Spanish-only signs were rare, however.

Photo 9: English and Spanish language displays throughout the Olathe study area.

Photo 10: A Spanish-language sign about local regulations. It is posted in a predominately Hispanic populated apartment complex parking lot and states that residents are not to play music after 10:00 pm and that they are prohibited from drinking alcohol in the parking lot and garden.

Another obvious modification in Olathe's cultural landscape was the presence of Hispanic-targeted or owned businesses. Such store names commonly were in Spanish or made reference to a Latin country (Photos 11-13). Windows in these stores were busy with Spanish-

language advertisements and announcements. In some instances, the Mexican flag would be prominently displayed. I also observed flags on vehicles in addition to those displayed in stores (Photos 11, 13, 14). Oddly, no flags were on masts outside of homes, hung in windows or displayed from an apartment balcony.

Photo 11: Olathe's cultural landscape changed by businesses directed at Mexicans. Storefront windows are filled with advertisements, most in Spanish. On left: a tax service specializing in Mexican immigrant worker needs. On right: a convenience store selling Hispanic goods and offering money wiring to Central and South America.

Photo 12: A Hispanic butcher and grocery store that also provides novelties for fair-skinned people. Mexicans refer to such people as "güero;" dark-skinned peoples are called "Moreno."

Photo 13: A convenience store directed at Mexicans. It offers Mexican goods, fresh-made tamales, and money orders, as well as money wiring and cell phone plans specifically for Central and South America.

A mapping of where I saw Spanish-language displays, Hispanic-focused businesses, and Hispanic-origin flags produced a definite pattern along 135th Street (Map 33). This area, consistent among all three categories, makes sense because 135th Street is a main thoroughfare and follows along the north side of Olathe's densely populated Hispanic area. Hispanic-focused businesses also are found on 143rd Street, another major street that coincides with the southern limit of the high Hispanic area. In addition, my findings for Spanish-language displays can be

Photo 14: A prominently displayed Mexican flag on a truck.

found mostly in Areas 1 and 2. The majority of the signage is bilingual, suggesting an

acceptance as well as adaptation toward the Hispanic newcomer population.[1] I did not see any

signs that suggested Hispanics were being excluded from businesses or residential areas in any

part of my study area.

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[1] The concept of adaptation will be discussed further in chapter seven.

Observed Cultural Landscapes Representing Spanish Langauge Displays, Hispanic-Focused Businesses, and Hispanic Flags

Legend
- Cultural Landscape Type (value, %)
- ▲ Hispanic People Sighted

Concentration of Hispanics
- Area 1: Very High
- Area 2: High Adjacent
- Area 3: Low
- Area 4: High Separate

Spanish Language Displays (64, 24%)

119TH ST · 127TH ST · 135TH ST · 143RD ST · 151ST ST
6.5% · 5% · 8.7% · 3.3% · 4.3% · 8.1% · 38% · 15.4% · 9.9% · 9.2%
Old 56 Hwy · LONE ELM RD · RIDGEVIEW RD · MUR-LEN RD · BLACK BOB RD

Hispanic-Origin Flags (5, 2%)

119TH ST · 127TH ST · 135TH ST · 143RD ST · 151ST ST
6.5% · 5% · 8.7% · 3.3% · 4.3% · 8.1% · 38% · 15.4% · 9.9% · 9.2%
Old 56 Hwy · LONE ELM RD · RIDGEVIEW RD · MUR-LEN RD · BLACK BOB RD

Hispanic-Focused Businesses (31, 11%)

119TH ST · 127TH ST · 135TH ST · 143RD ST · 151ST ST
6.5% · 5% · 8.7% · 3.3% · 4.3% · 8.1% · 38% · 15.4% · 9.9% · 9.2%
Old 56 Hwy · LONE ELM RD · RIDGEVIEW RD · MUR-LEN RD · BLACK BOB RD

Source: Maggie Book's cultural landscape analysis July 17, 2008 - August 30, 2009.

April 1, 2013

Map 33: Spanish language displays and Hispanic-owned or targeted businesses. These features have altered Olathe's cultural landscape in dense Hispanic census tracts and along 135th Street, a main thoroughfare. In contrast, Hispanic flag exhibits did not have a significant impact on changing Olathe's cultural landscape.

The last two types of cultural landscape identifiers observed are unkempt property and numerous satellite dishes on a residential premises. I defined poor property maintenance to include items such as mismatched lawn furniture in the front yard with some pieces toppled over; toys strewn throughout; numerous garbage cans—some upright, some on the ground; old sofas in the front yard; and miscellaneous household items piled on the side of the house instead of being stored in a basement or garage (Photo 15, top). Badly chipped house paint was another defining trait and overgrown bushes and or lawns still another. Contrasting that representation is the stereotypical Johnson County suburb an image of a trimmed yard with no debris in front of the

house and an overall streamlined look (Photo 15, bottom). The unkempt stereotype, of course, associates Hispanic residents with poverty.

Photo 15: Contrasting images of cleanliness and upkeep of property in Olathe. Top: a messy unkempt yard containing items that would normally be in a backyard or storage space. Bottom: a tidy property typical of Johnson County.

A satellite dish might not be seem to be a likely indicator of ethnicity, but several dish companies provide options that give access to Latin American television programming. This amenity enables Hispanic newcomers to keep up on the hometown soccer team and their favorite Spanish-language dramas. For this reason a local assumption exists that, when many satellite dishes are found on a residential property, it is occupied by Hispanics (Photo 16).

Photo 16: Satellite dishes on Olathe's residential landscape. Note the multiple examples (circled in red) on two apartment buildings and one duplex.

When I mapped the data for unkempt property and satellite dishes, both clustered in similar areas just outside of Area 1 (Map 34). Satellite dishes show some dispersion though Area 2 and small pockets exist in Area 3. Both unkempt property and numerous satellite dishes are imprecise indications that the Hispanic population had modified Olathe's cultural landscape. A closer association exists between unkempt property and lower incomes rather than ethnicity, and satellite dishes exist in many locales. Still, it was common for apartment buildings with a multitude of satellite dishes also to exhibit other Hispanic identifiers such as Hispanic males outside smoking, work vans, pickup trucks, or Hispanic car decals as described previously. Even though numerous satellite dishes may be a viable barometer of change, it and unkempt properties need more research.
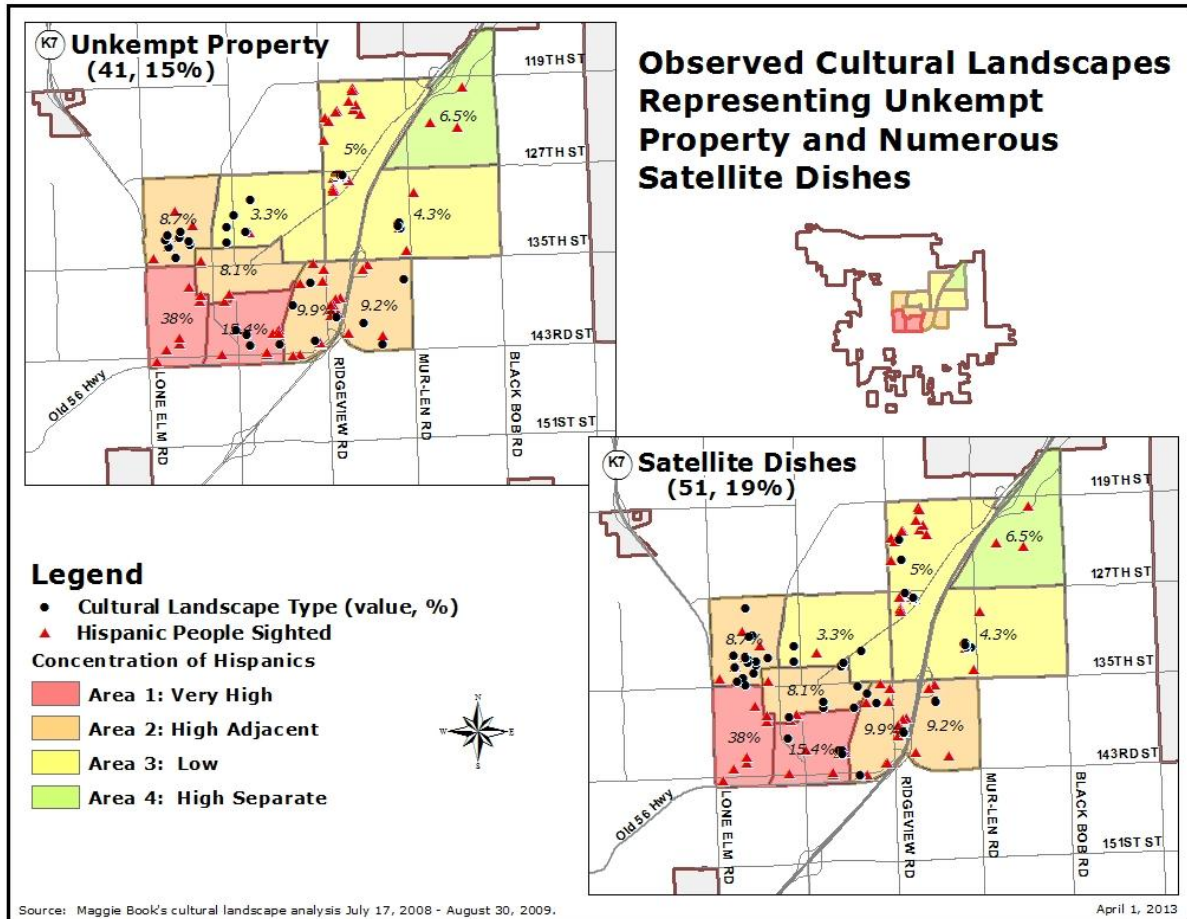
Map 34: The distribution of unkempt property and satellite dishes. Patterns of unkempt property reflect lower economic multi-family housing at least as much as it does Hispanic newcomers. Satellite dishes are widely distributed across Olathe.

Perception versus Observation

Interviewees perceived the same cultural landscape types that I had observed as ways that Olathe's cultural landscape have been changed. In addition, they identified single occurrences of other ethnic indicators. These included laundry hanging outside; cars being repaired in a driveway or parking lot; religious displays outside the home; brightly painted houses; fancy cars sitting in front of low-income houses; frilly balloons; refurbished houses; homes without amenities; and Christmas lights hung all year long. The major difference between interviewees'

perceptions and my observations is the extent to which each type was recognized as being a prominent indicator of change (Table 16).

Table 16: Compared results of interviewee perceived and my observed indicators of Hispanic cultural landscapes in Olathe.

Interviewee Perception				Landscape Analysis Observation		
Cultural Landscape Type	Instances Observed	Percent		Cultural Landscape Type	Instances Observed	Percent
Hispanic Businesses	35	67		Excessive Vehicles	108	40
Spanish-Language Display	23	44		Work Trucks and Vans	75	28
Other	11	21		Spanish-Language Display	64	24
Hispanic-Origin Flags	7	13		Satellite Dishes	51	19
Car Decals	7	13		Unkempt Property	41	15
Unkempt Property	4	8		Hispanic Businesses	31	11
Excessive Vehicles	3	6		Car Decals	7	3
Satellite Dishes	2	4		Hispanic-Origin Flags	5	2
Work Trucks and Vans	2	4				

Source: Maggie Book's interviews July 31, 2008 - July 17, 2009. Note: totals based on 52 interviewees who perceived a difference in cultural landscape between newcomer Hispanics and the majority. Some participants identified more than one type. Maggie Book's landscape analysis July 17, 2008, through August 30, 2009. Note: totals taken from 271 observances. Some sites contain more than one entry.

Participants thought that Spanish-language displays (64%) and Hispanic businesses (44%) had the greatest impact on Olathe's cultural landscape. Interestingly, my observed sightings for these traits were in confined areas (Map 33) and play a less significant role in actual cultural landscape modifications. This suggests that these indicators carry a lot of weight. A disparity also existed between interviewees' perception and my observations on flags being displayed. I found fewer flags on the landscape than participants perceived and conclude, because these are temporal exhibits and easy to move, they are not an accurate measure of Olathe's cultural landscape being altered by Hispanics.

Participants perceived that car decals were more significant in changing Olathe's cultural landscape than what my findings found. Because vehicle embellishments are often in Spanish,

have expansive religious displays, and diverge so greatly from Olathe's cultural norm, they make a considerable impact on an individual. This is another indication the power Spanish language wields in Olathe.

Because upscale, mainstream residents of southern Johnson County are so finely attuned to how a neighborhood is *supposed* to look, I was taken aback that interviewees did not perceive excessive number of vehicles (6%) and work trucks or vans (4%) to be significant ways in which Hispanics affected the cultural landscape. This was a very obvious cultural landscape difference and easy to spot during my landscape analysis where excessive vehicles constituted forty percent of my observations and work trucks and vans another twenty-eight percent. This difference likely is a consequence of the vehicle clusterings being concentrated in blue-collar neighborhoods through which interviewees did not frequently travel.

Participants also failed to perceive unkempt property (8%) and satellite dishes (4%) as major ways in which Hispanic newcomers changed Olathe's cultural landscape. However, as I discussed previously, I do not feel these attributes are the most affective measure to assess whether Hispanics have modified Olathe's cultural landscape.

Looking back to chapter five, my results show that participants thought Hispanics had changed Olathe in three ways: internal modifications (44%) including visible Hispanic people, Hispanics products offered in stores, specific services aimed at Hispanic needs, and changes made in the public school system; landscape modifications (11%) including Spanish-language displays, Hispanic-targeted stores, and property neglect; and/or a combination of the internal and landscape factors (45%). Once I compared these results to my landscape analysis observations, it became even clearer that an individual's perception is more influential than what is actually present in forming one's sense of an area.

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In order to better understand how actual landscape change affected interview perceptions, I mapped interviewee perceptions of how they felt alterations were taking place in Olathe (i.e. internal change, cultural landscape change, or both) against the dominant agents of change based on my field work—Hispanic businesses and excessive vehicles (Map 35). The results show an inconsistency. Hispanic businesses are concentrated along 135th and 143rd streets, but interviewees' perceived these same changes to be more widespread throughout my study area. If actual occurrences limited where and how Olathe was being modified, then interviewee perception would mimic store locations. The pattern of excessive vehicles has more clustering with how interviewees perceive change to be taking place, especially in Areas 2 and 3. Excessive vehicles are also a function of population density. In this instance the cultural landscape change and participant perception are driven by population density.
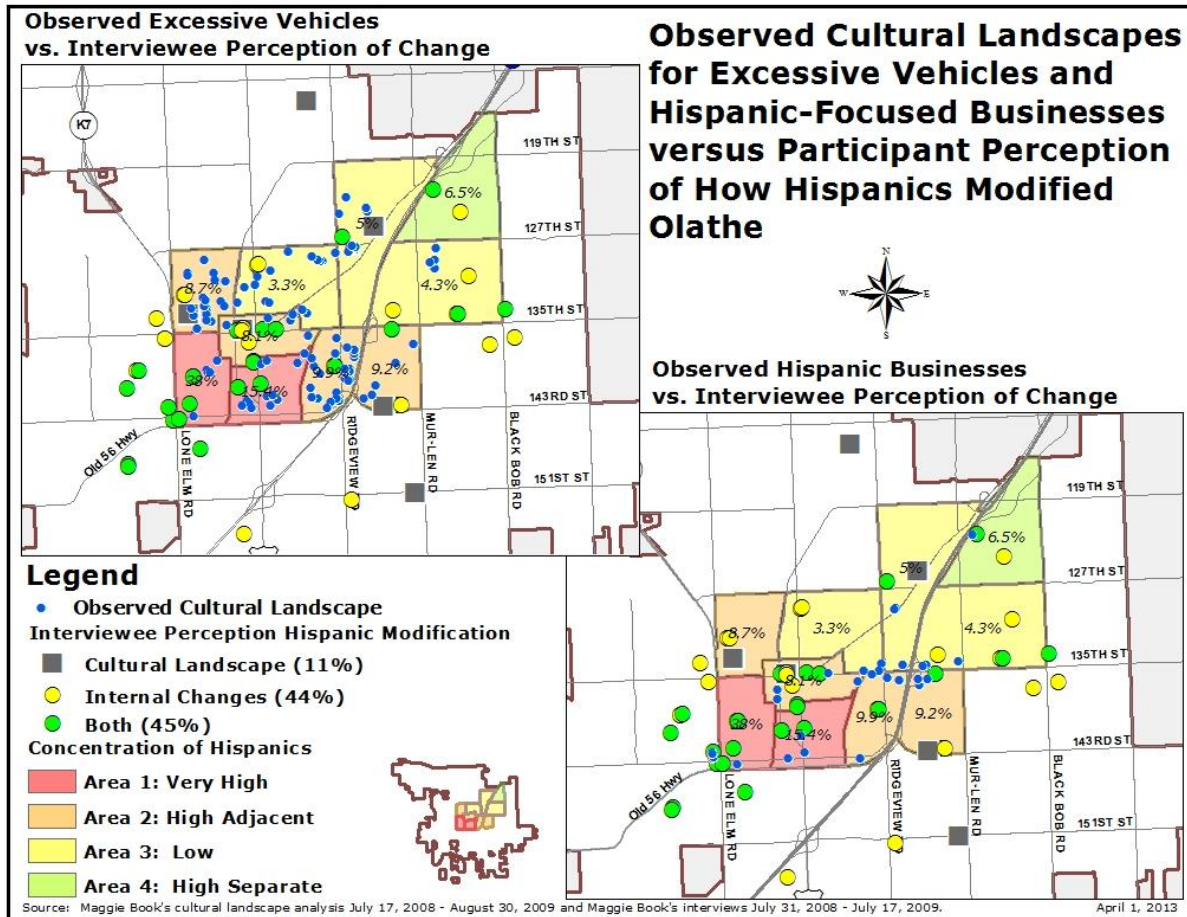
Map 35: Observed versus perceived cultural landscapes. Interviewee perception is influenced more by actual population densities than observed cultural landscapes.

A Changing Cultural Landscape

Like all cultural landscapes, Olathe's changing material scene reveals insight into the community's overall personality, beliefs, and how it reacts to an obviously different, newcomer population. One can learn, for example, that Olathe is a law-abiding, quiet, conservative community. Its citizens expect new people to acculturate, to respect and observe the existing laws and values. This concern can be seen through the bilingual and Spanish-only informational signs explaining local rules such as where to park, how to respect people's property, and when to restrict excessive noise in the evening.

Olathe's private, reserved nature can be seen in the minimal window displays used for advertising by majority-owned businesses. These contrast strongly with the vivacious store fronts of Hispanic-oriented enterprises filled with posters, bright colors, and abundant wording. This same quality carries over to vehicle decorations. In general, the majority population tends to be subdued in this regard with perhaps only a small decal in a lower corner of a back window hinting at personal interest or beliefs. Hispanics, meanwhile, proudly plaster their rear window (and sometimes vehicle side panels and more) for all to see with information about who they are, where they are from, and what they believe.

Overall, material culture reveals Olathe to be a welcoming community to the Hispanic newcomer population. This is exemplified by a lack of negative landscape displays and the numerous ways in which bilingual signs are used in public and private sectors. In addition, Olathe's entrepreneurial spirit is demonstrated by the majority populations' use of bilingual advertising and inclusion of Hispanic-aimed specialty services and products.

Outside of the Hispanic population, Olathe has its own internal identity conflict between its east and west halves. The east side is newer, wealthier, white-collar and seems to receive cutting-edge developments. In contrast, the west side is older, lower income, blue-collar and in need of modern development. Generally speaking, residents on each side feel the other group looks at them unfavorably. Despite this juxtaposition, nearly all Olathe people still hold on to a unifying identity that they live in a big small town, but now one with a Hispanic twist. All the landscape change mechanisms that have been identified here have altered Olathe's sense of place and to some degree its identity, especially in the older, west-side or original town area. This sector is now thought of as a place where you can find Hispanic specialty goods instead of

traveling to traditionally Hispanic areas such as the Argentine neighborhood in Kansas City, Kansas, or Southwest Boulevard in Kansas City, Missouri.

Although all the cultural landscape changes noted have affected Olathe's sense of place, only the Hispanic businesses and Spanish-only language signage define power relations between the majority and the newcomers. This occurs in two ways. First, intimidation for the English-speaking majority is created whenever the minority has a strong showing of Hispanic-targeted businesses that use the Spanish language exclusively either for verbal communication or display.[2] When this happens, the Hispanic newcomers wield the power. Consciously or not, they are controlling who is coming in and out of these stores or apartment complexes.

Power is also on display when the majority creates accessible areas for Hispanics by installing bilingual signs, window displays, or advertisements (Photo 17). In so doing, the mainstream community has removed the language barrier and thereby assumed a measure of control. The message conveyed is that, even if you do not speak English, you are welcome here and we want to help you. Much like a parent, the majority is taking on an authoritative role by setting boundaries and limits all passersby must follow.

Photo 17: Advertising for Rent-A-Center and Century 21 Realtors. The use of two languages indicates to Hispanics that they do not have to know English in order to exist in Olathe.

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[2] These sentiments were echoed during chapter five when discussing area perceptions.

As I reported in chapter five, language is the only way that Olathe's majority population felt they were on the receiving end of *othering*. To see if cultural landscape affects the majority's sense of *otherness*, I compared where interviewees perceived the majority to be affected by *othering* through language with each of the observed cultural landscape agents of change (Maps 36-38). Not enough data points were encountered during landscape analysis for Hispanic-influenced car decals and flags to determine if they had a significant effect on the majority's sense of otherness, but the other cultural landscape change types showed a noticeable relationship to locations where participants felt a sense of otherness. Numerous satellite dishes, unkempt property, and sightings of work trucks or vans occurred where majority felt a sense of otherness in Area 2 (Map 37). This suggests that such outward displays may make interviewees feel like the *other*. Area 1 also has several of these observations.
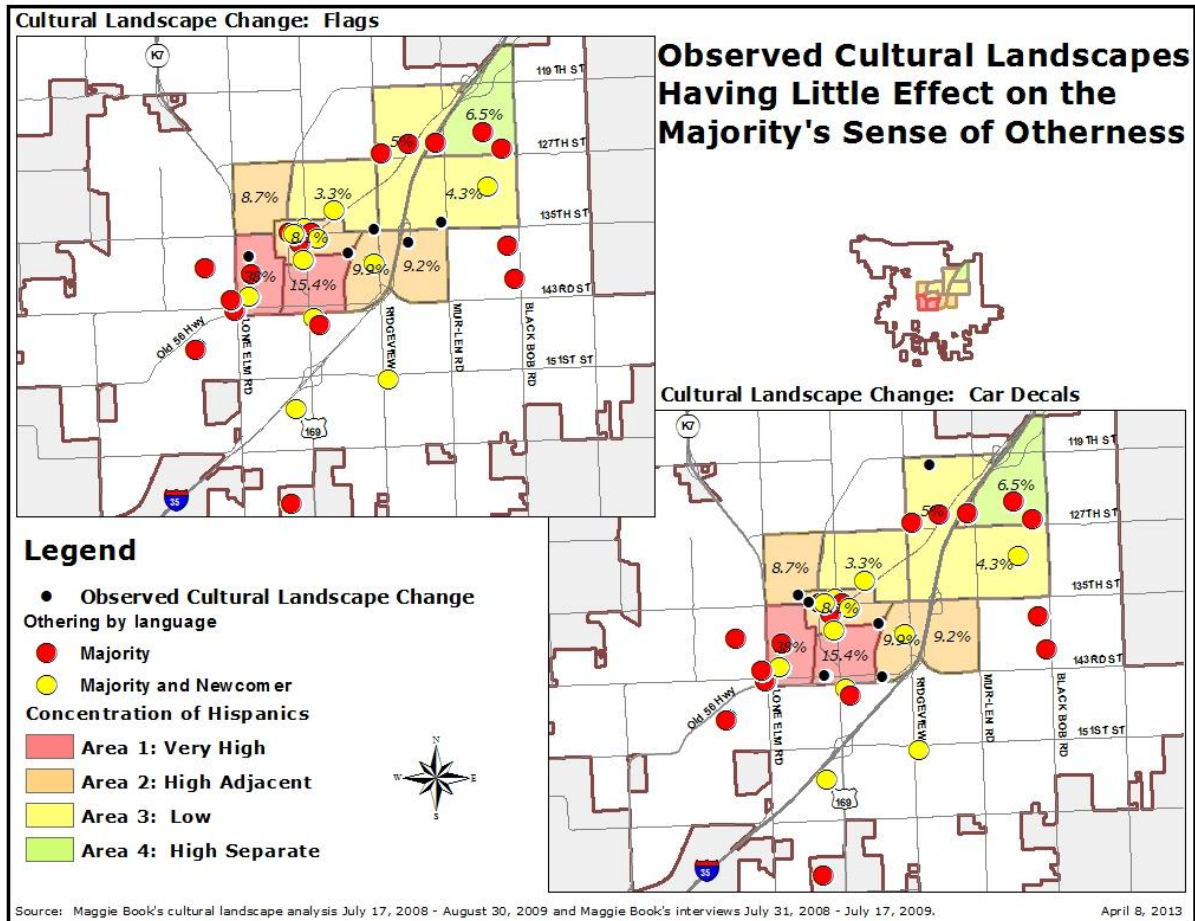
Map 36: Hispanic influence car decals and flags cultural landscape change locations. Such things have little affect the majority's sense of *otherness,* perhaps because of the small number of sightings.
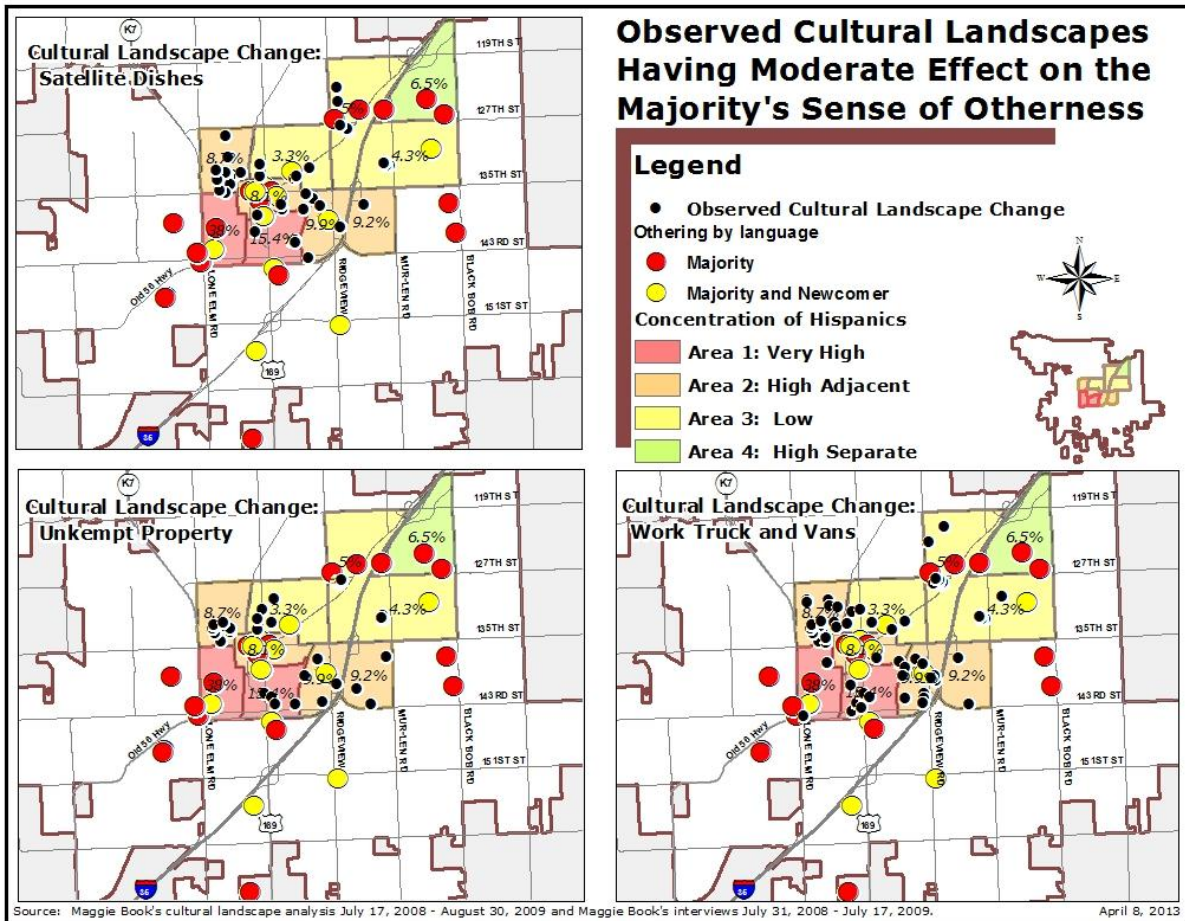
Map 37: Numerous satellite dishes, unkempt property, and multitude of work trucks or vans cultural landscape change locations. These items moderately affect the majority's sense of *otherness*.

Spanish-language displays and excessive vehicles on the landscape correspond to where participants felt a sense of *otherness* in Areas 1 and 2 (Map 38). In addition, more observations occurred near where participants felt like the *other* in Area 3 and even Area 4 for Spanish-language expressions. Observed Hispanic business locations remain fairly separate from where interviewees have a sense of *otherness*. However, as previously discussed, my participant conversations reveal another story in which the Hispanic-directed businesses have made interviewees feel like they are more widespread than they actually are.
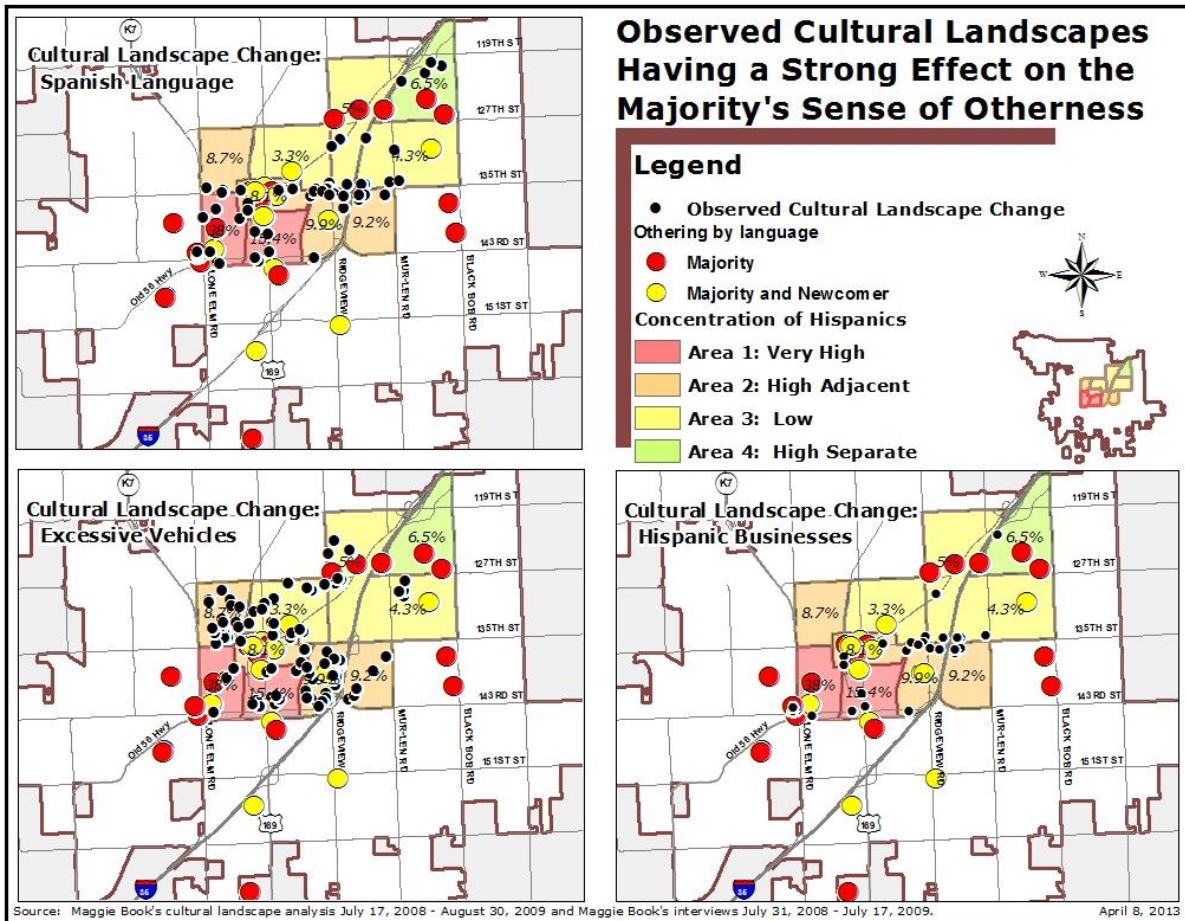
Map 38: Spanish-language displays and excessive vehicles cultural landscape change locations. These items strongly affect the majority's sense of *otherness*. Hispanic businesses do not need to be widespread to affect interviewees' sense of otherness.

To summarize, some observed cultural landscape changes definitely play a role in making the majority feel a sense of *otherness*. A hierarchy exists where Hispanic-influenced car decals and flags have the least influence, satellite dishes, unkempt property, and sightings of work trucks or vans have more, and Spanish-language displays and excessive vehicles have the most of all. Hispanic businesses do not follow the pattern because their influence exceeds their actual distribution.

CHAPTER 7
ADAPATATIONS TO THE HISPANIC POPULATION

Adaptation occurs when a new group of people, who differ in some fashion from the existing majority, enter a new land. Many studies have looked at how the incoming group changes. But, of course, the majority population goes through a cultural metamorphosis as well. This can take place in many ways, including when members of the host community use the foreigners' language in their daily routines, generate specific programs to ease newcomers' settlement, create recreational programs preferred by the incoming group, stock popular foreign goods in their stores, and incorporate newcomers' celebrations and traditions into community-wide activities (Anderson 1987, Broadway 2006, Chen 2004a, Cultural Relations Board 2000, Davis 2005, De Leon 2001, Mendoza 1997, Smith and Furuseth 2004, Stull and Broadway 2001). All these forms of adaptation were evident in the Olathe businesses and organizations I observed.

The rate and magnitude of adaptation varies by location and type of business or organization. It also has followed a particular sequence over time. In Olathe, I observed some of these changes on a small scale, which gave rise to some of the research questions I set out to answer. How has the influx of Hispanic immigrants into the suburb of Olathe caused businesses, social-service organizations, health-care providers, churches, police, and other groups that serve the community to adapt? Have some organizations resisted adaptation? For those that have adapted, why are some of them more proactive than others? What does this mean? Finally, does adaptation follow any particular chronological sequence?

In this chapter, I describe this adaptation by reviewing my interview responses to a series of specific questions:

- Do you think the influx of Hispanics has caused you to adjust your target audience?
- Do you have any positions where you require or prefer the employee to speak Spanish? If so which ones?
- How many existing employees do you have who speak Spanish?
- Are there any programs or services that you offer explicitly for Hispanics? If so, what are they? How do you feel about them? What benefit do you think they provide?

These data enable me to generate a timeline for when interviewees started to adapt. I also use the same information to explore the specific types of adaptation taking place as well as which businesses or organizations are acclimating. I then use all of these results to address the question of sequence and to probe the reasons that underlie the majority's adaptation process to the newcomer Hispanic groups. To extend my information base, I have relied on my reading of the Olathe News and Dos Mundos newspapers as well as my field notes.

Five Categories of Adaptation

After reviewing interviewees' responses, it became obvious the majority had been adapting to the incoming Hispanic population in five basic ways: providing language services, educating selves/forming partnerships, adjusting to Hispanic culture, offering special services and products, and including Hispanic traditions. Sometimes respondents reported that the adaptation they saw was being done by their organizations and sometimes they saw other people doing so around the city (Table 17).

Table 17: Adaptation methods taking place in Olathe by business and organizations.

Adaptation Method	Who Adapted:		
	Self	**Others**	**No one**
Language Services	**70 (91%)**	26 (34%)	2 (3%)
Education and Partnership	49 (64%)	19 (25%)	22 (29%)
Adjustments to Hispanic Culture	48 (62%)	8 (10%)	24 (31%)
Special Service and Products	41 (53%)	**37 (48%)**	22 (29%)
Inclusion of Hispanic Traditions	14 (18%)	16 (21%)	**49 (64%)**

Source: Maggie Book's interviews July 31, 2008 - July 17, 2009. Note: One or more adaptation methods were cited per person.

Language services adaptation includes such things as utilizing Spanish to assist with communication by having documents translated, hiring a translator, having bilingual brochures or signage, or having an English-to-Spanish quick reference guide available to employees. Seventy (91%) of my interviewees observed accommodation with the incoming Hispanic minority in this way. It is also the most widely distributed modification type irrespective of Hispanic population density (Map 39).
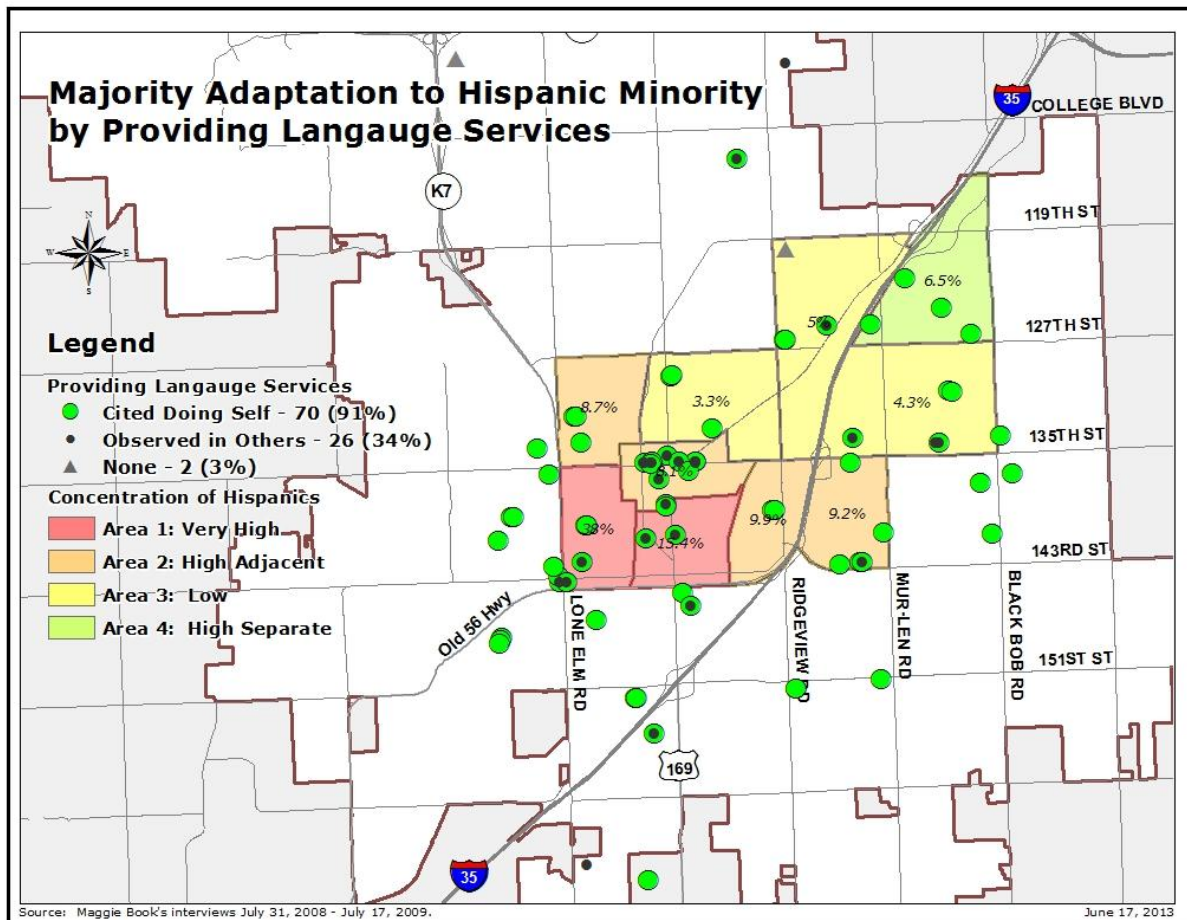
Map 39: Language services are the most widespread and common type of adaptation toward Hispanic newcomers. This pattern is not dependent upon Hispanic population density.

Generally speaking, language-service adjustments were made to help the majority population communicate with non-English speakers about their services and products. The list here is long, and includes items such as understanding a water bill, imparting information about

offered products or services, and making sure newcomers know the social norms and laws of the

settled area. One such instance was shared by Dennis Pine, the senior community enhancement

officer for City of Olathe, when he described how the complaints his office received regarding

Hispanics were often caused by a lack of knowledge about city codes (pers. comm.). Code

enforcement officials consequently put together a bilingual pamphlet with photos that described

the violations and how to fix them (Figure 1). In addition, the brochure helped increase the

immigrants' knowledge of cultural expectations and thereby reduced instances of complaints and

fines.
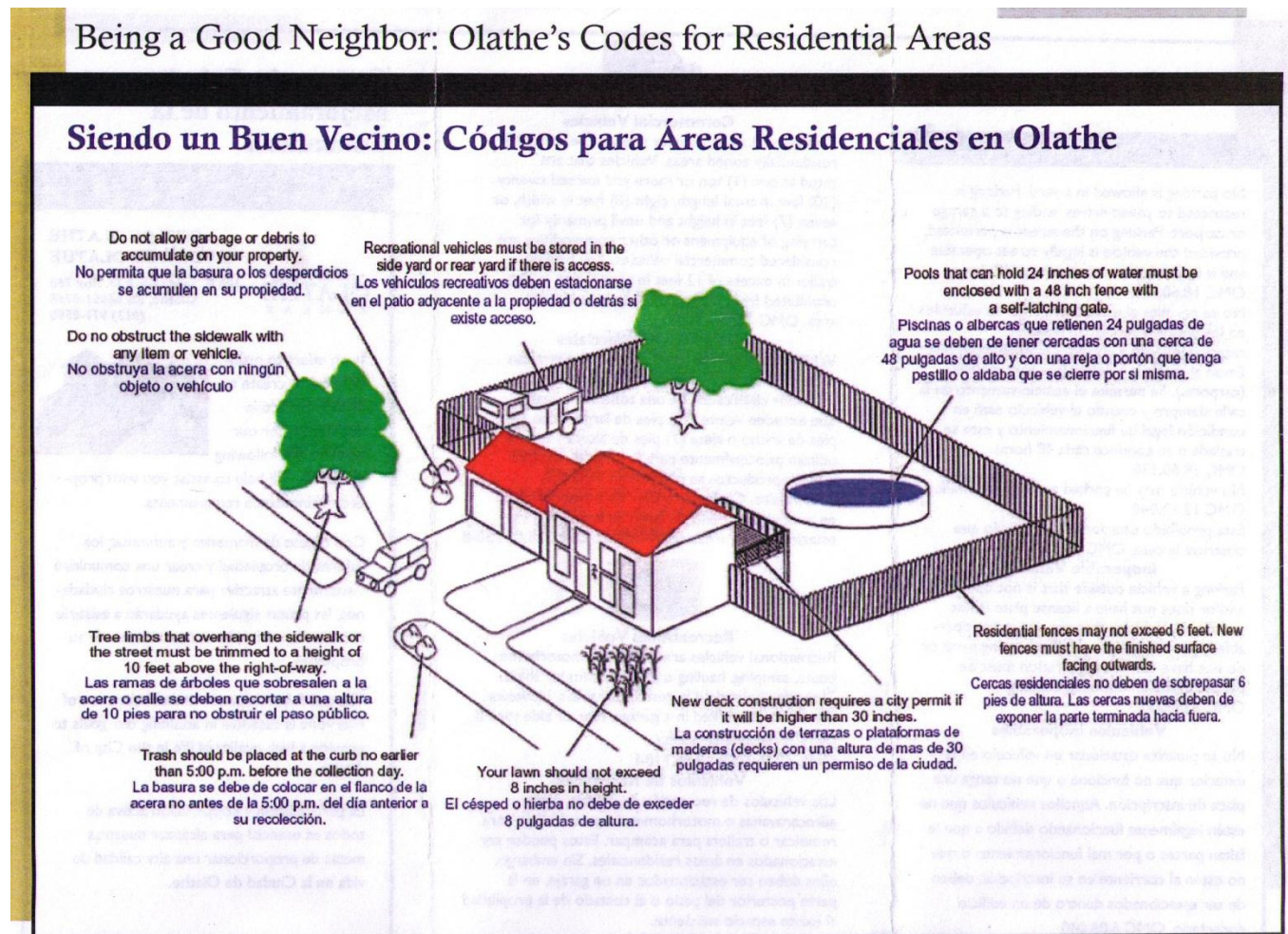
Figure 1: City of Olathe Spanish/English language pamphlet to assist Spanish-speaking residents with property maintenance requirements.

Other examples of using such handouts include banks explaining their services, hospitals making clear their policies and privacy rights, and the police department providing critical child safety information. Perhaps the most extensive translated material comes from the Olathe Public School District, which distributes a twenty-six page service guide of services to schools and others not only for Olathe, but also for the extended metro area and, in some cases, for the state.

Even though translated printed material is common and useful in Olathe, the most critical language resources are the people who can speak Spanish. This is exemplified in the interview of Brent Yeager, the principal at Fairview Elementary School. At the time we spoke, forty percent of his students were in the school's English Language Learners (ELL) program and the Hispanic population constituted forty-five percent of the entire student body (pers. comm.):[1]

> We have a full-time interpreter here at Fairview . . . . It's such a huge part of what we do every day here. I think without her we would be in big trouble. We have a few staff members that speak Spanish and things like that. She is one of our biggest assets to our school. But she's also kind of a community resource. I mean a lot of our Hispanic families will come in when they get something in the mail they don't understand or that kind of thing. She helps people with all sorts of things.

The idea that the school Spanish-language interpreter actually functions as a more general resource base and parental guide was echoed by several other interviewees. This type of person really becomes a liaison for acculturation of the new immigrants into the local community.

In addition to the responsibility of helping newcomers become part of the existing community, people who provide language services in the private sector see such communication as a way to increase business by making existing and potential clients feel welcome. Their efforts are rewarded with patronage. This idea was made clear by Cherry Cummins, bank manager, when she shared her experiences about hiring bilingual employees (pers. comm.):[2]

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[1] Brent Yeager (principal at Fairview Elementary School), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, December 17, 2008.
[2] Cherry Cummins (bank manager), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, November 5, 2008.

> Whether I get a high school person or actually the one lady [I have now who speaks Spanish], . . . is more mature, [and] works at the school, she is actually Hispanic. It works real nice. And the [customers] like it because . . . when they come in [employees] say hola . . . . [It] makes them feel welcome.

Twenty-six (34%) participants told me that they saw language adaptation happening outside their own particular organization. These occurrences are concentrated primarily in the high-density areas of Hispanic population (Map 39). This distribution suggests that language services are either more pronounced or expected to be seen in the denser areas. Two commonly noted items were Spanish masses provided by St. Paul's Catholic Church and the bilingual efforts of various elementary schools in those areas. Dan Simon, former editor of the <u>Olathe News</u>, shared his experience when he noticed language adaptation taking place at the city's fire and police departments (pers. comm.):[3]

> I remember talking to . . . the public information officers for the fire and police departments and the amount of training their guys [had] to do to learn to have at least basic conversations with Spanish-speaking residents so they could provide services for them. The city was actually providing . . . these education sessions for the officers to be able to serve the [Hispanic] population.

Only two participants did not identify any type of adaptation related to language services (Table 17). Both of these individuals worked for grocery stores located in areas with low Hispanic density (Map1). Their employers responded late to the changing population.

The category of adaptation labeled *education and partnership* consists of majority businesses or organizations seeking outside council to understand Hispanic culture, forming classes to teach English, informally sharing with them details about American culture, and creating task forces or advisory boards to better understand how to serve the Hispanic population.

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[3] Dan Simon (former editor of <u>Olathe News</u>), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, July 17, 2009.

As the Hispanic minority became more prominent around 2000, it was noticeable to those working with them that differences existed in cultural understanding. The Olathe Medical Center was one of the first organizations to recognize this when dealing with emergency room situations, child births, and general doctor visits. They began to offer in-house training for their staff on such items as different surnaming conventions, wider family involvement, and how treatments for ailments were approached. In addition, they created pocket-sized cards to address some of the more common cultural and language issues (pers. comm.). Some staff members even went a step further by taking it upon themselves to educate the newcomers on American culture. This included helping Hispanics learn how to talk to American doctors, informing them of their options, and assuring immigrants that staff wanted to help them regardless of their legal status. Other emergency services, include the police and fire departments, also were pioneers in seeking ways to educate staff regarding newcomers' culturally based behaviors in relation to their jobs.

Soon to follow suit was the Olathe School District. Teachers would notice a difference in how Hispanic students acted in school or the fact that sometimes they just would not attend. Teachers and principals took action on these matters by first recognizing the cultural differences and then trying to educate the newcomer children or parents about American expectations. As discussed in chapter four, different cultural conventions existed for the relationship between parents and teachers. School interpreters worked to let Hispanic parents know the importance of being involved and that it is permissible to question the teacher. An educator in one school with a high Hispanic population spoke of such a program (pers. comm.):[4]

> It is for parents of our Hispanic students that do not speak English . . . . The idea is to explain to them the American education system and how it works. It's nine weeks, it's one night a week . . . . Everybody would bring food in the beginning then they would all

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[4] Identity confidential (high school educator), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, January 16, 2009.

eat together . . . Then they would learn about the school, showing them the gym, just talking about the calendar of the American school and the school day. And how if you leave [the school in the middle of the school year] when you come back you have all that work to make up, versus what they have told us, that, for example in Mexico, if they leave, they just kind of pick up where they come back. They haven't missed anything. So that's just been real good for those families.

Eventually, other agencies beyond emergency services and schools found it useful to increase their knowledge about Hispanic peoples. The City of Olathe's Diversity Committee, for example, organized a series called Cultural Learning Links in partnership with a local college. A member of the Diversity Committee expanded on this during his interview (pers. comm.):[5]

This whole idea of awareness is twofold: It does increase my understanding of a different culture, but it also increased my understanding of people because everyone brings their own story to the table . . . . When we had our Hispanic Cultural Learning Link we had a panel of six people. And all them from Latino background, they all had a different story. Even sometime if they both . . . came from Mexico, they had two different cultures in Mexico. So that's the purpose of it is to increase knowledge about culture. It is just a start. Again, that person can't speak for the whole culture, but you know more now than you did before that.

Through time came a growing need for English-language programs. The intention was to bring the non-English-speaking groups into a functional relationship with the rest of the community. Johnson County Community College started English as a Second Language (ESL) classes as did the Grace Methodist Church. Business owners or organizations have also shown a willingness to help non-English speakers by passing on information about these classes when an employee expresses an interest in learning (pers. comm.).

Grace United Methodist Church has proven to be a cornerstone in the settlement and acculturation of the Hispanic community in Olathe through the formation in 2000 of a critical community partnership called Hispanic Ministries Task Force. The group consists of a vast delegation spanning approximately thirty agencies such as churches, police, immigration lawyers, city services representatives, the public library, banks, restaurants, community health

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[5] Identity confidential (Olathe diversity committee member), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, August 7, 2008.

services, the Olathe Medical Center, public schools, the local newspaper, Johnson County Community College ESL, and Catholic Charities. They meet once a month to talk about the needs of the Hispanic community and how they could address them.

The use of the *education and partnership* adaptation method is influenced more by business type than Hispanic density (Map 40). Overall, twenty-two (29%) people did not recognize any adaptation through this means. The business categories of these twenty-two were varied: an apartment complex, a bank, a church leader, community leadership organization, some government services that were less socially oriented, some grocery stores, some industry, and one school principal. Todd Wheat was that principal, located at Northview Elementary School in a census tract with 3.3% Hispanic population. During his short time at the school he did not have any need for educating or forming partnerships to understand an underrepresented Hispanic population. His perspective was furthered by his previous experience as a fifth and sixth grade teacher at a more densely (9.9%) Hispanic populated school.

A distinct grouping of interviewees who did not notice their business or organization adapting to the Hispanic minority through education and partnerships was located along 135th Street, a main thoroughfare that forms the northern border to the main Hispanic concentrations. Two of these people were located in downtown Olathe and worked for the local government in jobs to create recreational programs for the population at large. Their focus consequently is on activities that will get the most participants. Another of the twenty-two was a community leader who had interacted on a regular basis with city government. She was more in the know about everything going on rather than deep into specific activities. The other eight people in the 135th Street cluster were tied to businesses that have seen a stronger pull to adaptation through goods and services that will be discussed later.
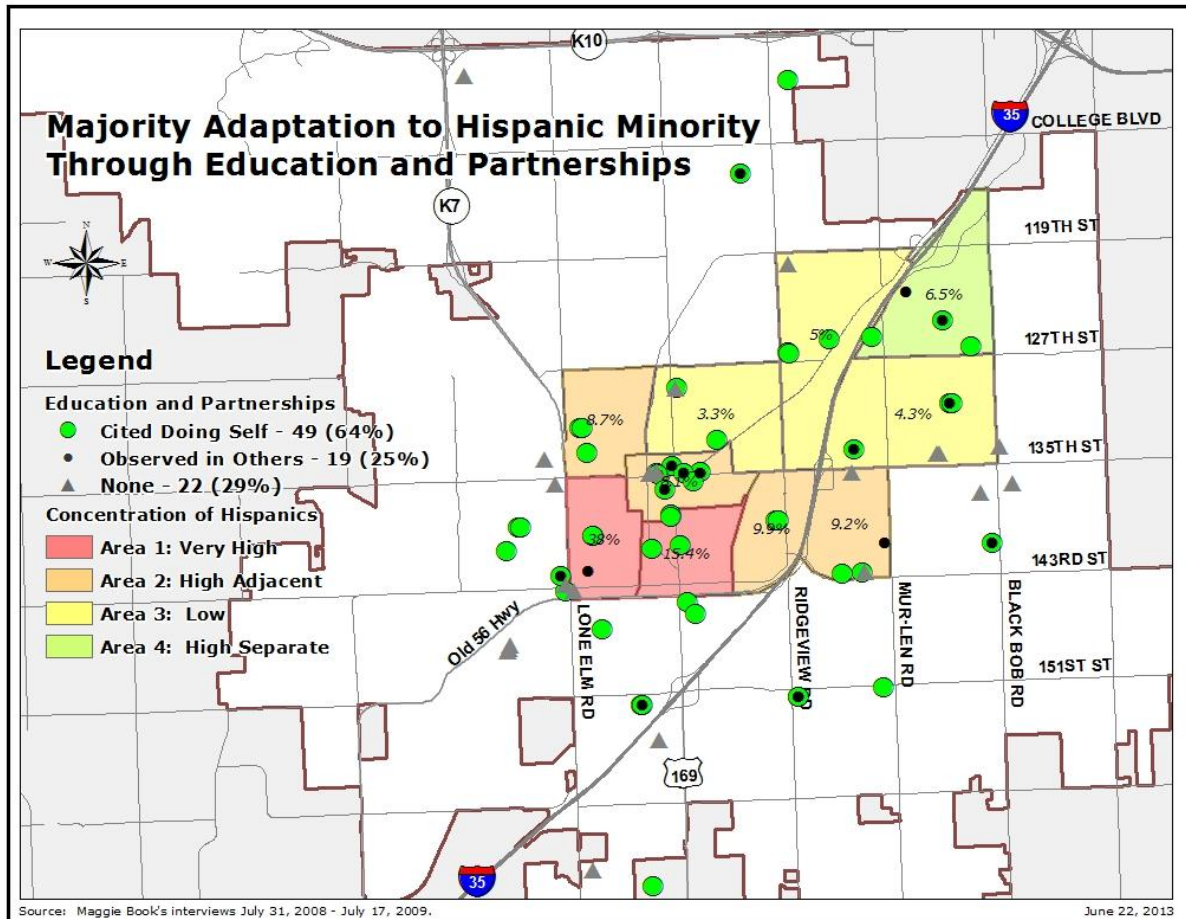
Map 40: Majority adaption to the Hispanic minority by educating themselves, teaching English or forming community partnerships is affected more by business type than Hispanic density.

Forty-nine people that I interviewed (64% of the total) wanted to gain a level of understanding about the minority groups' culture. They are distributed throughout the study area (Map 40). The greater part of these had community-service backgrounds or employed a large number of Hispanics. Their motivations were rooted in figuring out how to better meet immigrants' needs. Some of their employers, such as banks, insurance agencies, and realty offices, used such knowledge to boost business. Interviewees associated with local government had daily interactions with Hispanic newcomers so it was obvious they needed better ways to help the minority understand local rules (pers. comm.). Other types of businesses or organizations in this group include: churches, community leadership organizations, corrections

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agencies, the Olathe Medical Center, industries dependent upon Hispanic labor force, the public library, a nursing home, public schools, and social service groups. Only two interviewees in this group had associations with retail stores. One of these has an intimate connection to Hispanics because his wife is from Mexico. The other works for an auto parts store in a dense Hispanic locale and has seen how a Spanish-speaking employee can boost sales (pers. comm.).

Nineteen (25%) participants recognized organizations or businesses outside of their own that took part in the *education and partnership* adaptation method. Only six of these individuals were outside of the dense Hispanic concentrations in the southwest portion of my study area (Map 40), and most of these had jobs with the school district. The nineteen individuals in this group form a distribution pattern independent of their location to Hispanic density (Map 40). They see firsthand the education and programs that are available to Hispanics for language or community acclimation through various service groups. Ruth Nelson gave such an example during her interview. At the time, she was the assistant director of community development for the Olathe School District, as well as deeply involved in other service organizations. She was well aware of community partnerships with OSD. These included the Rotary Club providing Spanish-to-English dictionaries to schools, the Evening Optimist Club helping the English Language Learner program, and another Optimist group focusing on the School Plus program (pers. comm.).

Adjustments to Hispanic culture is an adaptation method where the majority has not only recognized that cultural differences exist between the two groups (as I discussed in chapter four) but they also make changes in how they do business to better include the newcomer population. Examples of such adjustment might include using different avenues for advertisements, seeking ways to increase Hispanic participation, working to build trust with newcomers, and adjusting

teaching or business practices to draw in Hispanic inhabitants. Each of these actions requires an

investment of time and/or money, and their existences is testimony to the importance now

attached to making this new group a part of the established community.

As previously discussed in chapter four, word-of-mouth campaigns, Spanish-language

newspapers, and Spanish radio stations are effective ways to get news out to Hispanic

newcomers. A number of interviewees reported success in this arena, including an auto parts

shop field executive. When I asked her how the store let people know they employed bilingual

staff she said (pers. comm.): [6]

> It's just word-of-mouth. When [a] customer comes in and sees they have someone in the
> store that can speak Spanish, we know they're gonna go home and they're gonna tell
> somebody and they'll tell somebody. Tell one and ten more people know about it, et
> cetera. Or they'll go out and tell ten people, who will tell ten people. So, just word-of-
> mouth.

Part of my research involved reviewing a one-year sample of <u>Dos Mundos</u> and <u>Olathe</u>

<u>News</u> newspapers for examples of building bridges between the two cultures. The results show

that, while the majority population reached out to Hispanics some in the <u>Olathe News</u>, they did

so much more often in <u>Dos Mundos</u>. Typically advertisements in <u>Dos Mundos</u> publicized a

willingness to speak Spanish to the article's respondents and were written either in Spanish or in

both Spanish and English. The items in <u>Olathe News</u> were most often in English. They also

tended to be smaller and typically stated whether the service offered was available only in

English or in Spanish and English. Only two examples specifically noted the availability of

Spanish speakers. One was a beginner's Internet class offered through the public library and the

other a State Farm Insurance agent with Spanish-language abilities. More interesting were the

number of outreach efforts by the English-speaking majority in <u>Dos Mundos</u>. I found

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[6] Identity confidential (auto parts field executive), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, April 24, 2009.

advertisements for goods and services, announcements of public events, and even job postings

(Table 18).

Table 18: Examples of Olathe majority reaching out to Hispanics via the Dos Mundos newspaper.

Advertisement For	Description	Language
Santa Barbara Mobile Home Park	Mobile home park in Olathe. Accepts tax identification numbers.	Both
Wild West Festival and Bullwhacker Days	Bullwhacker Days at Mahaffie Farmstead in Olathe. Mentions performance by Hispanic cowboy Charro Jerry Diaz.	English
Invitation to Bid	Construction Company in Olathe looking for subcontractors and suppliers to assist with bid.	English
State Farm Insurance	Two agents listed in Olathe stating they speak Spanish.	Both
Winter Fest and Mayor's Christmas Tree Lighting	Invitation to attend Olathe's Mayor's Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony at city hall.	English
Apartment for rent	Apartment for rent in Olathe.	Spanish
Price Chopper	Grocery store in Olathe advertising specific Mexican products.	Spanish
Fry Orthodontics	Orthodontist in Olathe offering a special price on braces.	Spanish
O'Reilly Auto Parts	Advertisement for an automobile parts specialist.	Spanish

Source: Dos Mundos from May 8, 2008 through June 17, 2009.

Another aspect of making *adjustments to Hispanic culture* is the majority taking time to learn about the importance of relationships and building trust to gain more Hispanic patronage or participation. Social-service organizations, public schools, churches, banks, local government, stores, and emergency services all subscribe to this mindset. For example, one OSD parent-teacher organization created a Cinco de Mayo event and another included Spanish music at school parties to draw in newcomers (pers. comm.).

In some instances, it was recognized that Hispanic immigrants were most likely to return to a business or organization if they knew the name of a particular person there who spoke

Spanish. Majority businesses have made significant adaptations in this arena, including the

hiring of a specific person or people to be Spanish-language contacts and/or printing a Spanish-

speaking individual's name and direct phone line on brochures and fliers (opposed to a more

common approach of using a generic job title and front desk phone number).

Other businesses have taken the time to initiate personal one-on-one interactions with

newcomers. Such a task was done by a local bank representative who worked purposefully to

assure Hispanic immigrants that her financial institution was safe and dependable (pers.

comm.):[7]

> When we started seeing the influx of the Hispanic population, what we did is we went out
> and actually posted brochures. Also, I made up little flyers [saying] we speak Spanish
> here at this branch, went to the laundromats, to the apartment buildings, [and] the little
> stores. [I] went out to reach out to different organizations. You know, just to let them
> know that we are here to help and that we do have some one that speaks Spanish.

The idea that the two groups could work together to achieve positive relationships is growing

rapidly. A prime example comes from the Olathe police department. As previously discussed in

chapter four, Hispanics traditionally have distrusted law-enforcement officials because of known

corruption in their countries of origin. Wanting to build trust and knowing that churches are

amongst the most dependable and safest places for Hispanic newcomers, the Olathe police

worked with ministers to showcase the police's positive intentions (pers. comm.). This example

overlaps with *education and partnership* adaptation method, previously discussed.

Another facet of *adjustments to Hispanic culture* involves a business, organization, or

school modifying their business practices so it would be easier for immigrants to learn or receive

services. One of the most extreme changes I observed was made by landscaping businesses that

sought employees from Mexico after they could not find Americans willing to accept their job

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[7] Identity confidential (local bank representative), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, December 3, 2008.

offers. They began to lobby Congress in hopes of achieving more flexible H-2B work visas.[8]

One operations manager shared his experience about this reform effort (pers. comm.):[9]

> There is actually a grassroots type of group here in town . . . . [When] we have meetings, as many as twenty people attend [where] business owners or managers . . . will get together. I've gone with a group, probably three out of [the] last four years, to Washington and have . . . gone around and talked to our representatives and really try to get them to jump into this thing and help us out. We've had really good support on the Kansas side . . . . This is a really good stimulus that costs the government nothing. We pay, the program is not paid for by tax payers, all the users pay fees and that supports it.

When companies apply for available visas, they have to pay the legal fees regardless if they are awarded any or not. In addition, the migrant workers who come usually do not have lodging. As part of their business practice, this particular landscape company has purchased a number of nearby duplexes to house their immigrant laborers.

Another adjustment by banks, mortgage companies, and some mobile home parks is the acceptance of new forms of identification instead of social security numbers. These include the Matrícula Consular (an identification card given by the Mexican Consulate) and the Individual Taxpayer Identification Number issued by the Internal Revenue Service. This change has greatly smoothed the process of getting loans, creating bank accounts, and making large purchases (pers. comm.).[10]

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[8] "The H-2B program allows U.S. employers or U.S. agents who meet specific regulatory requirements to bring foreign nationals to the United States to fill temporary nonagricultural jobs. A U.S. employer, or U.S. agent as described in the regulations, must file Form I-129, Petition for Nonimmigrant Worker, on a prospective worker's behalf" (U. S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. Accessed on 6/21/2013. http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.eb1d4c2a3e5b9ac89243c6a7543f6d1a/?vgnextoid=d1d333e559274 210VgnVCM100000082ca60aRCRD&vgnextchannel=d1d333e559274210VgnVCM100000082ca60aRCRD).

[9] Identity confidential (operations manager of a local landscaping business), interview with author, Olathe, KS, April 1, 2009.

[10] "IRS issues ITINs to individuals who are required to have a U.S. taxpayer identification number but who do not have, and are not eligible to obtain a Social Security Number (SSN) from the Social Security Administration (SSA). ITINs are issued regardless of immigration status because both resident and nonresident aliens may have a U.S. filing or reporting requirement under the Internal Revenue Code" (Internal Revenue Service. Accessed on 6/21/2013. http://www.irs.gov/Individuals/General-ITIN-Information).

Just as businesses have modified practices to cater better to the Hispanic immigrants, so have public schools. In fact, schools have been among the leaders in such changes. Teachers often told me how they were utilizing more visual cues in their class, making more hand gestures, and adding more repetition all the while taking into account differences in cultural background knowledge. They said they had to become more cognizant to determine if their lessons were coming across as intended because of students' disparate language abilities (pers. comm.).

Teachers gave credit to the school district for providing the resources needed for them to deal with the linguistically and culturally different newcomers. One educator at a high density Hispanic elementary school responded that the increase in the immigrant population absolutely changed how they teach and communicate with children: "First of all, all of our staff has gone through . . . a lot of training to help kids who are limited language learners because when you are limited in language you are limited in your written communication as well. We are doing *a lot* of things with active learning literacy."[11]

Adjustments to Hispanic culture as an adaptation method occurs most often in the southwest corner of my study area where the Hispanic densities exceed eight percent (Map 41). This is reflected in the distribution of forty-eight (62%) interviewees' responses. The eight (10%) interviewees who recognized other groups or organization adapting to Hispanic culture all had a lot of exposure to the newcomer group. All but two of these individuals were located in the high to very high areas of Hispanic concentration. Twenty-four people (31%) who did not notice a change by self or others are equally distributed throughout the study area.

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[11] Identity confidential (primary-level educator), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, November 21, 2008.
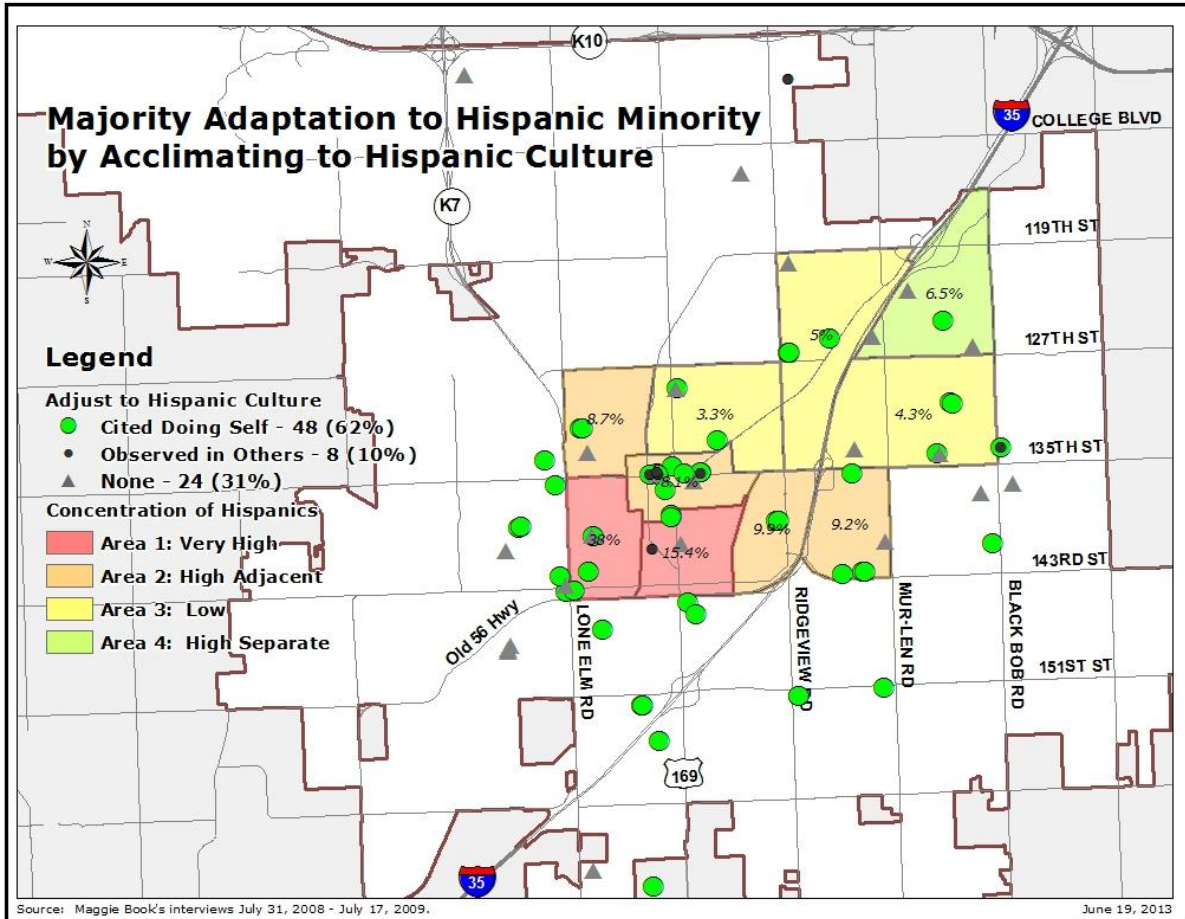
Map 41: The high to very high Hispanic density areas are where businesses and organizations have most often changed themselves to better serve the Hispanic residents.

The adaptation category of *special service and products* is straightforward. I defined it as an increase or change in services or products to meet differing needs of the Hispanic population. This grouping includes helping those who cannot read English fill out forms; major grocery stores stocking phone cards for Latin America countries and offering money-wiring services to the same locales, making sure that newcomers know which doctors and dentist have Spanish-language capabilities, and even providing a Spanish guide to auto parts.

Lorie Hyten, a reference librarian for the Olathe Public Library, has made sure that a wide variety of Spanish-language materials are kept on hand. These items, in fact, are kept in a special Hispanic collection that is positioned to be one of the first things seen by patrons entering

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the building (pers. comm.). This front-and-center placement helps to assure returning visits by Hispanic customers. This particular effort also overlaps with the *adjusting to Hispanic culture* and *language services* adaptation methods.

Not surprising, churches of many faiths have adapted by providing religious services in Spanish. Some have taken it a step further by offering Spanish sessions for counseling, baptismal preparation, money management, adult retreats, and premarital classes (pers. comm.). Grace United Methodist Church's downtown Olathe location, Center of Grace, in partnership with Olathe Medical Center offered classes on diabetes awareness during one of their Wednesday night suppers. Though the class was open to everyone, it focused on diabetes because of the number of Hispanics in the church and the high percentage of this ethnic group affected by the disease. The class also had a bilingual health professional present to answer questions and help make doctor appointments (pers. comm.).

The Olathe School District and others in the community offer a number of classes or programs either explicitly for Hispanics or created as a result of a recognized need for the Hispanic population. These include OSD Hispanic night, OSD English Language Learner program, OSD School Plus program, parent education on how the public school system works, Spanish-language computer classes, the United in Service program to help potential Hispanic home buyers, OSD after-school programs (Latin dance, care repair, soccer tournaments, etc.), Spanish-language wellness programs (aerobics, yoga, survival skills for women, self-esteem, and parenting), and, not least, drug recovery.

The Olathe School District also has made two even larger program/service adjustments to better serve the growing Hispanic population. The first was the formation of Hispanic Olathe

Leadership Academy (HOLA) in 2003. Erin Vader, who was then the city contact for youth

services, told me how HOLA came to be:[12]

> Youth Court, it's an alternative to the judicial system where the student who committed
> minor misdemeanor offenses can . . . be judged by a group of their peers as opposed to
> going through the traditional court system. The youth volunteers noticed a large number,
> a growing number of Hispanic students coming through as defendants. Part of the
> component of serving in Youth Court, or going to Youth Court, is that you come back as
> the volunteer. They felt like the Hispanic students weren't getting connected to their
> communities, connected to their schools, connected to their peers. They wanted
> something that would help with that. That would develop leaders and make some
> Hispanic students feel wanted and needed and included. So out of that came HOLA—
> Hispanic Olathe Leadership Academy.

HOLA eventually turned into Academic Diversity and Relationships Equal Success (ADRES)

because it was recognized that not all Hispanic students were bilingual and non-Hispanic

students wanted to join as well.

The second big school district addition of 2004 was their Department of Language and

Cultural Services. This department focuses on Hispanic families, although they support other

language learners as well. Their basic tasks include translating of documents, providing

interpreter services for schools, connecting families with community support resources, helping

with Hispanic leadership programs, assisting with various Hispanic clubs, participating in

Hispanic Ministries Taskforce at Center of Grace, and helping with monthly Hispanic family

meetings (pers. comm.).

As the Hispanic immigrant population grew, various businesses began to identify special

products that the newcomers would like to have offered in their stores. Grocers were leaders in

this investment and the businesses most frequently cited by participants, especially the local

Price Chopper chain. Similar changes then occurred at discount and convenience stores, dollar

outlets, and more. As I toured the different locales, interviewees would mention a wide variety

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[12] Erin Vader (then City of Olathe youth services coordinator), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, July 31, 2008.

of examples. This is captured below in an excerpt from my July 8, 2008 field notes describing a

visit to the most frequently referenced Price Chopper store at 135th Street and Mur-Len Road:

Immediately when I walked in the door, I noticed there were three Hispanic men standing at the Western Union counter. One Hispanic woman was talking in Spanish on the pay phone. A Hispanic woman was putting her preschooler in a shopping cart. The clientele was mainly a mix of Hispanics and white patrons consisting of older women, older men, and two young couples.

There was an obvious presence of goods geared toward the Hispanic population. In the produce section there was a dried pepper bar that consisted of over twelve different types of spicy peppers. They also had an assortment of fresh peppers representing six varieties. The produce consisted of a smattering of dried corn, dried beans, tomatillos, cactus leaves, and aloe vera leaves. The signs for these products were only written in Spanish.

Over thirteen brands of tortillas filled one side of the bread aisle. This did not include the different variation in each brand: corn, flour or rice as well as hard or soft. Some were local brands. Some only had packaging in Spanish. Also, in the "American" bread section was a brand called BIMBO. This product line had packaging written in Spanish. White bread was labeled as "pan blanco."

In the deli counter there were some goods from the Chapala brand that included: crema de la casa, cotija cheese, queso fresco, and panela cheese. The bakery carried about six different kinds of Mexican Sweet bread and cookies labeled with bilingual signage.

There was an aisle split by two signs labeled as "Authentic Hispanic" and "Mexican". The "Authentic Hispanic" section mimicked products that I have seen in the Latino y Punto Hispanic convenience store. Items included Jarritos brand soda pop; Sangria flavored soda pop; Jumex brand juice; Nestlé brand flavored milk mixes; Abuelita hot cocoa mix; San Marcos, La Preferida, and La Costeña brands of canned peppers; jarred tender cactus; canned guavas; jalapeño salsa by El Pato; Valentina brand hot sauce from Mexico; a large assortment of canned and dried beans; masa; Nestlé dulce de leche; hominy; menudo; La Moderna and El Guapo brands of dried pasta made in Mexico; Catholic prayer candles with images of Mary, Jesus, and various saints; and piñata candy mix. The "Mexican" portion represented more Americanized taste like Taco Bell and Old El Paso brand sauces.

The store carried mango guava and dulce de leche flavored Pop Tarts. Near the check-out stands there was ice cream type coolers filled with Mexican frozen fruit bars with Spanish-language packaging. I have seen the same type of cooler and product line at Latino y Punto as well as in Mexico.

Forty-one (53%) participants told me that their business or organization adapted to

Hispanic immigrants by changing their services or products. All of those were located in the

high to very high Hispanic concentration tracts (Map 42). Four were just north of 135th Street, two of them working at a grocery store, one as a school educator and one as a community leader who does a lot with service groups and schools. Three interviewees were located in the low Hispanic density Area 3. Of these, one is an educator at an ELL school and another is a reading teacher at a school that offers special night tutoring two times weekly. The last interviewee works at a grocery store that has a small "authentic" Hispanic goods section. It is worth noting that Area 4, with 6.5% Hispanics, did not have any indication of a change toward services and products. This strengthens the ideas that the *special service and products* adaptation method is associated with higher Hispanic population values.

Twenty-two (29%) interviewees observed mainly grocery stores as the business or organization that had adjusted to the newcomers by changing their product line. These people were located either along 135th Street, which is essentially the northern border for high Hispanic density and has a number of Hispanic owned or target businesses, or in the southwest corner of my study area, which has greater than eight percent Hispanic population (Map 42).

The final adaptation category, *inclusion of Hispanic traditions*, is typically the one embraced most slowly by the majority population. This is defined as folding Hispanic traditions or cultural elements into majority activities. As mentioned in chapter four, culture can be expressed through food and different styles of music and dance. Hispanic dancers and music have been used at festivals and school events, for example, as a way to celebrate the newcomers' culture and to make them feel included and comfortable. Rick Dryden, event planner for the City of Olathe, shared why he and the other city departments he works with chose to make use of such music at two such festivals (pers. comm.):[13]

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[13] Rick Dryden (City of Olathe special events coordinator), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, September 28, 2008.

For Bullwhackers, which is coming up this weekend, the actually history shows . . . [that] the kind of people coming up through here . . . were Hispanics and heading west too. That event has that flavor to it. They have the fiesta dancers and they have the flamenco players and they have these people that come out and play different kinds of Mexican music. . . . They are doing the event for everybody, but they're doing it not only to show the historical value but hopefully draw those people there.

He continued on to share his experience with Americana Jubilee, the city sponsored multi-cultural festival:

It's like when we did Americana Jubilee. We had Son Venezuela there who played music from all the different Latino countries. And we saw a certain percentage of people that would come out because of that. We had the fiesta dancers. We had those kinds of things. Knowing there's a good population here, at least the largest Hispanic population in Johnson County; we wanted to have something for them.
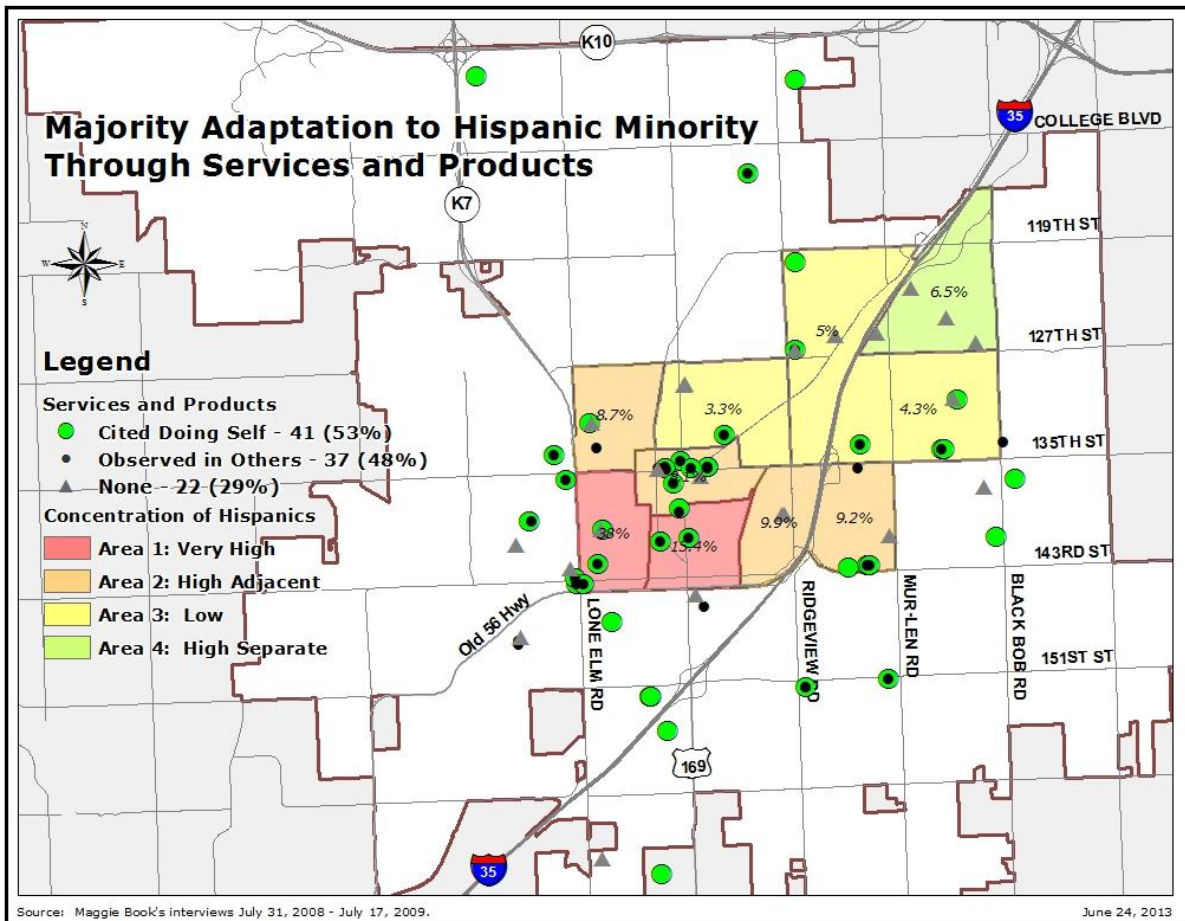
Map 42: The high to very high Hispanic density Areas 1 and 2 are where businesses and organizations have most often adapted to the Hispanic minority by modifying their services or products.

The majority of interviewees, who thought that Olathe was beginning to include Hispanic traditions as part of mainstream events, referenced Americana Jubilee as a good example of Olathe reaching out to include the newcomers. Business people who participated in the festival felt it provided a means of outreach to the Hispanic populous as well, and so did a 2006 article in the Kansas City Star (Babcock 2006: 8). In this newspaper piece, then councilwoman Beverly Wittenborn was quoted as saying, "when people in Olathe think of diversity, the city's growing Hispanic population comes to mind, but that's not the only culture represented among 120,000 residents" (2006: 8). The idea was that even more celebration of diversity was desirable and possible.

While Americana Jubilee was the most mentioned festival, interviewees also highlighted several specific Hispanic-rooted holidays and traditions. As mentioned in chapter four, St. Paul's Catholic Church celebrates Our Lady of Guadalupe every December 12. Cinco de Mayo also has become popular in Olathe, most often by restaurants and liquor stores for special sale opportunities. Public schools and library regularly celebrate Hispanic heritage month as well, often with a sharing of ethnic foods in pot-lucks, food items on sale at the grocery store, and changes in school menus.

Inclusion of Hispanic traditions as an adaptation method has an interesting geographical distribution (Map 43). Only fourteen (18%) participants saw their organization or business as embracing the Hispanic traditions and all are found in Areas 1 and 2. The interviewee farthest east in this grouping is an educator at OSD. Furthermore, the sixteen (21%) participants who saw other businesses or organizations including Hispanic traditions are located in Areas 1 and 2 or hover along 135th Street. Finally, the majority of interviewees, forty-nine (64%), indicated

they did not see their or any other business or organization adapting to the Hispanic populous by including their cultural traditions. They are distributed throughout my study area.
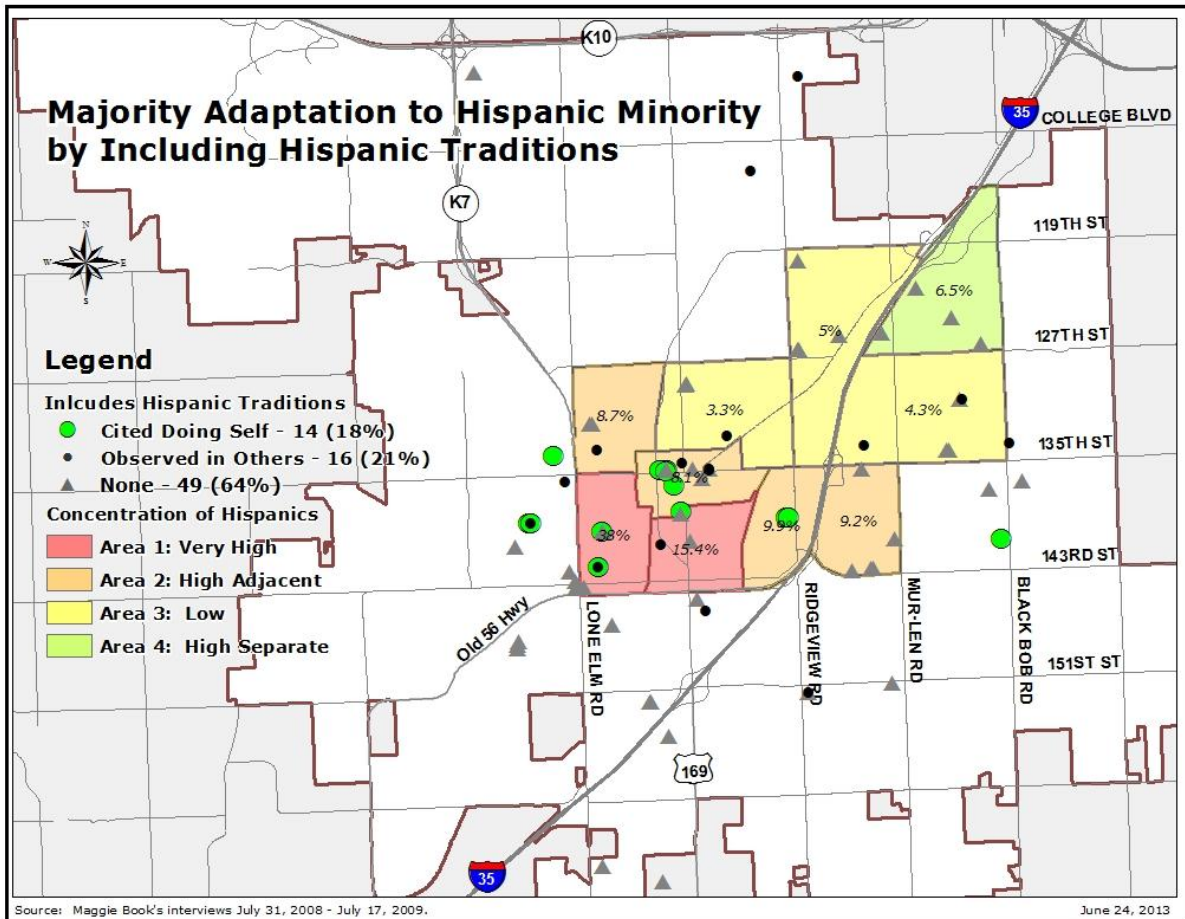
Map 43: Participants including Hispanic traditions are concentrated in the highly Hispanic Areas 1 and 2.

Sequence of Adaptation

Business and organizations in Olathe started applying one or more of the five adaptation methods to assist Hispanic newcomers as far back as 1982 (Charts 1 and 2.) [14] Churches, schools, and probation services were the front line of the process, having been adapting to the incoming Hispanic immigrants for eighteen years via language services, special service and products, and adjustments to Hispanic culture. In 1996, an interviewee noted the use of Hispanic

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[14] During my interviews 37 out of 77 (48%) people provided a year for when they started adapting in specific ways. Overall, I feel these responses are reflective to the group as a whole based on details of each interview.

dancers at Bullwhacker Days when she first moved to Olathe. The people who run this festival are well educated regarding Olathe's history and so were aware of the early presence of Mexicans in the city. Such knowledge could well have been the reason for the dancers in the 1990s, and not so much about trying to adjust to the Hispanic newcomers. The industry spotlighted on Chart 1for 1999 was landscaping. At this time, unemployment in Olathe was extremely low and so employers in need of physical labor had to seek help in Mexico.

In 2000, the Hispanic existence really began to be noticed by others in the community. The response was more examples of the previously mentioned methods plus the beginning of the education and partnership adaptation method (Charts 1 and 2). At this point the overall Hispanic population had reached 5.4 percent and selected neighborhoods (Areas 1 and 2) showed concentrations ranging from 8.1% to 38% (Map 39). Social services, more schools, hospitals, and the library started to become more active in adaptation. As the Hispanic population continued to grow, my interviews reveal that more businesses and organizations added their own changes. This list includes more schools, banks, community leadership organizations, apartment complexes, local government agencies, realtors, grocery and other stores, and more industry.

In 2005 Olathe's businesses and organizations began to add the *inclusion of Hispanic traditions* to their list of adaptations. Leaders here were schools, realtors, the local government, and stores. It is important to note that, however, The Grace United Methodist Church pioneered in this adaptation method in 2001 by starting the Family Fiesta. Their early inclusion of Hispanic traditions probably was a result of their physical location in the densely Hispanic Area 1 as well as their significant partnership efforts the year before to provide ESL classes and formation of the Hispanic Ministry Taskforce.

Chart 1: Timeline showing adjustments to the Hispanic population in Olathe arranged by different types of adaptation methods and business categories.

Timeline of Adaptation by the Majority (by ways and category)

1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010

1.2 % Hispanic Population — 1.8 % Hispanic Population — 5.4 % Hispanic Population — 6.4 % Hispanic Population

Ways Majority Adapts
- Language Services
- Special Service and Products
- Adjustments to Hispanic Culture
- Education and Partnership
- Inclusion of Hispanic Traditions

1982: Church, Church
1989: Corrections
1993: School
1996: Local Government, School
1998: Church, Church
1999: Industry
2000: Church, Social Services, School, Social Services
2001: Church, Hospital, Hospital
2002: Library
2003: Community Leader, Bank, School, Bank, School, Community Leader, Bank, Social Services, School, Bank
2004: School, Apartment, School, Apartment, School, Local Government, Industry, Apartment
2005: School, School, Industry, Store, Grocery, Church, School, Realtor
2006: School, Realtor, Local Government, School, School, Industry, Store, Realtor, Grocery, Store
2007: Local Government
2008: Store, Store, Store, Grocery, Store

Source: Maggie Book's interviews July 31, 2008 - July 17, 2009.

Chart 2: Timeline providing specific details of majority adapting to Hispanic population.

Timeline Highlighting Cited Majority Adaptation

1980
1.2 % Hispanic Population

1985

1990
1.8 % Hispanic Population

1995

2000
5.4 % Hispanic Population

2005
6.4 % Hispanic Population

2010

1982
-College Church of the Nazarene starts Hispanic Ministry

1989
-Probation officers start to see need for Spanish translators

1993
-Westview Elementary makes learning adjustments for Hispanic child

1998
-St. Paul's Catholic Church starts Spanish masses

2000
-Community partnerships start to address Hispanic needs
-Start of ESL classes and Hispanic Ministries Taskforce by Grace Methodist Church

1999
-Local landscape businesses supplement labor force with Hispanic workers

1996
-KSD recognizes need for Spanish translations
-Hispanic dancers appear at local festivals

2001
-Olathe Medical Center hires Spanish translators and starts educating staff on Hispanic culture
-Grace United Methodist Church starts Family Fiesta

2002
-Olathe Public Library begins to increase their Spanish language collection

2003
-OSD creates HOLA program
-Banks incorporate Spanish language and Hispanics' specific needs
-Olathe News and Dos Mundos newspapers form a partnership
-Social services adds bilingual staff
-Fairview Elementary teachers adjust to Hispanic immigrant students

2004
-OSD creates District Bilingual Language Department
-Local government hires bilingual staff
-Apartment complex offers services specific to Hispanics
-Landscape companies hire bilingual staff

2005
-Grocery and big box stores carry authentic goods from Mexico and other produce specific to native Hispanic palates
-More public schools offer Spanish language translators and services targeting Hispanic immigrants
-Local businesses advertise with Spanish language newspapers and radio stations
-Churches offer more programs and services for Hispanic needs

2006
-Realtors and related businesses provide Spanish language and Hispanic directed programs
-More grocery and big box stores carry authentic goods from Mexico and produce specific to native Hispanic pallets
-Local government starts Americana Jubilee multicultural festival
-More public schools offering services, incorporating cultural elements, and community partnerships associated with Hispanics

2007
-Local government starts cultural learning link learning series

2008
-New big box store opens taking into account Hispanic newcomer goods and produce preferences
-Another grocery store adds Hispanic-directed goods

Source: Maggie Book's interviews July 31, 2008 - July 17, 2009.

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Overall, adaptation methods followed a definite sequence (Table 19). Providing

language services was the first line of response to an incoming group, an indication of how

crucial it is for newcomers and existing majority to be able to communicate. Its occurrence was

independent of Hispanic density. From the information I collected, it seems that two other

adaptation methods—*adjustments to Hispanic culture* and *special services or products*—

occurred nearly simultaneously. Both adaptation methods showed a strong dependence on being

in or near highly populated Hispanic locals.

Table 19: Sequence of five adaptation methods experienced or observed by interviewees in Olathe.

Adaptation Method	Adaptation Method Implementation Sequence	Who Adapted:		
		Self	**Others**	**No one**
Language Services	1	**70 (91%)**	26 (34%)	2 (3%)
Adjustments to Hispanic Culture	2	48 (62%)	8 (10%)	24 (31%)
Special Service and Products	2	41 (53%)	**37 (48%)**	22 (29%)
Education and Partnership	3	49 (64%)	19 (25%)	22 (29%)
Inclusion of Hispanic Traditions	4	14 (18%)	16 (21%)	**49 (64%)**

Source: Maggie Book's interviews July 31, 2008 - July 17, 2009. Note: One or more adaptation methods were cited per person.

Inconsistency exists in the sequence for *education and partnership* because of a shortage

of dates noted for the timeline by category (Chart 1), but it is the second-most frequently cited

way that interviewees say they themselves have adapted. This suggests that more dates could

have been collected. Future research could focus explicitly on type and date of adaptation

mechanisms employed by those in the community. In addition, the *education and partnership*

adaptation method is tied not to areas with high Hispanic population densities, but to business

type. That being said, a significant newcomer population in general is still needed for this

particular adaption method to take place.

Finally, the *inclusion of Hispanic traditions* adaptation method shows a strong

relationship to large, established Hispanic concentrations as it did not take place until late 2000s

and then only by a finite number of respondents. The exception is if a particular business or

organization had a close tie to Hispanic newcomers such as a dependence on labor, children's

educational requirements, or providing religious needs.

All participants agreed that adaptation took place, but the motivation for doing so fell into

one of two categories: to help the Hispanic immigrants become acclimated to American culture

and to turn a profit. Olathe, just as any other American city, has an entrepreneurial spirit ranging

from local specialty stores to big box discount stores and service providers, and nearly all of

these are making efforts to gain the new Hispanic group as patrons. An owner of a convenience

store, for example, explained to me why he modified his product line beyond the corporate

standards of his regional chain when he noticed an increase in Hispanic clientele (pers. comm.):[15]

> We took it to the next level. That was to introduce more products that catered to
> [Hispanics]. And again the idea is to do business and to do business on the next level and
> introduce more products. So, yes, we have a line of [Hispanic] products and we are
> always looking for adding more product lines and deleting also.

Another example is provided by Debbie Swinney, an insurance agent, who explained

how her company had made adjustments to the growing Hispanic market (pers. comm.):[16]

> It's caused our company to become aware. [They] are actually promoting [the agents] to
> help this emerging [Hispanic] market and do it right. You know, having someone who
> can speak the language in our agencies. And they're doing things like giving us
> discounts on advertising . . . . They're spending a lot of money to help this market.

Even though Swinney's company is obviously seeking to gain customers through the changes it

is making, she feels good about the practice in ways beyond the money. She expressed a

genuine intention to want to help immigrants as she explained what prompted her to join United

in Service (pers. comm.):

> We had one instance that prompted me to get involved with this group [United in
> Service] when I was contacted. A tornado came through. And one of my builders had

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[15] Identity confidential (convenience store owner), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, December 12, 2008.
[16] Debbie Swinney (insurance agent), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, December 5, 2008.

sold a home to a Spanish-speaking family. And they [had] gone to a different company to get insurance and they [insurance agent] did an assumption that it was renters and didn't provide coverage for the home and the home was destroyed. And there was no coverage because the builder had done a contract for deed and he didn't check it. He just asked them if they got insurance and they said yes. So everyone assumed it was the proper coverage and it wasn't. It was lack of communication. And so at that point, I decided I needed to get someone in the office that spoke Spanish and then, you know, help them and communicate effectively. I think a lot of us need to do that.

In addition to wanting to help immigrants with personal issues, other interviewees said

they took measures toward adaptation more to assist the newcomers understand and become a

part of Olathe. This process, of course, promotes an overall stronger community. Syliva

Romero, pastora at Center of Grace Church, developed this general point during her interview

about the Hispanic Ministries Taskforce (pers. comm.):[17]

> I can have somebody come in and give them food. I can have somebody attending English classes. But, I think in order to understand what [Hispanic immigrants] really need, and how we can better serve them as a whole community, then I think we need to talk to each other. And I think it makes a big difference when you have people at the table who actually have to do with your everyday life just talking to each other. To have the health department, and the school, and the police, and the library, and everyone involved in how we can make the community better. Then not only one group benefits, but everybody benefits.

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[17] Sylvia Romero (pastora for Center of Grace Church), interview with the author, Olathe, KS, November 19, 2008.

CHAPTER 8
CONCLUSION

A Hispanic existence in Olathe is not a new concept. These people have been present since 1910, a movement precipitated by the Mexican revolution and the Santa Fe railroad's need for workers, and localized by having that company's main track run directly from the Southwest to Kansas City. Then, some seventy years later, another wave of Hispanic immigrants started to roll into Olathe, a movement that became a flood by 1990. This new immigration, like the old, was a result of similar "push" and "pull" factors. In the 1990s, Mexico was suffering from government turmoil and a devastating economic downturn.   At the same time, the United States had a strong economy with low unemployment rates. Olathe, in particular, was in the midst of a building boom and had even lower unemployment rates than the national average. Employers were desperate to fill positions in intensive manual labor.

As Hispanic peoples began to fill Olathe's working needs local residents found that they needed to modify their own behavior and polices in order for the city to continue to function well. My research has identified five types of such adaptation used by the majority population's businesses and organizations. Listed by developmental sequence these are: providing language services, adjusting to Hispanic culture, offering special services and products, educating selves/forming partnerships, and including Hispanic traditions. All seventy-seven of my interviewees participated in one or more of these methods. Overall, I found the five adaptation methods to be positive in nature. The only large negative was that, for an organization or business to achieve these changes, they often needed to invest substantial amounts of time and/or money. However, the return has been far more valuable in that it enables both the natives and immigrants to exist together as a symbiotic community.

I was also able to identify two overarching and overlapping reasons why participants adapted: to help Hispanic immigrants become acclimated to American culture and/or to turn a profit. Initially I hypothesized that local businesses, education institutions, social services, government agencies, and the hospital would be the first groups to adapt. I was only partially correct. My research found that Olathe's churches, schools, and probation services were the earliest responders.

Churches realized that a language barrier kept immigrants from being included. They started Spanish-language worship times and initiated other programs to foster a sense of community belonging and to meet basic social needs. Schools, of course, have a legal obligation to educate all children, especially with the federal mandate of No Child Left Behind in place. Educators, by nature, also want their students to succeed. This sense of duty prompted staff members to improve Spanish-language services and community resources for families even before the newcomer population exploded. Probation officers found that, to prevent repeat infractions from occurring, they needed to make sure that Spanish-speaking wrongdoers knew why they were in trouble and understand their punishment. This led them to seek interpreters. Other businesses and organizations soon followed the adaptation leads of the churches, schools, and probation officers as the Hispanic immigrant population continued to grow.

I found that cultural landscape provided useful initial insight into Olathe's Hispanic community. Areas of ethnic concentration could be identified by the location of businesses or organizations that provided specialized information, services, or goods. This zone had a northern border of 135th Street and a southern boundary of 143rd Street. It extended from Mur-Len Road on the east to Lone Elm Road on the west. Businesses in this area have had to do the most adaptation, of course. Other useful landscape indicators for areas influenced by newcomers were

Spanish-language displays, excessive concentrations of vehicles, and Hispanic-oriented car decals.

Surprisingly, interviewees' perceptions of how the cultural landscape was modified by Hispanics did not mirror the observed reality. Participants thought that language displays and Hispanic businesses were more commonplace than they really were. The same was true for Hispanic-oriented car decals. Upon reflection, I interpreted these discrepancies as normal. Any item that diverges greatly from the cultural norm of the majority population, regardless of magnitude, becomes influential in shaping their sense of an area. Such items make the majority feel like the Hispanic newcomers' impact is more widespread than it actually is.

When I started my research, I hypothesized that the theories of *otherness, language as power*, and *hybridity* all would help explain the rate and pattern of adaptations in Olathe. This proved to be true. Olatheans willingly made adaptations to help the Hispanic newcomers adjust to their community. By doing so they preserved their way of life regarding local laws and social norms. The concept of *otherness* was clearly involved here, although modified by altruism. Hybridity perhaps offers a better description of the process. For example, the presence of bilingual signage, Hispanic goods, and expressions of celebrations to Olathe's new social fabric all fit well with Homi Bhabha's (1994) explanation of how, when things that are different come together, they can produce acceptable "third spaces" that can embrace both the immigrant and the native alike.

I postulated that Hispanic newcomers would be the driver of change in Olathe and would hold significant power through the usage of Spanish. I was mistaken. As it turned out, in most cases, the majority population was exhibiting *language as power* by using Spanish in brochures, informational signs, and through interpreters to explain services, rules-of-the-land, and social

expectations. By doing so, they propelled the acculturation of Hispanic immigrants. This finding exemplifies Edward Said's idea that the majority [Olathe] can learn the other's language to give themselves power to control or guide the opposing group [i.e. Hispanic newcomers] (1975: 291).

In two instances cultural landscape and the *language-as-power* theoretical concept worked together to create scenarios where both the majority and the minority held power positions. First, perhaps unintentionally, Hispanic-owned or Hispanic-directed businesses with exclusive Spanish-language displays or verbal communications formed a space that was unwelcoming to English-only speakers. Here Hispanics hold the power. However, where the majority made use of bilingual material, signage, or interpreters, they assumed a measure of control, suggesting in almost all instances that they welcome the Hispanic newcomers.

Cultural differences regarding goods, language, gender roles, and social behavior repeatedly came up in my interviews.   These distinctions provided insight into how the host community saw the incoming group blending in and therefore an excellent way to assess *othering* in the city. My interviewees clearly identified Hispanic immigrants as the *other* based on differing appearance, language, residential locales, preferred goods, and social customs. At times this sense of *other* was seen in a positive light, in that it added depth, variety, and cultural awareness to what was previously a monolithic community. At other times, however, the newcomers were seen in a disparaging way. In a few neighborhoods, "white flight" occurred as a result of the majority's unhappiness regarding a perceived ethnic "invasion." However, it was more common for negative comments to occur "between friends" or to be made directly to people in leadership roles, such as a school principal, newspaper editor, or government official.

The use of the Spanish language was not the only way in which Olathe's majority population felt as though they were the *other*. Cultural landscape changes also played a role, especially Spanish-language signage and the presence of excessive concentrations of vehicles. In addition, my results suggest that cultural landscape displays of numerous satellite dishes in one locale, unkempt property, and sightings of work trucks or vans may be a source of *othering* for the majority. More research could be done to test these outcomes further.

The results of my study demonstrate the applicability of postcolonial theory beyond traditionally colonized areas to places affected by a rapid influx of a culturally and linguistically different population. In particular, my research shows how the themes language as power, hybridity, and otherness can help to explain how and when a majority population adapts to a newcomer group. My work also shows how these theories can help to identify positive community building in addition to their traditional role of explaining how one group dominates or suppresses another.

More specifically, my results expand the idea of how the *other* can be formed through unintended actions by a minority population and how having the *other* in a locale can actually be a beneficial contribution. My study adds to previous works showing just how powerful a disparate language can be for creating or tearing down spatial barriers. Finally, my findings confirm the longstanding theory that culture is ever changing. In order for a host community's culture to grow and flourish in the presence of a large immigrant population, the creation of third spaces (as illustrated in hybridity theory) is essential.

Despite all the changes and mixed feelings about the Hispanic newcomers, their presence did not impact the overall sense of safety for Olathe's mainstream residents. Interviewees mentioned safety as an issue only on occasion and then only in a vague way such as visibility of

a neighborhood at night, lower economic status, age of housing, number of multifamily units, and travel by oneself at night—especially for women. This fits with perceptions on how Hispanic immigrants were modifying Olathe. In general, an individual's personal experiences had more influence on their perceptions regarding immigrants rather than their proximity to the densely populated Hispanic newcomer areas. Differences in cultural landscape and seeing Hispanic people around also swayed an interviewee's ideas.

The upscale, mainstream people of southern Johnson County are acutely attuned to how a residential neighborhood is *supposed* to look. Given this fact, I was taken aback that interviewees did not perceive excessive number of vehicles and work trucks or vans to be significant ways in which Hispanics affected the cultural landscape. This was an obvious difference and easy to spot during my landscape analysis. The discrepancy could be caused by interviewees associating such agglomerations with blue-collar neighborhoods in general (as opposed to just Hispanic areas) or simply because the interviewees did not travel through such areas on a regular basis. In addition, I noticed during landscape analysis that most of Olathe's unkempt properties were usually occupied by lower-income, majority-Caucasian families.

I was able to determine at least some threshold values for when a minority presence starts to impact the host community. Smith and Furuseth (2004) suggested a value of fifteen percent, but when I started my study, I used a more conservative value of 5.5 percent for purposes of mapping. Upon the completion of data analysis, I found that, whereas some factors were independent of newcomer density, other research results changed abruptly where immigrant population values reached or exceeded 8 percent (Table 20). Being aware of such a threshold and its variations can perhaps help other communities that are experiencing a rapid rise in immigrant numbers to know what to expect and how to respond. Such action in turn should help

avoid cultural enclaves from occurring and assist the existing population in maintaining their own identity and observance of local laws.

Olathe presents an excellent demonstration of how the postcolonial themes of *language as power*, *hybridity* and *otherness* can be applied to a mainly monolithic, conservative community and how it acculturates a rapid growing Hispanic population to create an overall better space to live. This process can be a model for community leaders in other cities. When all groups feel like they belong to a single community, they will take better care of their neighborhoods.   Similarly, a strong sense of community can help to solve common problems related to political issues, transportation infrastructure, and environmental concerns. On a broader scale my Olathe results can perhaps aid in the ongoing discussion of immigration reform. Finally, by adding to the collective knowledge being accumulated on Hispanics in the United States, my study creates a more complete picture of this important group's impacts and contributions.

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Table 20: Hispanic immigrant identifiers and adaptation methods recognized as related to minority population percentage.

Observation or Reaction to Hispanic Immigrants	Only in > 8%[1]	Mainly in > 8% [2]	Occurs independent of density
CULTURAL DIFFERENCES OBSERVED			
Food and goods	1		
Gender roles		1	
Language	1		
Social behavior			1
OTHERING			
Othering is occurring		1	
Majority is *other* because they do not understand Spanish			1
Hispanic is *other* because they do not understand English		1	
Poor language skills makes both groups the *other*		1	
Othering due to derogatory remarks		1	
Othering due to dense Hispanic population		1	
Othering due to cultural differences		1	
Othering due to stereotyping	1		
Othering due to ignorance	1		
CULTURAL LANDSCAPES OBSERVED			
Excessive vehicles		1	
Car decals		1	
Work trucks/vans		1	
Spanish-language displays		1	
Hispanic-origin flags		1	
Hispanic-focused businesses		1	
Unkempt property[3]		1	
Satellite dishes			1
ADAPTATION METHOD			
Language Services			1
Education and Partnership			1
Adjustments to Hispanic Culture		1	
Special Service and Products		1	
Inclusion of Hispanic Traditions	1		

Source: Maggie Book's interviews July 31, 2008 - July 17, 2009.

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[1] Includes locations outside of study area surrounding Areas 1 and 2.
[2] Includes most people in Areas 1 & 2, and also others who have a strong association with Areas 1 and 2 either through work or general travel.
[3] Unkempt property may be equally dependent upon lower economic multi-family housing. More research needs to be done for definitive answer.

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Appendix 1

Example of a street network traveled in a census tract for cultural landscape analysis.

Appendix 2

Interviewee Information Letter

Dear Participant,

Thank you very much for being a part of my study. I greatly appreciate the time you are giving to do this.

This study is being conducted by me, Maggie Book, a PhD student at the University of Kansas, for my dissertation on how organization in Olathe are adapting to a large influx of Hispanic immigrants. I will look at the historical role of this minority group in Olathe; the perceptions and adaptations made by businesses, social-service organizations, health-care providers, churches, police and others that serve the community; and differences in the cultural landscape of areas with a significant Hispanic population versus those that are not. Instead of following the familiar part of focusing on adaptation of a minority population to the larger culture, my study reverses the perspective, emphasizing the acts and non-acts of community organizations and businesses.

You are receiving this letter because you have agreed to participate in a one-on-one interview. The interview will last approximately one hour and occur in a public place of your choosing. I will have one interview with you then ask then ask if it is ok to contact you again with further questions or for clarification. I will ask you a series of open ended questions and draw a map regarding your perceptions. Our conversations will be recorded with a digital audio recorder. If you are uncomfortable with that I will take notes by hand. Finally, at a later date when I have completed my research and analysis, you will have the option to review the portion of my dissertation that utilizes your interview.

The Department of Geography, the University of Kansas, and I are concerned with the protection of persons participating in research. Your participation is strictly voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time. Your name will not be used in research reports unless you have given prior approval. Unless otherwise agreed, every effort will be made to protect your identity. If you have any additional questions about your rights as a research participant, you may call (785) 864-7429 or write the Human Subjects Committee Lawrence Campus (HSCL), University of Kansas, 2385 Irving Hill Road, Lawrence, Kansas 66045-7563, email dhann@ku.edu.

If you have any questions about any aspect of this study, now or in the future, please feel free to contact me by *cell phone*: (123) 123-1234/*email*: maggie@dbookinc.com or my advisor, James "Pete" Shortridge, by *phone*: (785) 864-5539/*email*: shortrid@ku.edu.

Thank you!

Maggie Book

Appendix 3

Interview Questions

1. **Clientele & purpose of organization**
   a. Can you describe the purpose of your organization?
   b. What is your target audience?
2. **Get general feel for what they think about the area they work in**
   a. How long have you been involved in this community or worked here? In that time do you think the clientele or services have changed? If so how?
   b. How would you define the area you work in? What do you like or dislike about it?
   c. How do you characterize this area? Is there a phrase you would use to describe it?
3. **General perception of area or city and any mental boundaries they have created**
   a. Identify parts of town that have a lot of Hispanics or strong Hispanic influence.
   b. Why did you select these areas? Are there any visual indicators?
   c. Are there parts of town you don't go to? If yes, which and why?
   d. Are there parts of town you perceive as bad or unsafe? If so why?
   e. Do you think the part of town your business is in is safe?
   Note: Informants will be handed a map with Olathe city limits, major roads, and a various land marks to draw on.
4. **Discuss influx of Hispanics**
   Use if respondents think adaptation IS occurring:
   a. Do you think the influx of Hispanics has caused you to adjust your target audience?
   b. Do you have any positions that you require or prefer to speak Spanish? If so which ones?
   c. How many existing employees do you have that speak Spanish?
   d. Are there any programs or services that you offer explicitly for Hispanics? If so, what are they? How do you feel about them? What benefit do you think they provide?
   Use if respondents think adaptation is NOT occurring:
   e. Why do you think your organization has not made any adaptations to the increase in the Hispanic population?
   f. Do you know of any programs or services that are directed toward the Hispanic population by other businesses, organizations, or the city? If so, what are they? How do you feel about them?
   Use for either:
   g. Do you think the influx of Hispanics has impacted any parts of town? If so how?
   h. Do you think the influx of Hispanics has impacted any traditions that neighborhoods or city as a whole has? How do you feel about that?

Appendix 4

Oral-Consent Procedure

As a student in the University of Kansas's Department of Geography, I am conducting a research project about how Olathe is adapting to the Hispanic population. I would like to interview you to obtain your views on how you think the community, business, and or organizations are adapting. You have no obligation to participate and you may discontinue your involvement at any time.

Participation in the interview indicates your willingness to take part in this study and that you are at least 18 years old.

Please state yes or no to the following questions:
> Do you want your identity to be confidential?
> Do you want to review any portion of your interview or map you will draw that will get used in my dissertation?
> Can I contact you after this interview with further questions or for clarification of items we will discuss?

Should you have any questions about this project or your participation in it you may contact me by *cell phone*: (816) 769-2559/*email*: maggie@dbookinc.com or my faculty supervisor, James "Pete" Shortridge in the Department of Geography by *phone*: (785) 864-5539/*email*: shortrid@ku.edu.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may call the Human Subjects Protection Office at (785) 864-7429 or email dhann@ku.edu.