

Article

DELINQUENT CITIZENSHIP, NATIONAL PERFORMANCES: RACIALIZATION, SURVEILLANCE, AND THE POLITICS OF “WORTHINESS” IN PUERTO RICAN CHICAGO

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Abstract

Drawing from my ethnographic research on “national performances” in Puerto Rican Chicago, I examine the ways in which Puerto Rican residents of Humboldt Park are criminalized and rendered “terrorist.” The essay analyzes the production of a Puerto Rican US citizenship that is “delinquent” and approaches the status of “illegality” that has traditionally been imposed on other Latino (im)migrants. Puerto Ricans have tried to escape a stigmatized citizenship by consistently demonstrating their deservingness and deploying a politics of “worthiness” largely centered around involvement in the US military. The essay ultimately argues that constructions of “homeland security” are ideological and judicial projects of the US nation-state that not only unfold in an international arena but also configure domestic opportunities, power inequalities, and racial formations.

Keywords

citizenship; critical legal studies; Puerto Ricans; Chicago; popular education



Introduction

1 The names used throughout the text are pseudonyms, which have been changed even from those used in previous manuscripts and publications to further protect people's identities. Only when the name of the person or place has already appeared in local publications or in the media is the real name used (e.g. those of authors of locally published poems, names of community landmarks).

Alma Juncos,¹ an outgoing and energetic parent-volunteer whom I met in the corridors of Clemente high school in the Puerto Rican barrio of Chicago, once commented: "*Los nacionalistas son los únicos que se preocupan por los suyos. Si hay una comunidad aquí, es por ellos*" ["The nationalists are the only ones who care for their own people. If there's a community here, it's because of them"]. Alma was one of many Puerto Ricans who professed Chicago as the "Mecca of Puerto Rican nationalism." Based on Alma's characterization of the nationalists, one would never imagine that these Chicago barrio residents would be the same people implicated in cover-page newspaper scandals and deemed terrorists in the media throughout the late 1980s and 1990s (Blanchard, 1988; Cruz, 1995). The Chicago mainstream media and legal authorities accused the Puerto Rican "nationalists" of influencing the parents council of Roberto Clemente high school to spend funds in activities aimed at "indoctrinating" students into radical, anti-American politics that deserved FBI investigation (Cruz, 1995; Committee for Clemente Community Hearings, 1998). Why would a Latino barrio in the post-industrial US, otherwise marginalized from public discourse and politics, occupy center stage in accusations of terrorism and anti-Americanism? Moreover, how are these media- and State-generated characterizations of the barrio as "terrorist" and crime-ridden related to contemporary nation-state configurations of the so-called "homeland security" and the current state of civil rights and citizenship? More importantly, how are the performance of Puerto Rican nationalism and everyday experiences of US citizenship reflected in the development of grassroots educational initiatives in the barrio?

2 For a comprehensive methodological discussion of this ethnographic project, see Ramos-Zayas (2003).

3 The analytic framework of racialization emphasizes the ways that "race" or "racial difference" cannot be presumed to be based upon the "natural" characteristics of identifiable groups or the "biological" effects of ancestry, but rather comes to be actively produced as such,

Drawing from ethnographic research in Chicago in the mid-1990s, as well as from more current domestic and international developments,² I examine the processes by which Puerto Rican spaces become racialized in ways that effectively contribute to rendering Puerto Rican US citizenship delinquent.³ My main goal is to deconstruct the everyday processes by which the State targets Puerto Rican spaces, educational programs, and national performances in Chicago, so that Puerto Rican citizenship increasingly approaches a status of "illegality" equivalent to that produced by the State in relation to other Latino (and Asian) groups during the "war on terrorism."

In the brilliant examination of the conflictive views of citizenship in US history entitled *Civic Ideals* (1997), legal scholar Rogers Smith demonstrates that constitutional analyses of citizenship should not construe the US nation-state's "egalitarian strand" as its most authentic form. Instead, they must give full weight to the US's pervasive ideologies of ascriptive inequality – along with liberalism and democratic republicanism – and explain that each has been centrally constitutive, fundamental, and ideological components of American life (Smith, 1997: 30). Until recently, "illegality" and deportability were central

to a Latino experience of which Puerto Ricans – as US citizens – were not a part. Nevertheless, the ascriptive white supremacist core of civic identity in the US has effectively reduced the marginal value of Puerto Rican US citizenship (and the US citizenship of other racialized US-born populations) almost to a vanishing point as compared to “resident alien” status. As many of the community-initiated educational programs are considered bastions of “terrorism” and “anti-Americanism” in Chicago’s Humboldt Park, they are likewise subjected to the global penalties of clearly discriminatory measures that violate the civil rights of teacher-activists and youth alike.

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I first examine the history of radical politics and State surveillance in the neighborhoods comprising “Puerto Rican Chicago.” Humboldt Park has been historically targeted by surveillance units that have policed grassroots radicalism since the very formation of a geographically concentrated Puerto Rican area in Chicago in the 1960s. Secondly, I examine the concept of national performances – that is, the anti-colonial strategies of self-assertion for advancing civil rights demands and community formation – in relation to State productions of Puerto Rican “terrorists.” In particular, I consider how neighborhood-based educational programs, oftentimes ensconced in discourses critical of the US nation-state colonialist and imperialist foundation, are in fact produced as “terrorist” spaces. Moreover, I consider the US military recruitment of Puerto Rican poor and working class youth in Chicago in connection to the deployment of a politics of “worthiness,” according to which Puerto Ricans are asked to prove continuously their deservingness of US citizenship. Finally, I analyze the production of a delinquent citizenship through which Puerto Ricans, despite being nominal US citizens, actually approach the condition of “illegality” imposed on immigrant “aliens,” and are ultimately implicated in white supremacist constructions of “homeland security”

State surveillance and community formation in Puerto Rican Chicago

Only a few subway stops northwest of Downtown Chicago, the intersection of the two adjacent neighborhoods of West Town and Humboldt Park – with a third, Logan Square, further north along the same mass transit line – came to serve as a point of convergence and as the principal “port of entry” for Puerto Ricans migrating to Chicago in the 1960s. The stark White–Black racial segregation of residential patterns in much of the city was clearly one of the decisive motivations for Puerto Ricans to manifest such a forceful desire to establish their own distinct racialized enclave on the North Side. As early as 1965, police brutality in this growing barrio served as a flashpoint for community organizing, when two Puerto Ricans were arrested after police broke into their Division Street home and were then repeatedly subjected to group beatings in police custody. Then, again in June of 1966, immediately

and continually reproduced and transformed. “Race” is always entangled in social relations and conflicts, and retains an enduring (seemingly intractable) significance precisely because its forms and substantive meanings are always eminently historical and mutable (Omi and Winant, 1986: 64–66; Winant, 1994: 58–68; De Genova and Ramos-Zayas, 2003). With reference to Puerto Ricans, the concept of “culture” has been persistently deployed, historically, to account for poverty, marginality, and other “deficiencies” that might otherwise have been depicted in terms of shared “blood” (Lewis, 1965). Thus, the idea of “culture” has never been coherently or consistently separable from racialized notions of groups defined by their putative “biology.” By treating “Hispanic” as an “ethnic” designation, the US Census has encouraged Latinos to identify “racially” as white, or Black, or Native American – in short, as anything but Latino, while reserving “Hispanic” as an officially non-“racial” category. Nevertheless, this hegemonic “ethnic” distinction instituted by the US

state, which has also relied upon biological or phenotypic notions of racial categories, has been particularly instrumental for the allocation of affirmative action entitlements, deliberately constructing “Hispanics” as an effectively homogenized “minority” population analogous to African Americans. Thus, the “Hispanic” status of Latinos is widely treated as a racial condition all the same.

4 Only days before the riot, the Chicago Police Superintendent Orlando Wilson had ordered a special report on racial tensions in both the Puerto Rican and Mexican communities and the investigation had shown no signs whatsoever of unrest in either community (Padilla, 1987: 149).

following the first annual Puerto Rican Day Parade, police brutality touched off what has been called “the first Puerto Rican riot in the history of the United States” (Padilla, 1985: 46–50; 1987: 123–125, 144–155).⁴ The events, which lasted three days and nights, began when a white police officer shot and wounded a 20-year-old Puerto Rican man, Aracelis Cruz. This young man was alleged to be a gang member and the police claimed that they suspected him of having been armed. The outrage of the community was inflamed when the police unleashed trained dogs to disperse angry onlookers and a Puerto Rican bystander was bitten. Chicago Mayor Richard J. Daley publicly blamed the unrest on “unthinking and irresponsible individuals and gangs ... seeking a climate of violence and uncertainty” (Padilla, 1987: 150).

The Puerto Rican “riots” were a local expression of the more general climate of radical politics and racial militancy in Chicago during the 1960s. Chicago was the focus of national attention during the summer of 1966, when the city became the scene of civil rights marches against racial segregation in housing. The demonstrations culminated with the summit meeting of Martin Luther King Jr and the Chicago Freedom Movement, and were met with organized white hostility and violence and subsequent confrontations between African Americans and police in Black neighborhoods (Anderson and Pickering, 1986). The Puerto Rican community in West Town and Humboldt Park was still in its formative stages at the time, however, and thus, the 1966 events shaped the barrio’s destiny in significant ways. The 1966 riots were the first widely publicized collective action attributed to Puerto Ricans in Chicago. The racist stereotypes of criminality and violence had already been extended to the Chicago Puerto Rican community in 1960, when the *Saturday Evening Post*, a prominent national publication, ran a piece entitled “Crime Without Reason” (5 November 1960), with a yellow tag attached to newsstand copies that read “Racial Violence in Chicago.” The article told the story of two Puerto Ricans who allegedly murdered a man they had never met for the simple reason that he was Italian, thus identifying the source of “racial violence” in the irrational criminality attributed to Puerto Ricans. The same article depicted Chicago’s Puerto Ricans as “noisy” and “nervous,” living on the streets and sidewalks during the warm weather season, and having no social organizations or civic institutions other than taverns (Padilla, 1987: 61).

Regardless of whether or not most barrio residents had approved of, participated in, or condemned the riots, Humboldt Park immediately became an urban space definitively associated with Puerto Ricans, as both the people and the neighborhood became synonymous with civil rights unrest and conflict, and so were effectively criminalized. These galvanizing events served as a basis not only for the creation of specifically Puerto Rican-identified organizations but also for the consolidation a geographically based notion of Puerto Rican community that had been deferred for over 20 years by the group’s prior history of dispersal throughout the city. Already in the 1970s, within less than a decade,

the West Town–Humboldt Park barrio had come to be marked as the distinctively “Puerto Rican” section of Chicago, and boasted the largest Puerto Rican community in the Midwest.

Chicago’s Puerto Rican community is exceptionally distinguished for the historical prominence of its pro-independence and nationalist political radicalism.⁵ The recognition of Puerto Rico’s colonial reality and its manifestation in an incomplete and unequal citizenship whose parameters have been determined historically by white supremacy provided the ideological template on which anti-colonial nationalist politics developed in Puerto Rican Chicago. One manifestation of political insurgency in Chicago’s Puerto Rican community took the form of independent electoral campaigns that challenged the hegemony of Mayor Richard J. Daley’s Democratic Party machine.⁶ The Young Lords Organization in the 1960s and 1970s,⁷ and the Fuerzas Armadas para la Liberación Nacional (FALN) in the 1980s – both among the most nationally renowned and better documented embodiments of Puerto Rican political militancy in the US – were each first organized and remained centrally based in Chicago, and shaped much of the militant grassroots politics in the Puerto Rican barrio. The salience of this history of political radicalism and concomitant state repression, then, has been a particularly distinctive feature of community formation for Puerto Ricans in Chicago. This was especially true for the West Town–Humboldt Park neighborhood, which came to be criminalized not only as a result of its reputation of “riots” in the 1960s and 1970s but also because of allegations of “terrorism” thereafter.

Grassroots organizations in the Puerto Rican barrios since the late-1960s frequently articulated a level of political militancy that resulted in the intensive monitoring of Puerto Rican activists in Chicago by FBI, CIA, and Defense Department surveillance units (Anderson and Pickering, 1986; Padilla, 1987: 168–179). The late 1960s and the 1970s marked a period of intense counterinsurgency activity in Chicago that sowed confusion and suspicion within the community. Like Black militant organizations and some segments of the predominantly white New Left, many Chicago Puerto Rican activists – particularly those advocating Puerto Rico’s independence – have been beleaguered by the harassment and surveillance of federal agents and infiltrators from the 1970s to the present. Police files were maintained to record individual Puerto Rican barrio residents’ activism and “communist” or “un-American” tendencies in the most meticulous ways (Fernández, 1994; Padilla, 1987: 171–173).

The early 1980s found the Chicago Puerto Rican community at the center of political controversy on a national scale in the US as well as in Puerto Rico. The Fuerzas Armadas para la Liberación Nacional (FALN), a clandestine group advocating political independence for Puerto Rico, claimed responsibility for a series of bombings in US military facilities. A total of 15 Puerto Rican members of the group, 13 of whom were Chicago barrio residents, were eventually caught

5 I am in no way suggesting that the only Chicago Puerto Ricans have been subjected to state surveillance or have engaged in political radicalism. Puerto Ricans in other US cities – including Philadelphia and New York – and on the Island have also been targeted by State surveillance units (see, for instance, Fernández, 1987, 1994). However, in the Chicago Puerto Rican barrio radical politics have been deployed in efforts that transcend the initial militant logic of these politics, to also address issues of urban neglect affecting a heavily segregated neighborhood (see Massey and Denton, 1989). In this sense, and perhaps to a greater extent than in other largely Puerto Rican areas in the US that are less racially segregated or even on the Island of Puerto Rico, the everyday lives of barrio residents have been affected, to various degrees of intensity, by the initiatives of an openly nationalist faction that has deployed the 1950s

discourse of Puerto Rican nationalism to engage in issues of housing, education, commercial development, and other urban projects otherwise only tangentially related to radical politics.

6 In 1971, Graciano López became the first Puerto Rican to run for elected public office in Chicago when he made a bid for alderman of the city's 26th Ward in the heart of the West Town-Humboldt Park barrio (Padilla, 1987: 250n3). By 1975, three Puerto Rican independent Democrats ran against the Daley Democratic machine in a concerted campaign for the aldermanic seats for the 26th and 31st Wards (encompassing most of the Division Street barrio) as well as the 46th Ward in the Lakeview neighborhood, where the candidate was José "Cha-Cha" Jiménez. Jiménez had been one of the founders and a former leader of the Young Lords (Padilla, 1987: 196).

7 The Young Lords had begun as a street gang based in Chicago's Lincoln Park neighborhood that transformed itself in 1967 into a Puerto Rican youth organi-

and given lengthy sentences in the mid-1980s on charges of "seditious conspiracy to overthrow the US government." Due to the fact that the FALN political prisoners, prior to their incarceration, had participated in grassroots programs serving the Puerto Rican poor, many barrio residents and activists continued to associate grassroots activism with militant nationalism.⁸ At the peak of FALN military actions and FBI persecution (when most group members had already gone "underground"), Puerto Rican residents of Humboldt Park/West Town appeared divided. "Signs of 'FALN Welcomed Here' appeared on people's houses and cars," commented Ileana Díaz, a Puerto Rican woman in her thirties, who is the niece of one of the political prisoners and the ex-girlfriend of another. Other community members had agreed with the FBI and other government agents that the FALN members were "terrorists" that "gave all Puerto Ricans a bad name," as Jaime García, an active Statehood advocate remarked.

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, instances of FBI infiltration and surveillance in Humboldt Park contributed to the criminalization of the area most prominently racialized as "Puerto Rican." During the period of my fieldwork, at least three cases involving FBI intervention were documented in the media and supplied a recurring theme in many of the informal conversations I had with Puerto Rican barrio residents. In one of these instances, a teacher at one of the Puerto Rican alternative high schools where I volunteered was eventually revealed to be an FBI infiltrator who left the school unexpectedly and later testified against nationalist activists who were alleged to be "terrorists" involved in the local high school's school council (Oclander, 1995: 1). Likewise, the Humboldt Park Infant-Mortality Reduction Initiative (HIMRI), a community health center, was shut down for several weeks while the FBI subpoenaed the agency's files for no publicly stated reason (Espinosa, 1995: 4). Finally, in the summer of 1995, Roberto Clemente High School was also labeled a hotbed of "terrorist" activity in the mainstream news media, as teachers and administrators were required to hand over their records to FBI investigators (Oclander, 1995: 1). These instances exemplify some of the ways in which Humboldt Park has continued to be targeted by the FBI and other government surveillance units, contributing to its stigmatization not only as a "criminal" space of street gangs and drugs but also, and not entirely unrelated, as one of "anti-Americanism" and "terrorist" conspiracies.

Racialized spaces, national performances

In Chicago, one of the most racially segregated cities in the US,⁹ ubiquitous distinctions about "neighborhoods" are virtually inseparable from their overt or submerged racial and also class-inflected meanings, and so have a pronounced importance for struggles over identity formation (Bowden and Kreinberg, 1981). The politics of space is necessarily implicated in racialization processes,

and likewise, the politics of race plays out in remarkably spatialized terms in Chicago. Space has been conventionally presupposed as a naturalized and self-evident “context” for social relations. Rather than a mere background, however, space can be usefully understood as a social relation in itself (Williams and Smith, 1983). As Henri Lefebvre points out with specific regard to the city and the urban sphere, space may be “the setting of struggle,” but it is not only this; it is also “the stakes of that struggle” (Lefebvre, 1991[1974]: 386). Indeed, struggles over social space and the differences they produce are inseparable from more general conflicts over inequalities of power and wealth (De Genova and Ramos-Zayas, 2003). Far from neutral frames of reference for points on the map, the mere mention of “Humboldt Park” signaled to Chicagoans of any racialized group a particularly stigmatized image of “Puerto Rican”-ness, associated with criminality, poverty, and “welfare dependency” – even in spite of the fact that by the year 2000, Puerto Ricans had become a minority within that geographical area.¹⁰

As the symbolic and physical boundaries of the historically segregated Puerto Rican neighborhood are blurred by urban displacement and a growing number of Mexicans, Central Americans, African Americans, and Whites re-inscribing sections of Humboldt Park, West Town, and Logan Square with distinctive meanings, official symbols and narratives of the Puerto Rican nation are evoked to re-appropriate or, at least, mark physical and social spaces (Ramos-Zayas, 2001). Thus, paradoxically, as Puerto Ricans move out of the area traditionally regarded as “the Puerto Rican community,” increasing attention is drawn to the two Puerto Rican flags of steel that mark the commercial section of Division Street. The Paseo Boricua, as the commercial strip of Puerto Rican Chicago is popularly called, becomes analogous to the national territory, the Puerto Rican nation, the area where the “real” Puerto Ricans live.

The negotiations involved in the processes of creating marked urban spaces suggest ways in which nationalism becomes performative. I deliberately emphasize the aspect of *performance* to foreground the existence of various rehearsals – strategies that are tried and rejected or embraced – in the constructions of the nation in so-called diasporic communities, while understanding that these rehearsals are taking place in the public eye, in front of an audience (Ramos-Zayas, 2003). Puerto Rican nationalism in Chicago was a performance in progress, not a final product, but a relational and consistently reconfigured expose of the politics of race, class, space, and citizenship on a population frequently represented as apathetic, pathological, crime-ridden, and anti-American. In this sense, an understanding of nationalism developed in the act of performing it, since the act of “doing” a social category is what constitutes it as real (Butler, 1999).

These national performances were particularly prominent in the production of critical pedagogy programs in el barrio. Educational programs like the Clemente High School’s parent school council referenced in the introduction to

zation comprising second-generation Puerto Ricans who had been inspired by the Black Panthers (Browning, 1973: 25; Padilla, 1987: 120–123).

8 Since these individuals had been re-named community activists prior to their arrests, various sectors of the community – not only those self-identified as *nacionalistas* or advocates of Puerto Rican independence – devoted considerable energy and resources to their release. In the September of 1999, most of these prisoners were given presidential pardon. In Chicago, nationalist activists recognized the prisoners’ release as a bittersweet victory after fifteen years of amnesty campaigns. The victory was bittersweet, not only because the release had not been unconditional (the release was criminalized, rather than a recognition of the purely political character of the charges) but also because two of the most revered prisoners were not considered for presidential pardon. The two prisoners who remained in jail, considered the “masterminds” of the FALN, were the brothers of a

renowned Chicago activist and the sons of the reverend of a local church. For various accounts of the individual or collective motivations that led to the creation of the FALN, see Fernández (1994); Zwerman (1994, 1995).

9 Chicago ranked 1st for Latino/Asian segregation, tied for 1st for Black/Asian segregation, 3rd for Black/Latino segregation, 5th for white/Black segregation, 6th for white/Latino segregation, and 18th for white/Asian segregation, according to measures of residential dissimilarity scores in US cities, calculated from the 2000 Census by researchers at the Lewis Mumford Center for Comparative Urban and Regional Research at the State University of New York at Albany (Hirsch, 1983; Squires, 1987; Harrigan and Vogel, 2000).

10 For a more elaborate discussion of the racialization of space in Humboldt Park, as well as an examination of the relationship between Puerto Rican residential “displacement” and a correspondent increase in Puerto Rican national symbols, see Ramos-Zayas’

this essay and the Puerto Rican-centric Pedro Albizu Campos alternative high school served as vehicles to mark and reassert “Puerto Rican”-ness. Through the formulation of a grassroots historiography premised on a critical understanding of the political economic contexts of the *barrio* in relation to broader systems of state power and surveillance, *barrio* residents and activists attempted to exert a degree of agency and claimed a social space. These processes of self-affirmation are evocative of what Renato Rosaldo termed “cultural citizenship;” that is, the creation of a range of social practices designated to attend to subordinate aspirations for and definitions of enfranchisement (Rosaldo, 1997).¹¹ Notwithstanding these instances of self-assertion and resistance among subordinate and marginalized populations in Humboldt Park, however, the power of state surveillance remained an everyday feature of life in Puerto Rican Chicago.

The Pedro Albizu Campos High School, a high school conceived and developed by nationalist activists in Humboldt Park and West Town is an example of the critical pedagogy on which nationalism was performed (Ramos-Zayas, 1997, 1998). In May of 1995, sitting informally with students on the floor of the high school’s main area, Amarilis Martínez, a teacher-activist, explained how in the mid-1980s the Council for American Private Education and the US Department of Education selected Albizu Campos High School as one of the exemplary schools of the year. Shortly after the school was notified that it had been selected for the award, a local TV newscast ran a three-day series interspersing shots of the high school with images of the trials of FALN members, suggesting that the school was a poor choice for the award because of its controversial politics. When the series aired, the award was temporarily withheld. Eventually, the award was reinstated just to be rescinded again a few hours prior to the graduation ceremony where it was going to be celebrated. Believing that they did deserve an award for educational excellence, PACHS teachers and students inscribed their own plaque and placed it at the entrance to the high school.

During the 17 months of my fieldwork, the PACHS staff and students frequently discussed the high school’s turbulent history, including the time when the FBI raided the high school building while its founders were being apprehended. As an interviewee recalled, “In 1983 the FBI raided the building. They caused a lot of damage. We thought we’d have to close down, but the community helped out in rebuilding the place. In the first day alone, we collected \$3,000 through fundraising. Eventually, we raised \$15,000 among the people of West Town.” The school and the cultural center that housed the school were listed as sites to be searched for terrorist activity. Long thereafter, this description colored the community’s perception of the building, even though area residents continued to participate in formal and informal pedagogical spaces like the high school, adult literacy programs, and HIV-prevention health clinic. The Excellence in Teaching Award incident and the FBI raid served as metahistories. These narratives and the numerous public

demonstrations in which students, parents, and teachers engaged, created unique pedagogical spaces connected to processes of community formation that relied on the performance of Puerto Rican nationalism. Indeed, for Humboldt Park residents, PACHS and the cultural center acted as leading examples of how nationalism was performed and continuously rearticulated in the context of popular education programs.¹²

Puerto Rican nationalism must be understood as a series of highly contested performative processes in which both Chicago Puerto Ricans and the State are implicated, and which formulate and recast ideas of inclusion and exclusion based on racial formations resulting from normative, white-supremacist definitions of belongingness in the US nation-state.¹³ On the part of Puerto Ricans, these nationalist performances rely on highlighting the status of Puerto Ricans as “US citizens” while racializing Latinos of other nationalities – particularly the large Mexican and Central American populations – as “illegal,” irrespective of actual legal status (De Geneva and Ramos-Zayas, 2003). Hence, Puerto Rican national performances in Chicago rely on the deployment of a “citizenship identity” in contradistinction to a presupposed Mexican “illegality.” Moreover, these national performances serve as defensive self-racialization in response to the State’s historical criminalization of Puerto Ricans and “Puerto Rican” spaces in Chicago (Ramos-Zayas, 2003). More significantly, in the context of the current “war on terror”, Puerto Rican US citizenship has been further devalued to a status that approaches the “illegality” of Mexicans in Chicago and other Latino undocumented migrants in the US. As the State continues to construct Chicago Puerto Ricans as “terrorists” and “criminals” – slippery terms that are oftentimes deployed interchangeably in reference to the social space of Chicago’s “Humboldt Park” – the most vulnerable sectors of Puerto Rican Chicago further insist on proving their “worthiness” of being US citizens by performing a Puerto Rican nationalism. These national performances are both consistent with and actually *dependent on* emphasizing one’s role in the increasing militarization of the US nation-state. Joining the military or having served in the military are examples of the *politics of worthiness* among Chicago Puerto Ricans.¹⁴

US military identities and the politics of “worthiness”

A principal hesitation to granting citizenship to Puerto Ricans in the years following the US invasion of Puerto Rico in 1898 was the objectionable “racial composition” of the population in the newly acquired territory. Although the Jones Act granting US citizenship to Puerto Ricans was ultimately enacted, in 1917, it was never intended to be a grant of *full* citizenship as other non-Puerto Rican United States citizens know it. As Senator Foraker first introduced the possibility of granting Puerto Ricans citizenship in the 1900s, he described such federal citizenship not as an acknowledgement of the individual rights they

National Performances: The Politics of Class, Race, and Space in Puerto Rican Chicago (2003).

11 The concept of “cultural citizenship” incites scholars to anchor their studies in the subjectivities and aspirations of subordinate agents, rather than focusing on systems of domination alone. Thus, notions of “cultural citizenship” formulate an equivalency between cultural production designed to seek respect among Latinos and a demand to full-citizenship rights that Latino populations emphasize through a discourse of the “right to have rights” in the US. For an ethnographic examination of “cultural citizenship” and popular education, see the remarkable work of Rina Benmayor, Rosa M. Torruellas, and Ana L. Juarbe (1997). For more elaborate analyses of the subjectivities and discursive strategies of subaltern groups, see also Stuart Hall and David Held (1990) and James Scott (1985).

12 Nationalist narratives, educational projects, and iconography, including the multivalent representations of nationalist

leader Pedro Albizu Campos, which most literature on nationalism consider attempts to mute divisions within the nation, have a more mediated effect in Chicago: They are oftentimes responsible for generating spaces of contention and denunciations of internal subordination along race, class, and gender lines, as well as issues of cultural “purity” and “authenticity,” between “nationals” on the Island and “migrants” in the United States and between the Puerto Rican poor in *el barrio* and the “professionals” in the suburbs. This paradigmatic proposition is critical to understand the intricacies and areas of contention underlying the performance of nationalism in Chicago. For a more comprehensive discussion, see Ramos-Zayas (2003).

13 It is important to note that the problem of who does or does not deserve citizenship and belongs in the hegemony of whiteness dates back to the origins of the US and is not specific to the case of Puerto Ricans. The specific issues raised here, or racialized national “substance” enacted

might have but rather as recognition “that Puerto Rico belonged to the United States of America” (Perea, 2001: 161).¹⁵ These congressional discussions in the 1900s eventually rendered the US citizenship of Puerto Ricans born on the Island as “legislative,” and that of US-born Puerto Ricans as “constitutional.” Nevertheless, even when the citizenship of US-born Puerto Ricans is “constitutional,” and hence not as easily revocable as the “legislative” citizenship of Islanders could be, the translocal nexus on which all Puerto Ricans are implicated and the perpetual racialization of Puerto Ricans as “nonwhite” in a white supremacist nation-state, contribute to a more problematic inclusion of US-born Puerto Ricans into US citizenship.¹⁶

The racialization of Puerto Ricans by the institution of US citizenship has been a historical process of constructing Chicago Puerto Ricans as the “enemies of the State,” as “anti-American,” and, more significantly, as “terrorists.” In fact, the US citizenship of Puerto Ricans has become a *delinquent* citizenship, characterized as “illegal” and marginal. References ranging from the civil disobedience of the Chicago-born Young Lords in the 1970s to the FALN incarcerations of the 1980s and the media hype about anti-American student “indoctrination” at Clemente public high school throughout the 1990s are deployed and disseminated to locate securely these nominal US citizens in culturally and politically bounded rubrics, outside the parameters of the imagined “American nation.”

Various State surveillance practices – from COINTELPRO in the 1970s and 1980s to the FBI referenced in this paper’s introduction – have characterized life in Puerto Rican Chicago, as the legitimized subordination of a racialized population to a heavy-handed State.¹⁷ Public media representations become powerful disciplining strategies of the State, as they aim to compartmentalize Puerto Ricans into those who are “deserving” American citizens – namely, those invested in proving their worthiness with their upward mobility, aspirations, and accomplishments – and the ones who are “criminals,” and deemed “undeserving” of claiming full-citizenship rights (Ramos-Zayas, 1997, 2003).

Perhaps one of the most poignant results of the devaluation of the US citizenship of Puerto Ricans on the Island and Mainland alike is what I refer in this essay as the “politics of worthiness”; that is, the tacit and explicit insistence that Puerto Ricans in general, and the Puerto Rican poor in particular, must *prove their deservingness of US citizenship* in order to be legitimately entitled to civil rights and social benefits that other – particularly white male – populations can assume as inalienable. Puerto Ricans are certainly not the only ones drawn into these politics of worthiness, as the cases of previous migrants from Europe (and Asia) and contemporary migrants from Latin America suggest.¹⁸

Puerto Ricans do not engage in these politics of worthiness as a way of *seeking* US citizenship, which they nominally have, but rather as a way of circumventing their own racialization and even deploying a self-defensive re-racialization. By painfully demonstrating their deservingness of the benefits of

full-citizenship otherwise only enjoyed, constitutionally, by whites under white supremacy, Puerto Ricans also challenge facile associations between the US citizenship of Puerto Ricans and “unearned” welfare benefits.

Proving one’s worthiness consists of first accepting the very racialization of all Puerto Ricans as “lazy,” welfare “dependent,” apathetic, “crime-prone” and then, making sure one positions oneself, as an individual, outside these culture of poverty arguments by following prescriptive rules of patriotism, social mobility, and national acceptability. Hence, Puerto Ricans are called to demonstrate how one is not “like other Puerto Ricans.” Dominant racialization of Puerto Ricans and the production of Puerto Rican “illegality” and “criminality” can never be effectively or radically challenged if one’s individual intent is to secure a place within the parameters of “citizenship.” Indeed, this politics of worthiness castigates critical pedagogical projects directed at uncovering the white supremacist processes by which Puerto Ricans are racially marked by the US nation-state, which was a central component of educational programs like the Clemente High School’s local council or the PACHS. In fact, the fundamental rejection of radical politics simultaneously validates liberal, “self-help” processes that exalt individual “values,” “hard work,” and “moral character.”

In the conversations I have had with Chicago Puerto Ricans in the months following September 11 and the US invasion on Iraq, the politics of worthiness has surfaced prominently in narratives of decisions concerning educational and employment opportunities and involvement in the US military among Puerto Rican youth, their parents, and their teachers. In the March of 2003, I spoke with Carmen Rivera, a former parent-volunteer at Clemente High School and resident of Humboldt Park. Carmen’s 19-year-old son, Eladio, was about to graduate from Clemente High School and was trying to decide between attending culinary school to become a chef and going into the military. Carmen described Eladio’s quandary:

Eladio cooks really good. He tells me ‘Mami, you know that I can cook better than you!’ And it’s true [she laughed] He could have his own restaurant or catering business someday. But, his grandfather tells him ‘Join the army, join the army. You need to become a man and take on responsibility. I’m a proud army veteran. I haven’t been given anything for free.’ His grandfather always talks about being in the army, you know? The army recruiter has called Eladio home many times... They [the recruiters] go to the school, you know, and tell them that they pay for their education and they can do both, go to school and be in the military at the same time. Or that’s what they say, you know. And [Eladio] tells me ‘Mami, I’m not gonna end up like those losers at school who get killed in gang [activities] or go on welfare. I’m gonna make something out of myself! But I’m very scared about letting him go... because now is not like they go to training and that’s it. Now they really get sent to war right away.

in trouble-making, surfaced in the mid-1800s. Hence, the criminalization that is attributed to Puerto Ricans was also projected onto the Irish, Italians, Jews, and other European immigrants in previous centuries. However, what makes the Puerto Rican case unique is, of course, that Puerto Ricans had the US citizenship imposed upon them.

14 Another example of this politics of worthiness includes the multiple instances of civic engagement in volunteer organizations among Puerto Rican barrio residents in Chicago, particularly those residents who were unemployed. Even when unemployed barrio residents did not get monetary compensation for their volunteer work at not-for-profit agencies, for instance, they were able to construct a self-image as productive citizens, rather than subscribing to images of “welfare dependent” or “lazy” imposed on them (see also Benmayor et al (1997) for a comparable discussion of El Barrio Educational Project in New York’s Spanish Harlem).

15 In the so-called *Insular Cases* of the 1900s, the Supreme

Court held that Puerto Rico and the other new insular territories were not “foreign territory,” but it also held that they were not “a part of the United States” for all constitutional purposes (Cabranes, 1979, 2001: 43). In fact, as Marvette Pérez (2002b) demonstrates in an analysis of the 1990s US congressional hearings surrounding the issues of Puerto Rico’s political self-determination, the question of whether Puerto Ricans (born in Puerto Rico) are protected, like Americans born within the 50 states, under the 14th Amendment of the Constitution has brought forth the distinction between a citizenship resulting from legislation versus a citizenship conferred constitutionally. On a memo from the Congressional Research Services (Killian, 1989), it is stated that the US citizenship of Puerto Ricans (born in Puerto Rico) was not granted under the 14th Amendment, but rather was given legislatively under the Jones Act of 1917 and, therefore, the US Congress has the power to revoke the US citizenship of these Puerto Ricans. In a personal conver-

The masculinist discourse of being “toughened up” by the military, perhaps also a homophobic reaction against men in traditionally “female” fields, like cooking, are evident in the grandfather’s remark. However, what is specifically noteworthy is Carmen’s emphasis on her son’s insistence that he would not end up “killed in gang [activities]” or “on welfare.” In Carmen’s quote, joining the military is viewed not only as a way of “becoming a man,” as the grandfather allegedly stated, but also as a way of demonstrating one’s true “worthiness” by avoiding presumably the only other options for Puerto Rican youth, namely, street crime and violence or being welfare “dependent.”

Carmen’s narrative is particularly telling of the ways in which allegations of “criminality” and welfare – “abuse” articulated against Puerto Ricans in Chicago become a disciplining mechanism of the State. The poor and working class residents of Humboldt Park are used by the State to discipline one against the other, always at pains to demonstrate to the “real Americans” – namely, those “real” citizens enjoying the real benefits of their whiteness – that they are hard-working not lazy, that they are, indeed, deserving of membership into the nation, and that their citizenship has not come for free. Carmen’s interpretation of Eladio’s words demonstrates the paradox of the poor and working class residents of Humboldt Park: These residents’ attempt to separate themselves from the stereotype of the criminal is achieved by using the same strategies against one’s neighbors that have been used against oneself. As a consequence, the category of the criminal and its repertoire of prejudices and derogations are rarely contested, but is rather continuously legitimated and prejudices and stereotypes against poor people are re-enacted on a daily basis. This differentiation was not only a matter of citizenship status but also of belonging to the “proper” social space or to the improper space of crime (Caldeira, 2000).

It is imperative to note that serving in the US military and other symbols of US nationalism are not always explicit attempts at securing one’s inclusion into the US nation-state. Many, if not most, of the Puerto Rican poor and working-class men and women who enroll in the military admit to having been seduced by the employment and educational offers of persistent recruitment personnel, who presented the army as their only likely road to financial security, pursuing higher education, or giving “structure” to their lives (Pérez, 2002a). As Gina Pérez argues, many of the young Puerto Rican women who enter JROTC programs are motivated by economic hardship as well as encouraged by parents who see the military as a way for their daughters to gain independence, gender equality, and even avoid abusive relationships or unwanted pregnancies. Indeed, precisely by targeting the most disenfranchised neighborhoods, the US military recruitment offices first contribute to the criminalization of the social spaces in which they are located, and then act as paternalistic “saviors” of these very communities. In the case of working-class Puerto Rican youth like Eladio, the military legitimates one’s citizenship, not because it represents service to the nation-state in an international context, but because it serves as a route to de-

racialize oneself – to prove that one is disciplined not “lazy,” productive not a “parasite of the system,” law-abiding not “criminal.” Military service becomes the ultimate willingness both to “die for one’s country,” as well as to strive continuously to reposition oneself within the acceptable parameters of whiteness in the domestic political economy of the US nation-state – that is, indeed, to be “An Army of One.”¹⁹

The US military becomes a *de facto* substitute for weeding out the “unworthy” US citizens in a way that the effectively dismantled and purportedly “abused” welfare system presumably was unable to do.²⁰ A major problem with this condition is that the top-down dispensation of “worthiness” for the poor increasingly means joining the military as the only route to securing citizenship rights and social benefits. Even more problematic is that the US army investment in targeted recruitment of poor and working class populations unfolds largely at the expense of severe budget cuts in areas that have traditionally been considered “mobility roads” for some, namely, higher education. Nowhere have these tendencies of increased military investment coupled by significant educational budget cuts been more severe than in racialized neighborhoods like Humboldt Park. It is not a coincidence that Chicago public schools lead the nation in the number of public school military programs, with close to 10,000 students participating in either full-time military academies or military programs within regular high schools, such as the JROTC, mostly targeting the poorest populations in the city (G. Pérez, November 2002a). The Pentagon’s strategy of increasing the military recruitment of young men and women, particularly in racialized populations, from very early on in their educational careers is evidenced by the expected increase in funding aimed to expand the JROTC program from its current \$215 million in 2001 to a projected \$326 million by 2004 (Pérez, 2002a).

Puerto Ricans challenge the stereotypes of “parasites of the system,” often imposed on them by the dominant culture and other Latinos alike, by emphasizing duties that, as citizens, they have historically paid to the American nation, thus having to prove to the State and to fellow Latinos their degree of worthiness. The talk of crime in reference to the Humboldt Park area deals not with detailed description of criminals, but with a set of simplistic categories: a few essentialist images oftentimes involving youth, particularly young men, and opportunism, especially in images of the “welfare mother,” which eliminate the ambiguities and categorical mixtures of everyday life and gain currency at moments of social change.

In Chicago, State surveillance units along with increasing military recruitment programs continue to engage in punitive measures against the incorporation of nationalist activists into political citizenship through pedagogical projects like the PACHS and Clemente Local School Council of the late 1990s. Such pedagogical projects have historically assumed radical postures that are critical of US policies. They illuminate the invariable ways in which US patriotism is

sation with Pérez, she mentioned, anecdotally, that many Puerto Ricans attending the hearings, upon becoming aware of their “lesser” form of US citizenship, had inquired about the possibility of seeking naturalization.

16 Throughout this piece, the concept of “whiteness” signals a combined system of privilege that retains its power by appearing as an unspoken racial “norm,” an unmarked set of dominant assumptions that persist despite official “diversity” and “multiculturalist” rhetoric in the US. The privilege of whiteness is sustained precisely through its “invisibility” reflected in mainstream notions of order, duty, submission to the nation-state, and ideologies of class mobility, as further transmitted by the public education system, for instance. Because these are key elements that, ideologically speaking, anyone can acquire if they try hard enough, white supremacy in the late 20th and early 21st century places a burden on the individual to make an effort of belongingness that was not required a century ago. As George Lipsitz (1998)

has argued, the “pos-
sitive investment in
whiteness,” or what
white people gain
from their whiteness,
is not a simple matter
of black and white;
all racialized minority
groups have suffered
from it, albeit to dif-
ferent degrees and in
different ways.

Moreover, the power
of whiteness depends
not only on white
hegemony over sepa-
rate racialized groups
but also on manipu-
lating racial outsiders
to fight against one
another, to compete
with each other for
white approval and
the benefits of white-
ness. For a more ex-
tended discussion of
“whiteness,” see the
seminal works of Bell
Hooks, Ruth Fran-
kenberg, Noel Ignia-
tev, George Lipsitz,
Toni Morrison, and
David Roediger.

17 An extensive dis-
cussion of the numer-
ous interventions by
the FBI, CIA, and
other domestic sur-
veillance units (e.g.
COINTELPRO) into
Puerto Rican political
groups in the US and
on the Island is be-
yond the scope of this
paper. For a historical
account of such sur-
veillance, see Ronald
Fernández’s works on
“los macheteros”
(1987) and the FALN
prisoners (1994), as
well as José Cruz’s

unequivocally and unmarkedly white, under the ideological guise of its capacity to “assimilate” racialized groups into an elastic and easily tractable workforce consisting of people with “good immigrant values.” Ironically, the “good immigrant values” attributed to other Latinos, and which are a euphemism for enforcing docility and subordination, actually render these “illegal” Latinos as better citizen-subjects than Puerto Ricans are themselves.

The Puerto Rican Taliban: delinquent citizenship and “homeland security,”

The USA Patriot Act of 2002, as well as the Domestic Security Enhancement Act (SDEA) under consideration by the Supreme Court, are clear examples of the ways in which Puerto Ricans, and particularly the localized, pedagogical expressions of citizenship rights and national performances, such as those noted among Chicago nationalist activists and teachers, have rapidly approached the status of “alien” not too different from that of “illegal immigrants.” Puerto Rican US citizenship effectively becomes a delinquent citizenship, a citizenship that approaches the purported “illegality” of other undocumented Latino “aliens.” Whereas the “Patriot Act” renders traitor anyone who challenges its sweeping new powers of surveillance, detention, and prosecution, the Domestic Security Enhancement Act (DSEA) provides that any citizen, even native-born, who supports even the lawful activities of an organization that the executive branch deems “terrorist” is presumptively stripped of his or her citizenship (Cole, 2003). As David Cole notes, “To date, the ‘war on terrorism’ has largely been directed at non-citizens...but the DSEA would actually turn citizens associated with ‘terrorist’ groups into aliens.” These targeted citizens would be subject to deportation, and the Attorney General would possess the authority to deport any non-citizen whose presence he deems a threat to the US “national defense, foreign policy or economic interests” (quoted in Cole, 2003). One federal court of appeals has already ruled that this standard is not susceptible to judicial review. Hence, the provision would give the Attorney General unreviewable authority to deport any non-citizen, without having to prove that the person has engaged in any criminal or harmful conduct. Other provisions are similarly designed to further insulate the “war on terrorism” from public and judicial scrutiny.²¹

Not unlike the so-called “illegal aliens,” Puerto Ricans are susceptible to accusations of illegality that oftentimes span the gray area between media-produced (and officially sanctioned) images of barrio-grown criminality and the US imperialist investment in configuring racist understandings of international “terrorism.” These accusations further incite many Puerto Ricans, particularly the Puerto Rican poor, to prove retroactively their deservingness of a US citizenship imposed on them in 1917.

The Puerto Rican case may perhaps serve as a “blue print” for other Latinos who “successfully” navigate the “legalization” process in the US only to gain access to a lesser form of social and legal existence.

In the May of 2002, a reporter from a nationally renowned US news magazine called to ask me about José Padilla, otherwise known as Abdullah al-Muhajir, the so-called “Puerto Rican Taliban.” A 31-year-old US citizen, Padilla had been arrested at O’Hare Airport in Chicago for allegedly plotting a bomb attack and having links to the Al Qaeda terrorist network. The reporter had read a few articles I had written about a popular education program directed by Puerto Rican nationalist activists in Chicago and she wanted to know if I thought the reason why José Padilla was “so angry at the United States” had to do with his experience as “the son of a single mother, growing up in Chicago’s Logan Square and being influenced by the barrio’s nationalist activism and gang involvement.” In this well-intentioned reporter’s view, Padilla’s involvement with the Taliban was almost explained away by his Puerto Ricanness, in general, and his *Chicago* Puerto Ricanness in particular. More significantly, however, was the reporter’s view of Padilla’s involvement with the Taliban as a natural progression stemming from his “un-American” citizenship and from growing up in a social space that does not quite “exist” within the boundaries of how the US is imagined as perpetually prosperous and white. This of course is in stark contrast to how John Walker, the so-called “American Taliban,” was portrayed: an unexplainable aberration, an exception to the otherwise normative whiteness emphatically represented in images of his upper-middle class professional suburban upbringing. In drawing these distinctions, not only is citizenship naturalized to mean whiteness but also citizenship rights are dispensed accordingly so that John Walker’s judicial and human rights take precedence over the rights of José Padilla, who has remained untried and, for many months following his arrest, almost invisible from mainstream US political discourse. Not long after his fateful flight from Pakistan to O’Hare, Padilla basically disappeared from public view. A few weeks after his arrest, the federal government transferred Padilla to a military prison off the coast of South Carolina, precluding him from any form of contact either with his family or his lawyer.

Distinctions to determine degrees of “Americanness” and of entitlement within US society reinstate whiteness as the definition of the “real American” and as the dominant reference against which racialized Others are securely kept outside the purview of US culture and citizenship. The criminalization of Puerto Rican spaces in Chicago is part of a fundamental logic by which US citizenship serves as a racializing institution that promotes a moral economy of inequality on which concepts like “Homeland Security” and “USA Patriot”²² – and the gradations of belongingness implicated in them – are legitimately deployed to establish that only subjects who conform to normative racial privilege (e.g. whiteness) are truly part of the nation. The everyday educational programs of Puerto Rican nationalist activists, and the poor barrio residents and youth

(1998) volume on Puerto Rican politics in the US.

18 Particularly instructive here is Susan Bibler Coutin’s (2003) examination of the legal transcripts of suspension of deportation hearings, and how Salvadoran detainees are asked to prove their “Americanness” in order to avoid deportation. Coutin shows how the Salvadorans perceived to be eligible for amnesty tended to be written about as hard-working, church-going individuals, often with families, whereas those deemed ineligible were portrayed as problematic and possible troublemakers. See also Haney López (1996) and Ong (1999).

19 The most current recruitment campaign of “An Army of One,” – not unlike the previous one of “Be All That You Can Be” – cannot be more blatantly invested in the reinsertion of the US military as the only acceptable venue toward “whiteness” available for the “deserving” members of otherwise pathologized communities (US Army, January, 2002). The evident suggestion is that, in order to avoid the criminality, welfare

“abuse,” “single motherhood,” and other forms of “illegality” viewed as endemic to their corrupt neighborhood, young men and women from poor and working class backgrounds would need to be redeemed (and “reprogrammed,” to use the word of an army recruitment in Newark) by the US military.

20 More recently, the US military has also become involved in dispensing citizenship status, previously the realm of the INS, to young migrants from Latin American countries who have been casualties of the war on Iraq. The notorious case of Guatemalan José Gutiérrez, who was granted US citizenship posthumously, after being a casualty of the U.S. invasion of Iraq, is the most renowned case (see, for instance, Fergal Keane’s “Guatemalan Orphan to War Hero” British Broadcasting Network News, UK Edition, April 7, 2003). As Arturo Souza, a Brazilian high school student in Newark, told me in the weeks following the dispensation of the Guatemalan man’s citizenship: “Sometimes I think of joining the army so I can

involved in these programs, are truncated as un-American, terrorist activities used as evidence to legitimate the very criminalization to which Puerto Rican citizenship is subjected. Rather than a unifying US citizenship, we must consider the existence of multiple and inherently unequal citizenships. Unequal “citizenships” are produced in discursive and substantive practice that legitimize the subordination of Chicago Puerto Ricans by criminalizing the social space of “el barrio,” as well as any critical pedagogical initiative aimed at challenging the US foundational mythologies of “equality,” “mobility,” and the American Dream. Contemporary policy around “homeland security” and anti-“terrorism” are nation-state projects that not only unfold on an international arena but also configure domestic, educational policies and discourses of criminality that invariably produce unequal citizen-subjects in everyday life. With regard to Puerto Ricans and other “native minorities,” the US citizenship serves as a white supremacist institution that renders the rights of some citizen-subjects as birthrights, while requiring others to prove their worthiness. As demonstrated in the production of the Puerto Rican “terrorists” in the critical educational programs in Humboldt Park, the politics of worthiness condemn any form of engagement in radical programs that are critical of the US nation-state.

The performance of Puerto Rican nationalism in Chicago is complicated in the construction of a “politics of worthiness” and the assumption that people are only entitled to full citizenship rights provided they disavow radical political demands that challenge the US foundational mythologies of “meritocracy” and “equal opportunity.” The universe of crime not only reveals a widespread disrespect for rights and lives but also directly delegitimizes citizenship. The circulation of discourses of fear and the proliferation of practices of segregation invariably intertwine with other processes of social transformation, including conceptions of “homeland security” in ways that invariably configure educational and community developments at the most fundamental, everyday levels.

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get the U.S. citizen faster and be able to bring my mom from Minas [Gerais]. But I don’t know think they give it [the citizenship] by just joining. I think you have to be sent to war... or do you have to actually die in war? I’m not sure.”

21 As David Cole (2003) notes, “A US citizen stripped of his citizenship and ordered deported would presumably have nowhere to go. But another provision authorizes the attorney General to deport persons ‘to any country or region regardless of whether the country or region has a government. And failing such deportation plans, the Justice Department has issued a regulation empowering to detain indefinitely suspected terrorists who are ordered deported but cannot be removed because they are stateless or their country of origin refuses to take them back...” This bill would authorize secret arrests, allow secret government wiretaps and searches without even a warrant from the supersecret Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court when Congress has authorized the use of force, and terminate court

orders barring illegal police spying. Likewise, the government is granted access to credit reports as private companies, without judicial supervision.

22 As stated in an ACLU report, the USA Patriot Act expands terrorism laws to include “domestic terrorism” that could subject political organizations to surveillance, wiretapping, harassment, and criminal action for political advocacy. With the DSEA, the Administration seeks to transgress both the alien-citizen line, by turning citizens into aliens for their political ties, and the domestic-international line, extending to wholly domestic criminal-law-enforcement tools that were previously reserved for international terrorism investigations. Likewise, the Act expands the ability of law enforcement to conduct secret searches, gives them wide powers of phone and internet surveillance, and access to highly personal medical, financial, mental health, and student records with minimal judicial oversight. Moreover, the USA Patriot Act allows FBI Agents to investigate US citizens for crim-

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inal matters without probable cause of crime if they say it is for ‘intelligence purposes.’ Finally, the Act permits non-citizens to be jailed based on mere suspicion and to be denied re-admission to the US for engaging in free speech. Suspects convicted of no crime may be detained indefinitely in six-month increments without meaningful judicial review (ACLU, 2003; Cole, 2003). Ironically, many of these forms of government intervention have characterized life in Humboldt Park since the 1960s.

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