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Latinos in Chelsea, Massachusetts

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Vasquez, Daniel W., "Latinos in Chelsea, Massachusetts" (2003). *Gastón Institute Publications.* Paper 79.
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Part of a series of profiles of Latinos in New England | January 2003

The Mauricio Gastón Institute
for Latino Community Development
and Public Policy

Latinos in Chelsea | Massachusetts

by Daniel W. Vasquez, Research Associate

The Mauricio Gastón Institute of the University of Massachusetts Boston conducts research on and for the Latino population. A goal is to generate the kind of information and analysis necessary to develop sound public policy, and to improve Latino participation in the policy making process. In an effort to present vital information about Latinos to diverse audiences, the Gastón Institute has produced a series of basic demographic profiles for the states and selected cities of New England, based on the United States Census 2000.

Census 2000 data include changes in the way people were counted. The most significant change is to allow persons to select more than one race, creating a new multiracial category of "two or more races," but meaning people may not be included in the race with which they most identify. There was, however, no way to choose more than one ethnicity; one must choose either Latino or not. Throughout this profile, numbers reflect Latinos of all races, or non-Latinos by race, with persons of two or more races counted separately. All categorizations are based solely on self-identification. All of this complicates comparisons between 1990 and 2000 data. However, the concepts are similar enough to make trends and patterns clear.

In Chelsea, the general population changes from 1990 to 2000 were similar to national and state trends. The population of people of color — African Americans, Asians, Latinos, Native Americans, and Pacific Islanders — grew at a higher rate than did the population of non-Hispanic Whites, which actually shrank (see table 1). The total population of Chelsea increased by 22.2%, but its composition changed substantially. Latinos had a larger numerical growth than any other group, increasing by 7,966 or 88%. Latinos now represent 48.4% of the population, an increase of 17 percentage points and the (largest gain of any group). Chelsea has the fifth largest population of Latinos in Massachusetts and the 12th largest in the New England states. As a percentage of the total population, the Latino population in Chelsea ranks second in the state.

Table 1

Chelsea - Growth by Ethnicity

	2000		1990		Growth		Change
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	in Percent
Hispanic or Latino	16,984	48.4	9,018	31.4	7,966	88.3	17.0
White	13,424	38.3	16,930	59.0	-3,506	-20.7	-20.7
Black or African American	1,971	5.6	1,140	4.0	831	72.9	1.6
American Indian and Alaska Native	76	0.2	51	0.2	25	49.0	0.0
Asian [a]	1,614	4.6	1,381	4.8	245	17.7	-0.2
Pacific Islander [a]	12	0.0					
Some other race	195	0.6	190	0.7	5	2.6	-0.1
Two or more races [b]	804	2.3					
Total	35,080		28,710		6,370	22.2	

Sources: Census Bureau: 2000, 1990(a).

Note: Growth figures will not balance due to the new multiracial category.

[a] 'Asian and Pacific Islander' was split for the 2000 census. Growth and changes reflect combined total.

[b] There was no equivalent category in the 1990 census.

Table 2

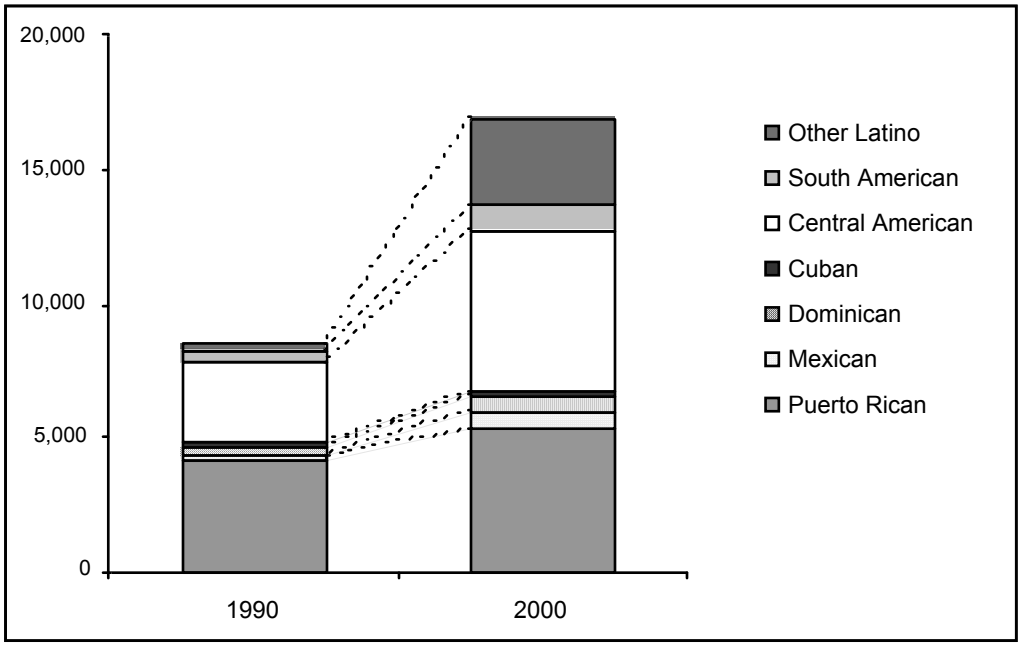
Chelsea - National Origin of Latinos

	2000		1990 [a]		Growth	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Hispanic or Latino	16,984		8,573		8,411	98.1
Mexican	660	3.9	120	1.4	540	450.0
Puerto Rican	5,363	31.6	4,251	49.6	1,112	26.2
Cuban	227	1.3	156	1.8	71	45.5
Dominican Republic	533	3.1	278	3.2	255	91.7
Salvadoran	2,711	16.0	1,539	18.0	1,172	76.2
Other Central American	3,299	19.4	1,509	17.6	1,790	118.6
Colombian	658	3.9	228	2.7	430	188.6
Other South American	247	1.5	157	1.8	90	57.3
Other Hispanic or Latino	3,286	19.3	335	3.9	2,951	880.9

Sources: Census Bureau: 2000, 1990(b).

[a] 1990 figures for nationality are from sample data only and differ from population counts.[1]

Figure 1
Chelsea - Growth and Change of the Latino Population



Sources: Census Bureau: 2000, 1990(a).

All Latino national-origin groups grew significantly between 1990[1] and 2000. The largest group in Chelsea is Puerto Rican, at 31.6%, followed by "Other" Central American and "Other" Hispanic or Latino. "Other" Latinos were the fastest-growing population in Chelsea, increasing by 880%, a trend seen across the U.S. (see table 2 and figure 1). A person is counted as "Other" if they write in "Spanish" or give an answer that can't be assigned to a particular nationality (such as "Latino"), or if they identify more than one origin, or leave the answer blank. Future scholarly studies may better describe the composition of this category. The detailed breakdown of Central and South Americans is available at the Census Bureau's American Fact Finder service, online at: *factfinder.census.gov*.

Table 3

Chelsea - Households by Tenure

	2000		1990		Growth		Change
Latino Headed Households	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	in Percent
Total Households	4,484		2,390		2,094	87.6	
Owners	814	18.2	258	10.8	556	215.5	7.4
Renters	3,670	81.8	2,132	89.2	1,538	72.1	

Sources: Census Bureau: 2000, 1990(a).

Latino-headed households in Chelsea are much more likely to rent than to own their home, 81.8% versus 18.2%, although there has been a 7.4% increase in home ownership since 1990 (see table 3). Still, this is much lower than the state average of 61.7%.

Although there has been a small growth in the proportion of non-family households, it is still true that most Latinos in Chelsea, 81.8%, live in family households (see table 4). Married couples with children represent 32.4% of Latino-headed households, slightly more than the Massachusetts average of 23.3%. Families made up of a single female with children account for 23.9% of Latino households, which is greater than the state average of 7.5%, but less than it was in 1990.

Table 4

Chelsea - Family Structure

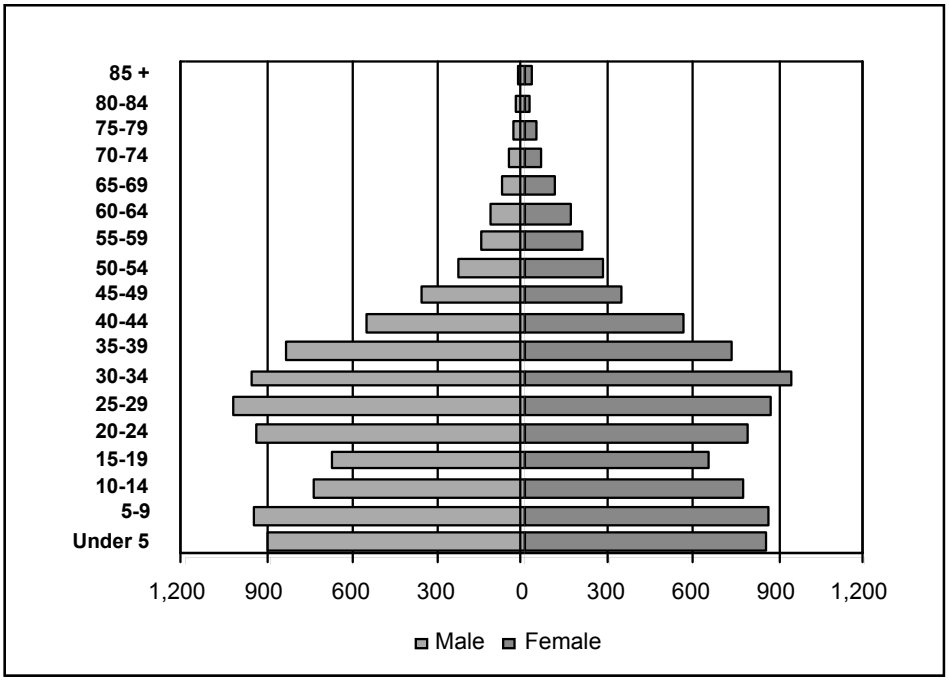
	2000		1990		Growth	Change
Latino Headed Households	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Percent	in Percent
Families:	3,666	81.8	1,943	81.3	88.7	0.5
with related children [a]:						
Married Couple, with children	1,452	32.4	644	26.9	125.5	5.4
Female Head, with children	1,070	23.9	753	31.5	42.1	-7.6
Male Head, with children	307	6.8	129	5.4	138.0	1.4
without related children:						
Married Couple, no children	454	10.1	232	9.7	95.7	0.4
Single, no children	383	8.5	185	7.7	107.0	0.8
Non-Family Household	818	18.2	447	18.7	83.0	-0.5
Total Households	4,484		2,390		87.6	

Sources: Census Bureau: 2000, 1990(a).
[a] Own or related children under 18 only.

Data Sources:
All available at American Fact Finder [online service]: http://factfinder.census.gov/
U.S. Census Bureau:
2000: Census 2000 Summary File 1 (SF1) 100% Data.
1990(a): 1990 Census Summary Tape File 1 (STF1) 100% Data.
1990(b): 1990 Census Summary Tape File 3 (STF3) Sample Data.
1992: 1990 Census of Population: General Population Characteristics. Washington DC: GPO.

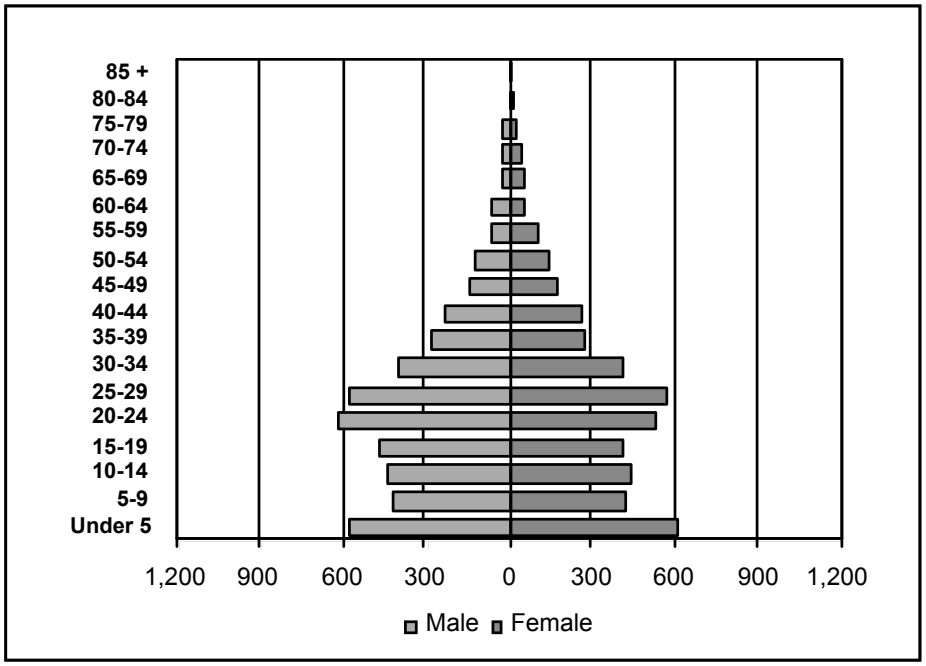
Notes:
[1] Sample data from 1990 are based on the "Long Form" files. About one person or household in six receives the Long Form Census. The estimates from there do not match the enumerations in the 100% or "Short Form" data. For example there is a 4.5% difference in the total number of Latinos in Massachusetts. There are sources of error in any census or survey, however the estimates here are accurate enough to note trends and patterns.

Figure 2
Chelsea - Age Profile 2000



Sources: Census Bureau: 2000, 1990(a), 1992.

Figure 3
Chelsea - Age Profile 1990



Sources: Census Bureau: 2000, 1990(a), 1992.

The age composition of Latinos in Chelsea has changed. There has been an increase among all age groups, but especially among those in the middle years. Even though there are many more children, the overall Latino population is maturing (see figures 2 and 3) .

While the Latino population in Chelsea and in the rest of the country remains relatively young, it is older than it was in 1990. In 2000, 37.8% of Latinos in Chelsea were younger than 20, just slightly fewer than the 42.1% in 1990 (see table 5). The Latino median age of 25.9 is much younger than the overall Massachusetts median age of 36.5. Women still tend to be older than men, but the gap closed during the 1990s. In addition to becoming relatively older, both Latinos and Latinas became less concentrated in the 20-29 age group (see tables 6 and 7).

Table 5

Chelsea - Latinos by Age

	2000		1990		Growth
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Percent
Under 10 years	3,572	21.0	2,035	22.6	75.5
10-19	2,861	16.8	1,757	19.5	62.8
20-29	3,624	21.3	2,281	25.3	58.9
30-39	3,470	20.4	1,347	14.9	157.6
40-49	1,824	10.7	807	8.9	126.0
50-59	878	5.2	438	4.9	100.5
60-69	466	2.7	203	2.3	129.6
70 and over	289	1.7	150	1.7	92.7
Total	16,984		9,018		88.3
Median Age	25.9		23.3		

Sources: Census Bureau: 2000, 1990(a), 1992.

Table 6

Chelsea - Latino Males by Age

	2000		1990		Growth
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Percent
Under 10 years	1,860	21.4	1,013	22.4	83.6
10-19	1,425	16.4	911	20.1	56.4
20-29	1,971	22.7	1,197	26.4	64.7
30-39	1,793	20.7	673	14.9	166.4
40-49	918	10.6	377	8.3	143.5
50-59	389	4.5	196	4.3	98.5
60-69	198	2.3	100	2.2	98.0
70 and over	128	1.5	63	1.4	103.2
Total	8,682		4,530		91.7
Median Age	25.5		22.9		

Sources: Census Bureau: 2000, 1990(a), 1992.

Table 7

Chelsea - Latina Females by Age

	2000		1990		Growth
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Percent
Under 10 years	1,712	20.6	1,022	22.8	67.5
10-19	1,436	17.3	846	18.9	69.7
20-29	1,653	19.9	1,084	24.2	52.5
30-39	1,677	20.2	674	15.0	148.8
40-49	906	10.9	430	9.6	110.7
50-59	489	5.9	242	5.4	102.1
60-69	268	3.2	103	2.3	160.2
70 and over	161	1.9	87	1.9	85.1
Total	8,302		4,488		85.0
Median Age	26.3		23.7		

Sources: Census Bureau: 2000, 1990(a), 1992.