making for women . . . patterns [which] seem strikingly reminiscent of earlier second generations, more like the behavior of the Italians or Poles of 1940 . . . " (p. 89). Of course, as even Perlmann concedes, today’s twenty-first century economy requires education far beyond what was necessary for those 1940s Italians and Poles, and two low-wage incomes are better than one, so it is unlikely that second-generation Mexican men are opting out of education in favor of plentiful good-paying blue-collar jobs whilst Mexican women are opting out of the labor market all together.

Finally, Perlmann examines Mexican second generation economic outcomes against native whites and blacks, as measured by total earnings. After controlling for education, he finds that the earnings of the Mexican second generation are, at best, 87 percent of those of native whites (p. 110). Additionally, he finds that the Mexican second generation is better off than native blacks, net of underclass risk factors.

In sum, although Mexicans lag behind their SCEN counterparts and native whites in all of the socioeconomic indicators considered here, Perlmann concludes that Mexicans are following (albeit more slowly) in the footsteps of their SCEN counterparts, rather than native blacks. As evidence, he argues that Mexicans are less likely to exhibit “socially risky behaviors” (other than dropping out) that would represent a “dysfunctional young-adult minority” culture among Mexicans, which according to segmented assimilation theory is indicative of a “feedback loop” of socioeconomic decline (p. 123), typified by the underclass.

Yet, by accepting this premise, that the absence of underclass behaviors among Mexicans relative to native blacks indicates upward mobility, Perlmann assumes that the different historical conditions under which these groups were introduced and allowed to integrate, their distinct racial uniforms, and their different “modes of incorporation” (Portes and Rumbaut 1990), would nonetheless evince similar outcomes. These assumptions are dubious. Additionally, recent studies clearly show gendered patterns of Mexican integration (Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994); thus, the near absence of women from the analysis provides an incomplete picture. Finally, Perlmann’s acceptance of the assumptions of segmented assimilation theory leaves him to conclude that Mexicans must be either assimilating to the mainstream or joining the underclass; yet, his numerous findings suggest otherwise. Although a Mexican underclass is not supported, it is possible that Mexicans’ high dropout rates and escalating wage gap in the context of an American economy and society that is characterized by a racialized and gendered labor market, growing wage inequality, tougher immigration policy, and upsurge in anti-Mexican-immigrant sentiment, reflect the presence of a “betwixt and between” group; a permanent, intergenerational, low-wage, low-skilled Mexican laboring class.

References
The concept of housing as a right is subject to critical analysis (Chester Hartman) and we learn about how the legal system through the courts has strengthened and limited these rights and the prospects for court involvement in the future (David Bryson). Featured are the elderly (Jon Pynoos and Cristy M. Nishita), women (Susan Saegert and Helene Clark), and homeless people (Rob Rosenthal and Maria Foscarinis). Examined is the importance of housing as a part of the socio-economic inequality picture. But to reduce housing problems to economic notions of limited demand or income losses sight of the complexity and centrality of housing to people’s everyday lives.

The authors show that the importance of housing in its multiple manifestations has only increased over time. The concept of housing as a right has become more crucial over the last thirty years with widening economic inequality amidst shifting government priorities. But this book is not a manifesto. It is a well-written hard-nosed analysis of a range of dimensions of housing in the U.S. Particularly if you have never delved into the housing field before (recall my prelim problem), this book is where you should begin.

The authors represent a wide range of disciplines and persuasions: planning, economics, political science, sociology, psychology, law, and community organizing. We learn about trends in economic inequality and housing (Chris Tilly), increasing rates of shelter poverty (Michael Stone), and problems of segregation and discrimination (Nancy Denton). These chapters emphasize the critical role of race and gender in these trends. Problems are much greater for women, women with children, and people of color.

We are educated about housing finance, particularly how it has changed and the implications of these changes (Michael Stone). The housing subsidy system is described with the emphasis on subsidies through the tax system (mortgage interest deduction) as well as direct subsidies for means tested families (Peter Dreier). Housing politics and policies are examined historically, faulting both conservative and liberal policy agendas (Peter Marcuse and W. Dennis Keating). We are told about the perpetual threat of privatization of federally assisted housing (Emily Paradise Achtenberg).

I highlight two chapters in particular for outlining concepts not often discussed in typical housing forums. A chapter on social ownership (Michael Stone) provides a much needed introduction into alternative tenure forms that can strengthen renting as a more secure tenure option while amending ownership to be collective. While largely absent from contemporary political debates, these ideas are central to reforming U.S. housing market if rights to housing are to be won.
chapter on social financing follows a similar venue by outlining how the financial intermediaries can support the production and preservation of quality, affordable housing (Michael Swack).

Read this book and fall in love all over again.

References


SHARON ZUKIN
Brooklyn College and City University Graduate Center
szukin@gc.cuny.edu

Richard Lloyd's study of the recent transformation of Wicker Park, in Chicago, from a rundown, inner city neighborhood into a nationally known avatar of hip culture spans three on-going debates. The first debate concerns the effects of gentrification—discovered in London fifty years ago, but rapidly spreading in many cities since then, with young, highly educated professionals moving into relatively cheap housing in the central city and quickly establishing entrepreneurial beachheads in living lofts, art galleries, music clubs, and bars. The second debate focuses on whether cities should cater to the "creative class," whose training, occupations, and cultural capital overlap in part with those of gentrifiers, but who have the potential to spearhead urban economic revival. On both these issues—gentrification and the creative class—Lloyd's study provides closely observed documentation. Connecting with the third debate, however, pushes the book beyond the category of community studies. "Neo-bohemia," as Lloyd terms the concentration of creative digerati who moved to Wicker Park during the 1990s' dot-com boom, is a model of the post-industrial, working-class neighborhood where young college graduates hang out, get inspiration, and wait for new media projects or recording contracts to pay their rent: a Back-of-the-Yards for the 21st century.

Neo-Bohemia relates this neighborhood re-creation to the one-two punch of the post-Fordist economy. First, the factory workers whose families had lived in Wicker Park since the 1920s or 1930s began to move away in the 1970s—some, to better neighborhoods and the suburbs, and others, especially the Latinos who had recently arrived, to regions that still offered industrial jobs. Second, the dynamic growth of college and art school graduates from the 1960s brought many young people to Chicago, where they settled down to pursue their creative vision, and gradually formed a visible community in the very areas the working class had left.

Through interviews and participant-observation, Lloyd shows how this community came together during the 1990s. Young artists and musicians were drawn to Wicker Park because they couldn't afford to live in already gentrified neighborhoods nearby; besides, Wicker Park looked like the "authentic" urban neighborhoods they had seen in movies and on TV, and it was familiar to them as the location of The Real World on MTV, which began production in 1992. Some of them knew that the pre-eminent hipster of literary Chicago in the 1940s, Nelson Algren, had lived there. All of them found the area exotic, dangerous, and edgy: its combination of ethnic diversity and capital disinvestment provided inspiration for aesthetic innovation aiming to go beyond mainstream commercial forms. By the time Rolling Stone said that one of the new neighborhood cafés was "the coolest place in Chicago to suck down a cappuccino" (p. 112), Wicker Park had become a cool place to live.

Lloyd wisely insists that the growth of venues for cultural consumption was only one reason for the area's growth. Just as important, Wicker Park became "a post-industrial production site" (p. 43), where artists exchanged services and honed skills that they would be able to sell in the "new economy" just taking shape. The Internet's constant hunger for content, especially for "the aestheticized information" (p. 220) so useful to design firms, media corporations, and the advertising industry, places a premium on the kinds of cultural innovation at which the new