Protocol for Lot Selection in Monterrey fieldwork 9-18 January

Settlements were selected from 5 that had been reconnoitered earlier in 2008 for which data had also been gathered by students and mapped during the Fall.

Three were dropped for the following reasons: 1) Because it was located in a second municipality (Guadalupe) and it was felt that this would double the work for key informant interviewing; 2) Because it was mixed (El Mirador) with sections on either side of the arroyo that appeared to date from slightly different time periods. Moreover, a section of the settlements contained uniform pies de casa (FONHAPO?) which had subsequently been extended. But this would introduce a distorting element; 3) Because the lots were unusually small (Tierra y Libertad) and the settlement had conflictive origins.

Another criterion for selection was that the two settlements were adjacent with each other and close to the Metro making logistics for student interviewing considerably easier and increasing the chances that we would be able to make substantial progress in two colonias rather than just completing a single settlement. It It also meant that they dated to the same time period, and formed part of the same "social" class and context.

The two settlements were Francisco (Pancho) Villa; and Valle de Santa Lucia (formerly known as Granjas Sanitarias (or Granjas Sanguinarias – Bloody Granjas – give its early troubled and somewhat violent history).

Elsewhere we have included more detailed descriptions of the two settlement histories. Both settlements were sizeable, Valle Santa Lucia was especially large. This area in NW Monterrey contains many of the most notorious colonias (Tierra y Libertad various sections) dating to the early 1970s. It also contains a swathe of Fomerrey sponsored subdivisions (see Fomerrey interview) from the late 1970s and 1980s. In retorpsect it might have been worth selecting one of these since they appear to be less conflictive; more state supported from the outset and perhaps, slightly better off.

We had obtained plat maps (blocks and lots) from the planning office before leaving for the field (thanks to Dr Roberto Garcia).

Lot Selection Procedure.

Lots were selected randomly in the following way. The total # of blocks was counted and assigned a number 1-n. Approximately half were selected using random numbers Tables. Then, depending upon the approximate yield of lots from those that had been selected, a sampling fame # was selected. Starting at a randomly selected point every nth lot was selected and marked on the plat map.

Fco Villa: Yielded 81 blocks (manzanas) with blocks of varying sizes between 8 minimum and 26 max. 33 blocks were selected randomly, from which 91 lots were selected using a sampling frame of every 7th lot.

Valle de Santa Lucia: was considerably larger – some 66 blocks but each block having 46 of more lots. The smallest block had 28 – the largest 54. 32 blocks were selected randomly, and a sampling frame of every 17th lot was selected starting with a random point in the first selected manzana. This yielded 123 lots that were marked on the map.

Fieldwork Protocol

We were assisted for the first three days by three of the lead researchers from Guadalajara who were each experienced in applying the questionnaire. They concentrated their attention on Fco Villa; while most of the Austin based interviewers worked in Valle de Santa Lucia.

Training in the questionnaire had been undertaken in December with a "refresher" session in Monterrey before embarking. Preparation included the usual materials: Letters of presentation; name tags and identification; clip boards with household lists & maps broken down by sub-areas etc. Interviewing was done in pairs most days (and individually latterly as several members of the team became more confident). Because of certain early warnings about insecurity and gangs operating, it was felt sensible to interview in pairs or at least in sight of one another on the same street.

Before interviewing each pair "walked" their sections, triangulating the selected lot on the map with an actual address and annotating the same details on a listing sheet attached to their clipboard. This listing sheet allowed interviewees to record their time and dates of visits, and make substitutions were necessary.

Substitutions were allowed if the building was unoccupied or vacant; and after three unsuccessful attempts had been made to conduct the interview. In this case it was decided to substitute with the 4th house to the right (facing the first selected lot). This "rile" was applied rigorously whenever it was necessary to make a substitution.

Interviewers followed the agreed presentation format and had "owner" as well as "renter" questionnaire schedules for application. As anticipated, few renters were found. Actually interviewing took between 20-20 minutes for owners (much less for renters), although a lot of time was also spent in the initial presentation and convincing people to participate, as well as circling around knocking on doors, etc. Completing 4-5 interviews in a day was a good yield (over 4-5 hours). Usually after 3:30 people were at lunch which was when we usually wrapped up for the day.

Post Coding and Analysis we analyzed the number of interviews conducted in each settlement that were in the lots selected (not substututes); the number of refusals and substations made, etc. 129 owner households were interviewed with a 79% success rate of interviewing the selected households. :

After the first two days the group assembled evenings to discuss progress and to clarify any confusion or doubts that had arisen. We found that it was especially important to reiterate and clarify the anchor points for data collection, in those (many) cases where the respondent owner was not the original title holder and/or was answering vicariously for both his/her own household and for other separate family homes located on the same lot. Similarly, how one defined "separate" families/households. In these cases even though respondents often stated that adults siblings and parents formed "una sola familia" -- a single family – it was invariably the case that they were separate homes/households, albeit closely related. The definition was whether they "generally prepared meals separately" even if they actually used the same kitchen. This closely resembles the "eating out of the same pot" that anthropologists traditionally utilize to identify single household entities.

Post Survey Coding and Analysis

Starting before fieldwork a draft coding guide had been prepared. This was further discussed by principal lead researchers during the fieldwork; and was completed once we returned to Austin . Coding took place over the following month, and was always undertaken in pairs: the lead coder (one of three) and the person who had conducted the interview. This allowed for greater consistency in marking up the responses and for clarification where responses were unclear. String variables were also used for some responses, and this allowed us to recode responses later to obtain a more nuanced range of responses. But most codes were pre-categorized.

The Coding Guide was in Excel and the coding was also in Excel for uploading into SPSS datasheets later.

Prepared by PMW 2/14/2009.