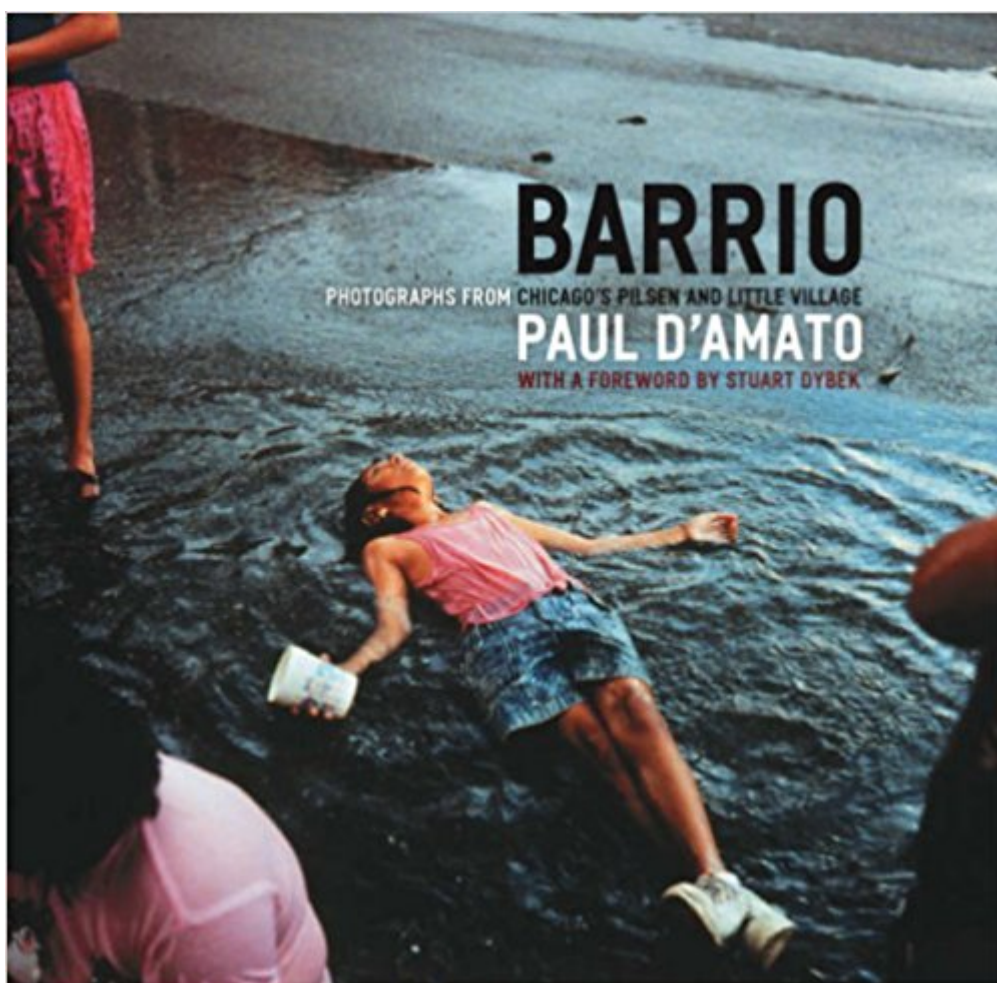


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# Barrio: Photographs From Chicago's Pilsen And Little Village (Chicago Visions And Revisions)



## Synopsis

In 1988 photographer Paul D'Amato was driving around Chicago with his camera when he decided to follow Halsted Street into Pilsen, the city's largest Mexican neighborhood. Intrigued by the barrio and neighboring Little Village, he began to take photographs and would continue to do so off and on for the next fourteen years. D'Amato started with the public life of the neighborhood: women and children in the streets, open fire hydrants, and graffiti. But later—after he got to know the area's Mexican residents better—he was allowed to take more intimate photos of people at work, families at weddings and parties, and even gang members. *Barrio* collects ninety of these striking color images along with D'Amato's fascinating account of his time photographing Mexican Chicago and his acceptance—often grudging, after threatened violence—into the heart of the city's Mexican community. Some of the photos here are beautifully composed and startling—visual narratives that are surreal and dreamlike, haunting and mythic. Others, like those D'Amato took while shadowing graffiti artists in the subway, are far more immediate and improvisational. With a foreword by author Stuart Dybek that places D'Amato's work in the context of the Pilsen and Little Village that Dybek has elsewhere captured so memorably, this book offers a penetrating, evocative, and overall streetwise portrait of two iconic and enduring Hispanic neighborhoods.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"[Barrio] offers an outsider's and an insider's perspective on the challenges of being part of a community continually stressed by economics, assimilation, and transition." (Carolyn Alessio Chicago Tribune) "One of the more compelling photography books of 2006, presenting an even-handed overview of Chicago's Pilsen and Little Village assembled lovingly over a period of 14 years." (Alan G. Artner Chicago Tribune 2005-07-06)

Paul D'Amato is professor of photography at Columbia College Chicago. His photographs have been featured in the New York Times Magazine, DoubleTake, Harper's, and several other publications.

I am no book critic, but I am an armature photographer and a native of the Pilsen neighborhood in Chicago very near where Mr. D'Amato shot the photographs and immersed himself in the daily lives of the people who live there to make this book. For me, Mr. D'Amato is a hero of urban street photography. The photographs are an excellent record of life in the Near West Side and Pilsen during the late 1980's. Paul D'Amato was able to capture and demonstrate the true fabric of this vibrant, bare nuckles, and often violent and changing part of the city. And to do so he found a way to weave himself directly into that fabric. Becoming friend and foe to gang members, business owners and average working class folks - the "story between the images" is an even more compelling tale than the photographs themselves. This book represents one man's solution to take what could have been a dry photojournalistic record of neighborhood life and instead converts the experience to one of immersion into the day by day and night by night struggles, battles and loving connections of family, friends and outsiders becoming insiders through sheer guts and will. A true inspiration for anyone interested in urban life, Chicago, Hispanic heritage or urban street anthropology, and of course photography. Thank you, Paul D'Amato for creating this wonderful book. Bart Casper, Chicago, IL

This book was invaluable when I was directing a theater piece set in Hispanic Chicago. The colors, beliefs, passions, and personalities of the people are captured in the photos. You hear their voices in the accompanying journal. Thank you, Mr. D'Amato, for bringing me to Pilsen.

If Goya had a camera (this goes for Caravaggio also) his photographs would look like Paul D'Amato's. Within the pages of this compelling book live the supreme photographs of their genre.

Fine Art? Documentary? D'Amato's vision is not simply positioned and categorized. These photographs are of people's lives. "Barrio" hugs Mexican life in Chicago. This book reveals a culture and people that are truly beautiful, unvarnished splendor in the direction of labor, guts, water and light. The most respect a photographer can give their subject is to make the strongest (possible and out of the question) photographs. Paul D'Amato repeatedly shows his respect with these photographs.

I really liked the combination of the pictures and the journal entries. It feels as if the book is the complete story, you get to see the images of the neighborhood and read the story of the photographer. Both the pictures and the words are beautiful. Although the photographer is an outsider in the neighborhood he is able to capture images of the inside.

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