



HARVARD JOURNAL OF HISPANIC POLICY

Interviews

Community Connected: Grassroots to Treetops

California Community Foundation President and CEO Antonia Hernández
Interviewed by Alejandra Campoverdi

Passion and Policy in California

California State Assembly Speaker Fabian Núñez
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Twenty Years of Journalistic Justice

Univision Anchorman Jorge Ramos
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Balancing on the Brink of Change: Reevaluating Hispanicity in the United States

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Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy

Call for Papers, Volume 20 (2008)

Deadline: 1 December 2007

The *Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy (HJHP)* is now accepting submissions for Volume 20, to be published in April 2008. The *HJHP* is an annual, nonpartisan, student-run scholarly review published by the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. The *HJHP*'s mission is to educate and provide leadership that improves the quality of public policies affecting the Latino community. One of the only policy journals dedicated to examining the effects of policy on Latinos, the *HJHP* hopes to further the economic, social, and political empowerment of Latinos.

The *HJHP* is interested in manuscripts that emphasize the relationship between policy making and the political, social, and economic environments affecting Latinos in the United States. Topics of interest include (but are not limited to):

- Political participation of Latinos and their growing influence on public policy and electoral politics
- Health care reform debates and policy decisions (finance, quality standards and bills of rights, etc.)
- School reform debates and policy decisions, including educational standards, charter schools, and vouchers
- Economic security, business development, and welfare policies, including the implications of welfare reform and slowdown in the economy

Submission Guidelines

For articles:

Original and unpublished material
15–25 double-spaced pages
All figures, tables, and charts submitted as entirely separate files
Abstract of 100 words included

For commentaries:

5–10 double-spaced pages

For book reviews:

3–10 double-spaced pages

In addition, all authors must observe the following:

Authors must submit a cover letter with the author's name, address, e-mail address, daytime phone number, and a brief biography, as well as two hard copies of the submission.

Authors must submit an electronic copy of the submission on CD or by e-mail to hjhp@ksg.harvard.edu.

Submissions must be formatted on any version of Microsoft Word.

Citations must be formatted in the author-date system via running text, according to the guidelines in *The Chicago Manual of Style*. Footnotes are not accepted.

Authors are required to cooperate with editing and fact-checking.

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Editor's Remarks

Since the U.S. Census Bureau announced in 2003 that Hispanics had surpassed Blacks as the nation's largest minority group, it has become difficult to find an article or story in the media about issues affecting or involving Hispanics that fails to mention the country's "growing Latino population." The numbers have politicians increasingly turning their attention to Hispanic enclaves, pundits debating the influence Hispanics will have on the country's language and culture, and other minority groups wondering what this demographic change will mean for them.

For the past twenty years, the *Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy* has published quality work on issues that affect this country's Hispanic population. However, what exactly is meant by the term "Hispanic policy" continues to be an issue for debate.

Traditionally, "Hispanic policy" has been synonymous with immigration reform and bilingual education. While these topics are certainly components of the bigger picture, what this journal has done over the past twenty years has been to use hard data, informed opinion, and scholarly research to challenge the assumption that Hispanic policy *is* immigration policy.

This volume of the *HJHP* continues that tradition through discussion on the impact of preschool on school readiness for Latinos, challenges to building a critical mass of Hispanic leaders, and the tangible benefits of mentoring young Latinas. Volume 19 also includes material on issues that have not traditionally been a part of the Hispanic agenda, including an article on the digital divide and minority access to the media, as well as a commentary on affirmative action in Michigan.

The policy challenges and opportunities featured in this year's edition reflect the changing nature of the Hispanic demographic in the United States. As Latinos grow in number, so do the number of policies that directly impact the Hispanic community. However, as this year's interviews highlight, many of these policy challenges are not uniquely Hispanic. Interviewees in this volume include policy experts in the public, not-for-profit, and private sector. Speaker of the California State Assembly Fabian Núñez (D-46th District) speaks on health care and education policy as they pertain to the entire population of California, as well as the responsibilities he has as an elected public official. Former MALDEF general counsel and current president and CEO of the California Community Foundation Antonia Hernández provides insight into the role of philanthropy in influencing policy by including voices from all affected parties. Lastly, Univision journalist and television anchorman Jorge Ramos discusses the complexity of delivering a message to a heterogeneous Hispanic market, implications of current immigration reform, and the dynamic nature of the Hispanic demographic.

Volume 19 also includes articles that add to the existing discourse on Hispanic policy as well as introduce new topics for consideration. First, Eugene E. García and Bryant Jensen of Arizona State University write on advancing school readiness for young Latinos through practical interventions implemented at the preschool level. Next, Sonia Y. Ruiz, Sandra Rodriguez, and Glendelia M. Zavalia of MANA, A National Latina Organization, present findings and recommendations derived from a longitudinal study of a mentoring program for Latinas at six different sites around the United States. Finally, Laura R. Rochet of the Indiana University School of Law offers compelling evidence that the digital divide created by lack of access to new forms of media is having negative effects on the political participation of minorities.

We are proud to feature commentaries in this year's edition that present views on initiatives to ban affirmative action, the state of Hispanic leadership, and Puerto Rico's ailing economy. Khaled Ali Beydoun of the ACLU of Michigan offers an overview and analysis of the passing of the anti-affirmative action referendum held during the 2006 midterm elections in Michigan. Next, Founder and President of the National Hispanic Institute Ernesto Nieto shares his views on the obstacles to forming a solid Latino leadership base and the difficulty of conceptualizing and addressing the multifaceted social forces that influence Latinos in the United States. In their commentary, "Restoring Growth in Puerto Rico: The Economic and Policy Challenges," Executive Director of the Center for the New Economy Miguel A. Soto-Class and Research Director Deepak Lamba-Nieves evaluate the economic conditions in Puerto Rico, shedding light on an often-overlooked region.

This year the journal offers three book reviews. First, Michael D. Kerlin reviews Robert Courtney Smith's *Mexican New York: Transnational Lives of New Immigrants*, an ethnography that highlights the positive effects of encouraging closer ties between immigrants and their countries of origin. Daniela Pineda's review of *The Latina/o Pathway to the Ph.D.: Abriendo Caminos*, edited by Jeanett Castellanos, Alberta M. Gloria, and Mark Kamimura, explores the book's argument that various social, psychological, and cultural factors prevent Latino students from pursuing a doctoral degree. Finally, Patricia A. Soler reviews Marta Tienda and Faith Mitchell's *Multiple Origins, Uncertain Destinies: Hispanics and the American Future*, a comprehensive report on the social, economic, cultural, and policy issues facing Latinos in the United States today.

For the first time in the journal's twenty-year history, the *HJHP* features three pieces of art from the Latino Art Museum in Pomona, CA. The first piece is by Chicano artist Abel Ramirez and is entitled *Metroplex*. The second piece, *Funky Donkeys*, comes

from Mario Gee Lopez, an artist from Honduras. Argentine artist Graciela Horne Nardi painted the third piece, *Tango IV*. Together, these three pieces serve as a reminder of the oft-forgot policy realm of the arts. The staff hopes that the *HJHP* will continue to feature artwork in the future.

Clearly, this year's content demonstrates that "Hispanic policy" is increasingly becoming a part of mainstream policy. However, it also speaks to the necessity of reaching across racial and ethnic lines for the sake of social cohesion and progress. Indeed, immigration policy does not affect Latinos alone; affirmative action is not reserved for particular minorities; and the digital divide concerns socioeconomic strata as much as it does racial categories.

I wish to extend my sincerest thanks to Frank Aguiló, the *HJHP*'s managing editor, for his support and visionary guidance in making Volume 19 a truly unique contribution to the journal's twenty-year collection. I also want to acknowledge the outstanding staff, whose exceptional efforts not only produced a quality product that will enrich national debate on policies affecting the Hispanic community, but one which will have a lasting legacy on the overall mission of the journal for volumes to come.

The staff and I would especially like to express our gratitude to our publisher Christine Connare for her extraordinary dedication to the *HJHP* over the past six years.

Similarly, we thank Grace Flores-Hughes, who, after joining the Executive Advisory Board in 1989, became chair in 1992 and has served in that role for the past fourteen years. Their leadership will be sorely missed as they leave the journal and move on to new adventures. As always, I would like to thank the Executive Advisory Board for their efforts to promote the *HJHP* and to lend their expertise to advancing its mission. Lastly, I thank former members of the *HJHP* staff, especially former editors-in-chief Edgar Morales and Elena Chávez, for their support, advice, and continued commitment to the journal. Volume 19 is the product of twenty years' worth of staff members who have come and gone through the doors of the *HJHP* office and whose ground-work continues to be a strong foundation for the *HJHP*'s success. It is our hope that the work accomplished this year will have the same effect.

María C. Alvarado
Editor-in-Chief

Cambridge, Massachusetts
April 2007

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Community Connected: Grassroots to Treetops

*Interview with California Community Foundation
President and CEO Antonia Hernández*

Nationally recognized for her commitment toward the betterment of underserved communities in Los Angeles and beyond, Antonia Hernández joined the California Community Foundation as president and chief executive officer in February 2004.

Established in 1915, the California Community Foundation is one of the largest and most active philanthropic organizations in Southern California, with assets of more than one billion dollars. In partnership with its more than 1,200 individual, family, and corporate donors, the foundation supports not-for-profit organizations and public institutions with funds for health and human services, affordable housing, early childhood education, community arts and culture, and other areas of need.

Previously, Hernández was president and general counsel of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF), a national not-for-profit litigation and advocacy organization dedicated to protecting the civil rights of the nation's Latinos through the legal system, community education, and research and policy initiatives.

An expert in philanthropy, civil rights, and immigration issues, Hernández began her legal career as a staff attorney with the Los Angeles Center for Law and Justice and worked as counsel to the United States Senate Committee on the Judiciary before joining MALDEF in 1981 as regional counsel in Washington, DC.

Hernández is a trustee for the Rockefeller Foundation, as well as a member of the board of directors for the American Constitution Society, the American Automobile Association, and the Automobile Club of Southern California. She currently serves on various commissions, committees, and advisory boards, including the Institute of Politics at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, the Council on Foreign Relations, and the Center for Talented Youth at Johns Hopkins University. She is a frequent public speaker and has been awarded a number of honorary degrees and awards.

Hernández is a member of the State Bar of California, District of Columbia Bar, American Bar Association, the Mexican American Bar Association of Los Angeles, and a fellow of the American Law Institute.

Hernández earned her B.A. in history at UCLA in 1970 and J.D. at the UCLA School of Law in 1974.

Alejandra Campoverdi conducted the interview 22 January 2007. Originally from Santa Monica, CA, Campoverdi will receive a master's in public policy degree from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University in 2008. She previously worked for the California Endowment, focusing on grants to organizations in the San Francisco Bay area and the Agricultural Worker Health Initiative.

HJHP

Your opinions on how certain issues will affect the Hispanic community have been highly sought after by newspaper editorial pages, national magazines,

television talk shows, and numerous other television outlets. What do you believe has contributed to your ability to have a finger on the pulse of the Hispanic community?

Hernández

I believe that it's all about being in the community and being connected. My parents were very much a part of a community. I come from a very large extended family and all my siblings are very involved in a variety of issues. I care deeply about what goes on in the community I live in.

So for me, it's about meeting people, going to meetings, and just staying connected. There's no substitute for actually being out there where real life happens and then being able to transfer that knowledge, that information, that experience to the policy makers, the institutions, and the voices that frame how society views the issues that affect us and how they view us as a community.

HJHP

How can the California Community Foundation (CCF) be used as a model for other philanthropic organizations operating across the country?

Hernández

Philanthropy is no different than the mainstream of society. The question is, Does philanthropy reflect the diversity of the population? If not, how can we change that? Can one individual make a difference in an institution? At what point in time are there enough of those types of people that care about or represent an issue to make a difference? Let's take Harvard as an example. It's a huge university. Would one Latino be able to make a lot of difference if he or she were on the board of advisors or the board of trustees? I'm not sure. It's a lot of hope to put on one individual.

If there were twelve overseers at Harvard and three were Latino, *maybe* they could make a difference. If there was a Latino, an African American, a gay or lesbian, an Asian American, and collectively they shared an agenda for inclusiveness, they *could* make a difference.

For CCF, my goal is very simple—to make CCF truly reflective of the community we serve. Los Angeles County is extraordinary. It's not just Latinos—it's Asians, it's Armenians, it's Iranians, it's Koreans. How can these people look at this foundation and say, "Yeah, I see a little bit of me in that institution." It doesn't mean that we're going to see everything through your lens, but that vision, that perspective is coming in. It's like a stew; it's all fitting in. Out of that you say, "Yeah, I'm included in that."

HJHP

What do you see as the role that foundations should play in advocacy efforts affecting systems and influencing policy versus funding only direct services?

Hernández

I have a very strong feeling that if you want to make systemic change, you have to fund processes that make systemic change. There's nothing wrong with funding direct services. If an institution chooses to feed the hungry, then they're going to

spend all their resources doing that. I think that's wonderful, but I want to fund changes so that there is no need to feed the hungry and the people have enough to eat. Because of my background with MALDEF and as a civil rights lawyer, I truly believe what makes this country unique is our ability to make systemic changes.

HJHP

You've said that your life's work has been dedicated to making sure everyone has a place at the table. What does a place at the table look like, and what are the civil rights/public policy issues that currently need to be addressed in order to continue making this a reality for Latinos?

Hernández

The number one issue for the Latino community has always been education. Unfortunately, we are a poor community. In this society, it's no longer a reality that one can work at a decent factory job, work with the sweat off your back, and make a decent living like our parents. It's now about the development of your brain power. If we are not educated, if our community is not educated, then I think that numbers alone aren't going to make a great impact in our community. There's no pride in having a large number of people who are poor, disenfranchised, and out of the mainstream.

I believe that the development of our intellect is the number one issue for American society if we are going to remain the number one country in the world. The Latino community has to realize that there is no more important issue than the education of our children.

HJHP

Having worked in Washington as staff counsel to the United States Senate Judiciary Committee, can you speak to your experience as a Latina in Washington in the seventies, and how do you think this might be different today?

Hernández

It's not that different. I would tell any young Latino/Latina to really pursue disciplines, areas, issues, and places outside of their comfort zone. I was very fortunate to have that opportunity. I was one of few; in fact, I think I was the first Hispanic to be counsel to the Senate Judiciary Committee.

There's nothing more rewarding than working with the best and the brightest. Doors were open to me; I met and engaged people who were making policy; and I worked on policy and bills that are laws today. Being in a place where I was intellectually stimulated and challenged 24/7 was a phenomenal experience.

What I tell Latinos is that one cannot dream of what one does not know. And at that time, I didn't know what that concept was! But I would say that leaving home and going to DC and experiencing new things was a phenomenal experience for me. Being willing to try new things is the only way we're going to improve our lot in life.

HJHP

Only one woman of color has served in the United States Senate to date—Carol Moselley Braun (D-IL), an African American who served from 1993 to 1999. How

can we work as a community to increase the representation of Hispanic women in Congress, and what do you see as the unique perspective these women can give?

Hernández

Everyone has a unique perspective, and we look at life through the lens of our experience. As Latinas, our lens is one of basically managing and bridging two worlds—the cultural world that we come from and the mainstream world that we have to function in. Unfortunately for Latina women, we often come from communities that generally are poor. So we understand what it is to be a mother; we understand what it is to be a working mother. We understand, unfortunately in many instances, how to be a working *single* mother. We understand the demands on raising children and the health care needs of children. Those are the things we bring to the table because we have to live them. I think the lens that women in general, and women who understand these issues can offer, is a practical lens on the issues and in crafting effective programs.

Politics is an interesting field. I was brought up to think that serving in the public interest is a very noble endeavor. I don't see politics as "dirty." Although I've been in the belly of the beast and I've seen how it functions, I have the highest respect for politics. But it's a tough, tough field to be in. And women need to be tough, practical, and yet, not lose what makes them unique. Politics is like making *chorizo*. It's not a pleasant process. Washington is a place of give and take. If you don't want to give, then you can't take; if you want to take, you have to give. The difference is you have to know your bottom line and not sacrifice your principles.

HJHP

As a woman who's had a successful career politics in law, politics, and philanthropy as well as a dedicated family life, what advice would you give young women who seek to find that balance of career and family?

Hernández

It's very simple: you can have it all, but not all at the same time. There's a lot of sacrifice. I mean, I did it thanks to a very supportive husband. I did it because I moved back from DC to be across the street from my mother so she could help me raise my kids. I mean, you make sacrifices. When I came back from Washington to L.A., it was because we decided that our family was expanding and we were going to have children. My husband and I made a decision that while our children were young, we would not move from L.A. I didn't care if they offered me the Queenship of Whatever, we were not moving from L.A. because our children were going to have a stable home life. You make choices. I think this is one area where Latinos' concept of an extended family is really an asset. Like I said, I moved across the street from my mother; my sister also lives across the street. My kids grew up with aunts and uncles and grandpas and grandmas. But that meant that I had to move back home to L.A. where that support was; I couldn't stay in Washington. And I think that as Latinos, we need to nurture. I know Hillary Clinton said that it takes a village to raise a child. I believe it takes a *rancho* to raise a child.

HJHP

Having been the president of two highly visible and powerful organizations, what have been the stigmas you've faced as a strong woman in an authoritative position, and what has been your approach to dealing with these misconceptions?

Hernández

I don't let obstacles get in the way; I never have. And I live up to every stereotype: Latina, short, you know? But do I let that get in the way? No. You know, some people will tell you that I'm "all charm," and I am. It's taken me a long time to say this, but generally I'm a pretty pleasant person to be around. *But don't cross me.* I don't hesitate if I feel that I've been wronged or deprived of something to confront the situation.

And if I put my mind to it, if I work myself, if I prepare, and if the process is fair, I'm going to get it. And if it's not fair, then I'm going to show that the process was not fair. Just give me an equal opportunity and I will show you I'm the best, and I can tangle with the best. I've always felt comfortable. I'm just as comfortable going to the weekend swap meet as going to the steak dinner at the White House. You know, it's all about people. So yes, I've been discriminated against and there have been obstacles. But I can't complain; look where I am!

HJHP

Were there any mentors that were instrumental in helping you get to where you are?

Hernández

Yes, my parents have been my greatest mentors and supporters. My father taught himself how to read and write, and he's one of the brightest people I've met. Had he had an education, he would have been a scholar. But he didn't have that opportunity. My mother worked ever since I can remember—whether it was in the fields, in a factory, she worked. She held the family together.

When I went to law school, I didn't know a single lawyer. I wanted to go into law to change the world. But I couldn't point to someone who had done it because I didn't know any lawyers. So in a way, I haven't had mentors. And you know what? That's not all necessarily bad. I've made mistakes, but I've been able to shape my own destiny and not fit into a cookie cutter. I believe that has allowed me to really be comfortable with who I am and to find the strength within me.

HJHP

You've been involved in several pieces of landmark legislation and other historically significant events throughout your career. What would you say has been your most rewarding experience?

Hernández

My more rewarding work has been representing the interests of the immigrant community. And it's not just representing the Latino community, but immigrants in general. I think that because of being an immigrant child, and someone who lived the immigrant experience, I feel comfortable being able to articulate the needs and aspirations of the immigrant community. When I look back, this has

been my proudest accomplishment—the immigrant community saw in me an individual who could represent their interests accurately and fairly.

HJHP

Along those lines, in December, Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents raided meat-packing plants in six states, in which over twelve thousand documented and undocumented immigrants were arrested on immigration and identity theft charges. What precedent do these raids and others before them create when it comes to dealing with undocumented immigration and the rights of immigrants and their families?

Hernández

Unfortunately, it's not a precedent-setting event. Immigration and the issue of workplace raids is a really complex issue. Our country has a long history of raids in the workplace. What I tell folks is that you don't find very many unemployed undocumented immigrants. You work, or you starve; they come to work. In this huge economy, it is evident that we need immigrant workers.

The issue is, can we craft an immigration policy that allows this country to bring in the workforce that it needs without harming the domestic workers? The competition is really within the immigrant community. Immigrants compete against immigrants, first and foremost.

Will this country ever accept the fact that it needs immigrant workers? I mean, most people would rather stay in their home country. Why would you want to come to a foreign country when you're not wanted, you don't speak the language, you don't understand the culture, and you're away from your family?

People say, "When will this issue be over with?" The issue will be addressed the day you look at me and you see an American, and you don't ask me where I came from.

HJHP

Thank you so much for your candid, inspirational thoughts today.

Passion and Policy in California

Interview with California State Assembly Speaker Fabian Núñez

Speaker Fabian Núñez (D-46th District) was elected to the California State Assembly in 2002 and sworn in as the state's 66th Speaker on 9 February 2004.

Last year, he presided over what the 31 August 2006 issue of the San Francisco Chronicle called “. . . one of the most productive legislative sessions in decades.”

In previous legislative sessions, Núñez authored bills to curb pollution, aid small business, help the homeless, discourage predatory lending, improve working conditions for hotel attendants, and offer solutions to California's long-term energy needs. As Speaker, Núñez has pushed for tough consumer protections for car buyers, a state minimum wage increase, the halting of offshoring of California jobs, the expansion of affordable health insurance to children, and affordable prescription drugs.

Last year, the Speaker worked to pass the nation's first legislation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from California industries. Other legislation he crafted will encourage cable television competition and launch major investments in California's infrastructure. Also, as a University of California regent, he has fought for more transparency and accountability in compensation practices.

Prior to being elected to the Assembly, Núñez was government affairs director for the Los Angeles Unified School District from 2000 to 2002. In this capacity, he tackled a broad range of education issues and secured millions of dollars in funding for school construction projects, children's health insurance, and low-performing schools. From 1996 to 2000, he served as political director for the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor.

Núñez, age thirty-nine, earned bachelor's of arts degrees in political science and education from Pitzer College in Claremont, CA. He resides in Los Angeles. He and his wife, Maria, have three children: Esteban, seventeen, Teresa, fifteen, and Carlos, six.

Alejandra Campoverdi conducted the interview 19 January 2007. Originally from Santa Monica, CA, Campoverdi will receive a master's in public policy degree from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University in 2008. She previously worked for the California Endowment, focusing on grants to organizations in the San Francisco Bay area and the Agricultural Worker Health Initiative.

HJHP

Thank you for taking the time to interview with us today. What is the unique role that you see for yourself as a Latino in policy making, and do you feel that being a Latino influences your policy-making priorities?

Núñez

I see myself as being one of a lucky breed of young Latinos that was able to reach an elected job in a critical period of time, but I also see myself as someone who is probably representative of the first generation of Latino “electeds” who have a certain level of influence, who are not viewed simply as Latinos.

I think that's a very important development—to be able to govern for everyone. And people don't look at us and say, “Well, you're a Latino Speaker.” You're the

Speaker, and you have just as much responsibility as any other Speaker. People don't have to question how authentic your interest is in serving all of California, and in my case, the 46th District. As the Speaker, my responsibilities are statewide.

HJHP

According to the *California Latino Demographic Databook* Web site, in 2005 more than a third of all Californians were Latino. What do you see as the effect of this growing population on policy making?

Núñez

I think this population trend that we have experienced in California will continue to spiral upward for Latinos in terms of the demographic makeup of the state. I think it's significant, but it presents a lot of challenges as well. On the one hand, there are some opportunities. For example, the more Latinos who live in California, the more acceptable the Latino culture is in the mainstream.

At the same time, the growth in our population has also expanded the poverty in the state. If you look at poverty among Latinos, in particular in California, you're talking about the working class. You see that the needs of our community are very challenging. Access to housing, access to jobs that pay a living wage, access to health care—all of these things are challenges that the Latino community faces.

There will come a time in California in the next twenty years where we're going to be 40 percent of the population. And then ultimately, we'll be half the population. The challenge for us when we get to that point is, can Latinos continue to sustain the middle class in California?

The middle class, in my view, is really the fullest expression of a modern democracy. I think for us, it's really a question of whether we can continue to strengthen the middle class so that it can accommodate the growth. I think that it's going to be a challenge because if you look at the types of jobs that Latino immigrants do, for example, it's all in the service sector.

So from a political standpoint, people can celebrate [the growth] and say, "Oh yeah, we feel great. Latinos make up a third now; we have more political strength." You always have to look at political strength not so much vis-à-vis how many elected officials are in power at the state level or national level. But you have to look at the living conditions of the people. Do they have health care? Do they have adequate housing? Are their children getting a good education?

HJHP

I would like to read you a quote from the Family Security Foundation: "When a water pipe breaks in your house, the very first thing you do is shut off the water, and then the mess is cleaned up. Illegal immigration must be treated in the same way." What is your response to comments such as these?

Núñez

They are shortsighted, simplistic, unreasonable comments that come from people who really don't understand the laws of supply and demand. We have a government at the federal level that has to deal with the complex task of seeing through

real immigration reform, and being able to balance our government's federal laws on immigration with the laws of supply and demand, which are very incongruent.

The real challenge for people and for America is—as the melting pot that our society is—we have an obligation to prove to the world that this experiment of multiculturalism works. And one of the challenges you have with that is to have an intelligent debate over immigration. [Such a debate] is very difficult because people's racial biases play into it. You read me that quote; it's too simplistic. As long as you have willing employers and a demand for the work that immigrants—undocumented or otherwise—provide, they will continue to come.

The other thing is that we now live in a world economy where every corner of the globe is interconnecting. It's hard to look at ourselves as different nations, and of course we have to respect the sovereignty of every nation, and that's important. But we live in an ever-changing society, and economies have intensified.

Globalization has in many ways reshaped the face of the world. It is tearing away the national bodies that want to keep their own identity. And in the world of business, there is no such thing as "I belong to this country, and I'll only do business in this country." People go wherever they get the best rate of return on their investment. If you want to understand immigration, you have to understand the world economy and globalization. Some people are very shortsighted and ignore those things. And oftentimes, it's the racial biases that end up getting in the way.

HJHP

On that note, what do you see as the economic and social benefits of more comprehensive immigration reform, and what role do you think Mexico could play?

Núñez

There are economic and social benefits to comprehensive immigration reform. Certainly for the people—undocumented folks that live in the United States—because they contribute to our economy and they pay taxes in this country. They live by the rules of this country, and their allegiance is to this country. They made the mistake of coming here without legal status, but I believe there is a strong economic contribution. People don't have to live in the shadows anymore. But in a social setting, it also gives people an opportunity to say, "Welcome to mainstream America." And it gives people the right to accept, adopt, and embrace America as their home.

In the context of Mexico, the more stable that the immigrants of Mexican descent are, the more they can focus on helping their family back home. What that does is helps stabilize the economies of the countries they come from and it slows down immigration into the United States.

Clearly, stabilizing the lives of undocumented immigrants in the United States is going to help stabilize the economies in their own countries. In the case of Mexico, you have a developing country next to the most advanced economy in the world. And so clearly, people look for the best opportunities, and it's opportunities that bring people here. But the Mexican government does have an obligation to invest in its people and to improve the quality of life, as well as to increase the minimum wage so that people can live in Mexico, earn a decent living, and be able to pay their rent and feed their families. Immigration isn't solely the problem

of the United States, in this case. The other countries have to do something as well.

HJHP

You've spoken about the urgency of fixing California's health care system. With 6.6 million uninsured Californians, how do you propose improving access to health care, especially for minority and immigrant communities?

Núñez

There is a federal law that requires every hospital in the state of California, both public and private, to provide emergency care to any person who shows up at an emergency room, which I think is a just law. Having said that, the law has put a stranglehold on the cost of health care because you have six and a half million people who don't have access to it.

And so in many respects, if you're going to solve the health care crisis that we are facing in California, it isn't just about the six and a half million people that don't have it. It's also about the people who have health insurance and are paying a hidden tax, indirectly helping to subsidize those who don't. You're not just subsidizing people who don't have health insurance, you're also subsidizing their employers who refuse to pay health care insurance.

What I'm proposing is a comprehensive health care package which would allow, first and foremost, every child—regardless of their legal status—to have immediate, universal health care through Medi-Cal and the Health Families Program by January 2008. I'd require every employer to pay a portion of the premium towards the health care costs of their employees. Then I would require employees who are working to pay a portion of their health care. Ultimately, we would clamp down on the health care insurance industry through changes in the underwriting process, but also by making sure that we reduce the cost of health care premiums so that they're more affordable for not only working class families, but also middle class families.

This is the way to do it. Ultimately it's going to reduce the cost of health care overall, so that everyone who's paying a premium to have health care insurance is going to be paying a much lower one. And we'll be able to cover every Californian, regardless of their legal status. It's the right thing to do, but it also makes economic sense.

HJHP

How does your proposal compare to Massachusetts's universal health care program?

Núñez

The Massachusetts model is an individual mandate. Essentially if you're a resident of Massachusetts, you have to have health care insurance. My proposal is not a mandate on the individual. It's a mandate on the employer. I don't believe that you can require everyone to have health care insurance until the cost of health care is affordable.

HJHP

California has been a leader in environmental issues, passing a landmark global warming bill last year. Will this affect communities that are disproportionately affected by localized air contaminants, including low-income communities and communities of color?

Núñez

If you look at Assembly Bill No. 32, the *California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006*, which I proudly authored, you will find environmental justice written all over it. The reason why we did that was to make sure that communities that are disproportionately affected by contaminants are free from having to breathe unhealthy air. One of the ways we do this is by making sure that all of the major industries that are the largest emitters of CO₂ reduce their carbon output by 20 percent. We believe that between now and 2020, reducing carbon output to 1990 levels is not just going to be good for our sustainability, but it also is going to help vastly improve the air quality in urban areas.

HJHP

On a more personal note, your political career did not follow a traditional path, from your early childhood years in Mexico to your experience as an amateur boxer. What is your advice to young Latinos who aspire to have political careers, but do not have the typical upbringing or experience?

Núñez

I am the most atypical. No one in my family ever was involved in politics. My mother had a third- to fourth-grade education. My father is self-taught, never went to school a day in his life. So I come from a very humble family.

When you have a similar background to mine and you're a young, aspiring Latino, you need to have the passion to want to do it and you have to want to do it for the right reasons. Not for the glory and attention, and the press clippings and the news coverage. You have to want to do it because you really believe in it. And I believe that it is the people who really believe in this and want to make a change that are the most successful.

And it doesn't matter whether you come from a political family like the Kennedys, or if you come from an apolitical family of farm workers and gardeners like me. It doesn't matter. No one should be dissuaded from wanting to get into politics because they don't come from a political family, or because they don't have the type of upbringing or the political connections that ultimately will be helpful.

Some people have them, and it's a lot easier to get to that place. But when you work really hard for it and you get there, you appreciate it a lot more. *And* people take you seriously because they know you're committed to what you're doing and they know that you have a passion for it. I always think the best way to make a difference is to have a passion for something.

There's nothing like advocating for something you want and making a passionate case for it. I remember being in college, writing papers. My professor would say, "You know, you can't do it this way. You have to use logical arguments, not

passionate arguments.” And I learned from that because you do. You have to be able to make sense. You have to make a coherent case. But a coherent case alone doesn’t win it. You have to have passion to make it happen. That’s what’s necessary.

HJHP

I think that’s the perfect “last word” to close on. Thank you very much for your time.

Núñez

Thank you.

Twenty Years of Journalistic Justice

Interview with Univision Anchorman Jorge Ramos

Jorge Ramos has been the anchorman for Noticiero Univision since 1986. Among his many recognitions, he received the Maria Moors Cabot Award from the University of Columbia and has won eight Emmy Awards for excellence in journalism (including the first one ever presented by the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences to honor leaders of Spanish-language television). He was honored in 2002 with the Ruben Salazar Award by the National Council of La Raza for his positive portrayal of Latinos.

Ramos received the Latino Book Award in 2006 for his book Dying to Cross (Morir en el Intento). He is the author of six other books, many of which have become bestsellers: Behind the Mask (Detrás de la Máscara), What I Saw (Lo Que Vi), The Other Face of America (La Otra Cara de América), Hunting the Lion (Cazando al León), his autobiography No Borders: a Journalist's Search for Home (Atravesando Fronteras), and The Latino Wave (La Ola Latina).

He writes a weekly column for more than forty newspapers in the United States and Latin America that is distributed by the New York Times Syndicate, provides two daily radio commentaries for the Radio Univision network, and collaborates with the largest Spanish-language Web sites in the United States.

Ramos is one of the most respected journalists among the fifty million Hispanics in the United States and in the thirteen Latin American countries where his newscast is seen every night. He has covered five wars (El Salvador, the Persian Gulf, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq) and has been a witness to some of the most important news stories of the last two decades, including the fall of the Berlin Wall, the disintegration of the former Soviet Union, September 11, and the catastrophe of Hurricane Katrina.

He has interviewed some of the most influential leaders and writers in the world: George W. Bush, Bill Clinton, Al Gore, George Bush Sr., John Kerry, John Edwards, Fidel Castro, Hugo Chávez, Daniel Ortega, Felipe Calderón, Vicente Fox, Ernesto Zedillo, Carlos Salinas de Gortari, Subcommander Marcos, Carlos Menem, Andrés Pastrana, Ernesto Samper, Octavio Paz, and Isabel Allende.

Ramos is an immigrant. He came to the United States as a student in 1983. In November 1986, at age twenty-eight, he became one of the youngest national news anchors in the history of American television.

Ramos holds a degree in communications at the Ibero-American University in Mexico City and has a master's in international studies degree from the University of Miami.¹

Nelly G. Nieblas and Celina Moreno interviewed Jorge Ramos on 6 December 2006. Nieblas, a native of Los Angeles, CA, will receive a master's in public administration degree from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University in 2007. Nieblas has worked for the Mexican Education and Health Department and for the Congressional Hispanic Caucus in Washington, DC. Moreno, a native of San Antonio, TX, will receive a master's in public policy degree from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University in 2007. A graduate of print journalism at the University of Texas at Austin, Moreno most recently spent a year working with the Intercultural Development Research Association, an education research and advocacy not-for-profit organization.

HJHP

As the face of the country's leading Spanish television network, how do you define Univision's mission?

Ramos

The most important thing is to keep the Hispanic community informed about Latino issues, about U.S. issues, and about international issues. It is my belief that being informed allows you to make better decisions. Let me give you an example. If the Hispanic community knows that we [the Hispanic Community] are 15 percent of the population in the United States, yet we only have two senators, one governor, and twenty-four members of Congress, they immediately realize that there is a disparity, a problem. These are the kind of stories that Univision wants to emphasize.

HJHP

What types of challenges does the media face when trying to communicate with a very diverse Latino population?

Ramos

The diversity of the Hispanic population makes it a real challenge to try to communicate our news stories. What concerns a Cuban American in Miami is very different from what concerns a Mexican American in Texas or California, or a Puerto Rican in New York. Let's talk about, for instance, Fidel Castro. Everybody, of course, is interested in Fidel Castro's health. However, that story would become a first block story or a lead story in Miami, but not necessarily in Texas or in California. At the same time, when we are discussing the problems facing the twelve million undocumented immigrants in the United States, we know that that's a story that people in Texas, California, and Arizona would be interested in. But definitely, Puerto Ricans and Cubans couldn't care less about what's going on with the undocumented immigrants because they are not facing that same problem.

We are facing challenges in trying to include the most significant news stories in the most attractive way to appeal to an increasingly diverse community. It used to be that Mexican Americans composed about 70 percent of the Hispanic population. But nowadays, Mexican Americans are about 55 percent of the Hispanic population. Therefore, the diversity within the Hispanic community is increasing. We have to pay attention to groups like Dominicans and Central Americans, which are becoming a growing part of the Latino community.

HJHP

Having interviewed leaders from Fidel Castro to President Bush, which interviews impacted you the most and why?

Ramos

Well, I am convinced that the most powerful and controversial men make for the most interesting interviews and that part of the social responsibility of a journalist is to ask the tough questions to those same men. So my interviews with President Bush, Fidel Castro, Hugo Chávez, and Subcomandante Marcos in Mexico are the ones that had enormous repercussions in the news media.

HJHP

Is there an interview in particular that has especially impacted you?

Ramos

Many, including those that I mentioned. Going to the White House and talking to the president is always something that leaves a mark both on you and on the media. I've had the opportunity to talk to George Bush Sr., Bill Clinton, and George W. Bush. Those interviews are always important and unforgettable, such as the one with dictator Fidel Castro, with whom I could not finish the interview because his bodyguards threw me to the floor in the middle of the interview. While talking with Bolivian president Evo Morales, he stood up six minutes into the interview and decided not to talk to me anymore. Then there was my interview with Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez, who insulted me in the middle of the interview because he didn't like the questions. Those are interviews that I always remember. I don't remember just one; I remember many.

HJHP

How do you maintain objectivity while reporting news stories to which you feel personally tied—for example, immigration?

Ramos

After twenty-three years in the United States, I still feel like an immigrant. But also, there are disasters like the earthquake in Mexico in 1995 or Hurricane Katrina that obviously affected me personally and emotionally. It is a stereotype that journalists have no fear when covering a story or that we always keep our emotions in check. That's only true when you are delivering the news. Nevertheless, the process of covering a story is always very emotionally demanding. And it always leaves a mark.

What we do is cover stories with what I call "journalistic justice." For example, when covering Cuba, you cannot and should not treat Fidel Castro and the victims of his dictatorship in the same manner. In this sense, journalists are not objective. However, you are achieving journalistic justice by covering different stories in different ways. And even though we aim at objectivity, we do not act in a vacuum. We have personal opinions whenever we are confronted with a story; we just have to learn to live with that.

Having said that, I'm always very careful about keeping those opinions to myself. If I'm writing a column or an essay, and the viewers or the readers know that I'm including my opinion, it's fine as long as they know that it is my opinion. But when I'm doing the newscast, my opinions always have to be kept to myself.

HJHP

You've been called the voice of the voiceless. What do you see as the obligations associated with this role? How do you define that role?

Ramos

I have a frivolous position as a journalist in the sense that my voice and my words are heard by millions of people every month. Therefore, as a journalist and as an immigrant, I think I have the responsibility to speak for those who do not

have a voice. Those who do not have a voice in this country are mostly undocumented immigrants. Even though I am legally in this country, I feel the need to speak about them.

Trying to get the voice of the voiceless, in other words the voice of undocumented immigrants from the major networks—ABC, NBC, CBS, CNN, Fox News—is almost impossible. Sometimes the only place to hear those voices is in Spanish. The major networks and the cable networks always complain that they are losing viewers. But what the major English-speaking networks do not realize is that part of that trend is explained by the fact that they are not covering stories that the Hispanic community is interested in.

For instance, if you wanted to know who won the recent presidential election in Venezuela, it would have been impossible for you to find the results on ABC or CNN's English network. You would have to wait for Univision's Spanish newscast or CNN's Spanish network to announce the results. If you were following the political crisis in Mexico before Felipe Calderón took office, you would have been hard-pressed to find that information on the English language newscasts. So you see, we are giving a voice to those who do not have a voice. We are airing news that you couldn't find anywhere else.

HJHP

What, in your view, are some of the most important policy issues affecting Latinos today and why?

Ramos

Univision News and Spanish newspaper polls show that the most important issues for Latinos are education, jobs, health, and immigration. It is a stereotype to say that the only issue that Latinos care about is immigration. The reason why we are here, the reason why many immigrants come to this country, is so [that] their kids can have better educations. So there is no question in my mind, and polls [indicate] that education is the most important issue for most Latinos. But again, after education, the important issues are jobs, immigration, and health care.

And let me add to that. The lack of political representation is one of the major problems Latinos face when confronting the problems that I just described. We don't have the political representation that we deserve, comprising roughly 15 percent of the population. It is very difficult for our representatives in state and federal government to confront these problems and find solutions when we do not have enough members in the Congress, Senate, or in the different state legislatures.

HJHP

You mentioned immigration, which, like you said, is an issue stereotypically afforded the most importance. The immigrants' rights demonstrations that took place in May 2006 sparked a debate as to whether the United States was witnessing the beginning of another civil rights movement. What do you think of that characterization?

Ramos

Well, I think the marches, protests, and demonstrations made visible what has been invisible to millions of Americans. That is that millions of people in the

United States live in conditions similar to slavery. They live in fear and in the shadows of American society despite the fact that they contribute enormously to this society.

But I do agree that those demonstrations signaled a major change in American society towards a state where everybody has the right to live without fear of prosecution and the right to live with dignity. Eventually, I hope, we're going to see comprehensive immigration reform that allows people living in fear and in the shadows to come out.

HJHP

Now that the Democrats control the House and the Senate, how do you anticipate that immigration reform efforts will be impacted?

Ramos

We have a very short window of opportunity and we have three very important elements in play. First, we have a new Congress controlled by Democrats. The Democratic Party has historically been closer to the needs of the Hispanic and immigrant populations.

The second element is that President Bush does not have to face another election. Therefore, I hope that he, being a former governor of Texas, understands the plight of the immigrant community and really tries to go beyond the walls and look for a real solution for those living illegally in the United States.

The third element that we have to take into consideration is that we have a new president in Mexico who is more pragmatic than President Fox and who could push for true immigration reform in the United States working together with President Bush and the Democrats. But this window of opportunity will last no more than two years. So we really have to start working real fast on this comprehensive immigration reform and try to take advantage of these three elements in order to find a real solution.

HJHP

Jorge, what, to you, would be the ideal policy?

Ramos

The ideal policy is very simple: To provide legal status to the twelve million undocumented immigrants. Second, is to provide jobs—temporary work visas to those immigrants who come every single year to the United States. Third, it has to include an investment plan in Latin America so that eventually, in a couple of decades, immigrants won't have to look to the north as their only economic alternative. I see these as the three elements that have to be included in any comprehensive immigration reform.

HJHP

Every president since George H.W. Bush has made sure to be interviewed by you. How do you think the nation's changing demographics is affecting political strategy? How will the increasing Latino population continue to affect electoral politics in the future?

Ramos

I am completely convinced that the Hispanic community decided both the 2000 and 2004 elections. Hispanics are the fastest-growing electoral group in the United States. And eventually, by the year 2025, there will be more Hispanics than non-Hispanics. In other words, the United States is going through a process of Latinization. And this, already, is having an incredible political impact in every election.

There used to be a time in which presidential candidates had no idea that the Hispanic community was an important factor in any election. But nowadays, every presidential candidate makes sure that they are covered by the Hispanic media. The same way that Latinos decided the outcomes of the 2000 and 2004 elections, I am convinced that, in a very close election, Latinos will again decide the outcome. Therefore, it would be suicidal for any candidate not to pay close attention to the needs of the Hispanic community and to the growing Hispanic electorate.

HJHP

Samuel Huntington (2004, 30), in his article “The Hispanic Challenge,” argues that the persistent inflow of Hispanic immigrants threatens to divide the United States into two peoples, two cultures, and two languages. How do you respond to those comments?

Ramos

Huntington is wrong, completely wrong. There are many people who have nostalgic views of the United States, and Huntington is among them. They simply do not realize that this is a multicultural, multiethnic, multiracial society and that, thanks to the immigrant population, this is a stronger, healthier society.

The nostalgic views of those like Pat Buchanan, Huntington, and Lou Dobbs hoping to have a monoracial society are not only old, but not valid anymore. I mean, this has always been a diverse community. And thanks to the Hispanic population, it's becoming even more diverse. The strength of the United States is based not on its language or on its ethnic origin, but on its diversity. Thanks to the diversity, thanks to the respect of this diversity, and thanks to the acceptance of immigrants, the United States is a greater nation.

So I cannot understand those who fear the diversity that has made the United States such a great country. Also, I am always shocked by the fact that you find many people in the United States who believe that speaking one language is better than speaking two or three languages. I simply cannot understand that reasoning. But eventually the United States will have to look itself in the mirror and realize that it's a truly diverse society and that, thanks to that diversity, it's a stronger society.

HJHP

What advice would you give to young Latino and Latina adults as they embark on careers in public policy and decision making?

Ramos

The real problem that we have as a Hispanic community is lack of representation. So my only advice, in whatever field that you choose, is to be active, be

present, be visible, be strong, be powerful because this is an incredible country. This country gave me the opportunities that my country of origin couldn't give me. And make sure that you make waves, that you change things, because it is possible in this country. Let's take advantage of that.

HJHP

Gracias, Jorge.

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Advancing School Readiness for Young Hispanic Children Through Universal Prekindergarten

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Abstract

Hispanics account for over one-fifth of newborns in the United States. Hispanic children, on average, achieve at lower levels from kindergarten forward than the non-Hispanic White majority and Asian Americans. Increasing the percentage of Hispanic children who enter kindergarten “ready” for school constitutes one of the nation’s most important current agenda items in education. Given that it is believed that the early childhood years provide the best window for improving academic trajectories for Hispanic children, this article describes current findings and offers recommendations to expand high-quality universal prekindergarten (UPK) programs for Hispanics in the United States.

Introduction

Young Hispanic children (from birth to age eight) are currently the largest and fastest growing racial and ethnic minority subpopulation in the United States. In 2002, there were nearly 13 million Hispanic children and youth in the United States, about 18 percent of the nation’s under-eighteen population (Census Bureau

2003b). Hispanics were an even larger share of the very young that year. Of the four million babies born in the United States in 2002, nearly 877,000 were Hispanic, about 22 percent of the total—up from 16 percent of the births a decade earlier (Martin et al. 2005). It is anticipated the under-eighteen Hispanic population will grow to over seventeen million by 2020 (Census Bureau 2003a).

Despite extensive efforts over the past few decades to raise academic achievement among educationally and economically disadvantaged elementary and secondary school students, including low socioeconomic status (SES) Hispanics, progress has been slow (NCES 2003c; NCES 2001a). It has been especially difficult to raise achievement levels in high school, a problem of increasing concern to policy makers (Olson 2005).

Promisingly, there is a growing body of evidence that high-quality UPK programs (those for three- and four-year-olds) can have a positive impact on the school careers of many children, particularly those from low SES families (Bowman, Donovan, and Burns 2001; Gormley, Gayer, and Dawson 2005; Heckman and Masterov 2004; Reynolds 2003). There also are some promising approaches to nurturing the cognitive development of infants and toddlers from disadvantaged circumstances (Love et al. 2002). In addition, some elementary school improvement strategies seem to be producing meaningful academic achievement benefits for low SES students (Borman and Hewes 2001). As a result, there is reason to believe that the period from birth through age eight currently constitutes the best window of opportunity for making improvements in the educational trajectories of disadvantaged children, including Hispanics, in the United States.

Parties who advocate for voluntary UPK should be precise regarding its capacity to produce developmental and academic achievement gains. Such gains are optimized when the progress of structural, curricular, and instructional approaches are informed by sound theory and rigorous research. For Hispanic youths, research suggests that the most effective UPK programs directly address language and culture, providing sound instruction in both Spanish and English. In this article, we discuss several demographic attributes of young Hispanic children, their current early education profile in terms of access and achievement, and how increased access to high-quality UPK programs constitutes a promising approach to improve their educational opportunities. We end by offering a number of recommendations from the research literature to ensure the high quality of UPK programs for young Hispanics.

Demographic Attributes

Children of Hispanic heritage in the United States are not a homogenous group but embody diverse social, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds (Montemayor and Mendoza 2004; Census Bureau 2003b). Hispanic children represent, for example, long-term native-born populations to the United States along with various countries of origin, each of which is associated with a unique combination of histories, cultural practices, perspectives, and traditions. Recent growth in the young Hispanic population in the United States has been driven to a high degree by immigration patterns from Latin America (Census Bureau 2003b). In 2000, one in

five children from birth to age eight in the United States were Hispanic (Hernandez 2006). Of these children, over 64 percent were born into immigrant families in which at least one parent was born outside the United States. A large majority of young Hispanic children are of Mexican origin (68 percent), but substantial proportions have origins in Puerto Rico (9 percent), Central America (7 percent), South America (6 percent), or are Cuban or Dominican (3 percent each) (Hernandez 2006). Two-thirds of young Mexican-origin and Cuban-origin children live in immigrant families, and this rises to about nine in ten for those with origins in the Dominican Republic and Central or South America. Especially important is that the vast majority of young Hispanic children are, themselves, U.S. citizens: 85 percent for those with South American origins, 88 percent for those with Mexican origins, and 91–92 percent for those with origins in the Dominican Republic and Central or South America (Capps et al. 2004; Hernandez 2006).

Compared to the Whites and other racial and ethnic groups, Hispanic children and families demonstrate a number of favorable demographic attributes. In an analysis of census data, Hernandez (2006) found that a large proportion of Hispanic children live in two-parent households. Indeed, 77 percent of young Hispanic children (from birth to age eight) lived with two parents in 2000. The proportion rises to 81–86 percent for young children in immigrant families from Mexico, Central and South America, and Cuba. These proportions decrease, however, in native families from these regions as well as those from the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico.

Young Hispanic children, on average, live in families with a strong work ethic and desire to succeed (Hernandez 2006). Ninety-three percent of these children have fathers who worked during the year previous to the 2000 census survey. The proportion is the same in both native-born and immigrant families. Moreover, Hispanic children are approximately three times more likely to live with three or more adults (including their parents) who participate in the workforce.

Despite low socioeconomic circumstances, Hispanic families demonstrate various positive physical health outcomes. Studies have consistently found that Hispanics have lower infant mortality rates, better birth outcomes, healthier diets, and lower rates of obesity compared to Whites (Escarce, Morales, and Rumbaut 2006). Variations on these domains have been found between national-origin groups and by immigrant generation status. Hispanics of Puerto Rican descent, for example, tend to have worse health status indicators than other national-origin groups while Hispanics of Mexican and Central American origin often exhibit the most favorable health outcomes despite their poverty status.

Survey data has also highlighted that Hispanic parents demonstrate a positive attitude toward education and the schooling of their children. Although parents of young Hispanics, on average, do not have high levels of formal education attainment, they have high educational aspirations for their children (NCES 1998). Parents express interest in enrolling their children in early education programs and supporting them through postsecondary schooling. A survey conducted by the Tomás Rivera Policy Institute found that over 90 percent of Hispanic parents feel that it is very important or somewhat important for children to attend preschool (Perez and Zarate 2006).

Young Hispanic children live in a variety of home language environments. In general, Spanish dominates such environments with access to English as a significant factor. Because early language development is strongly associated with cognitive development and academic success (Risley and Hart 2006), it is important to understand the intersection of Spanish and English for these children and how the native language can be leveraged to increase school achievement. Some young Hispanics acquire English as their first language and maintain only monolingual proficiency throughout their life. Others speak Spanish as their first language, and learn English as they enter public schooling. The proportional size of the latter subpopulation has been growing rapidly over the past few decades. Indeed, the percentage of the overall child population in the United States whose native language was not English rose from 6 percent in 1979 to 14 percent in 1999. The National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (2006) reported that enrollment from kindergarten to twelfth grade for English language learners (ELL) grew over 65 percent between the 1993–1994 and the 2003–2004 school years while the total population from kindergarten to twelfth grade grew less than 7 percent. The majority of this growth is attributable to increases in populations of Latin American origin. In 2000, Spanish accounted for 76 percent of all ELL students from preschool to fifth grade.

Using data from a national sample of children born between December 2001 and January 2002, López, Barrueco, and Miles (2006) describe the home language environments of Hispanic infants. The largest group (34 percent) of Hispanic infants lived in homes in which Spanish was the primary language. Twenty-two percent lived in a home in which English was the primary language spoken, with some Spanish; 21 percent lived in English-only homes; and 19 percent in Spanish-only homes. In sum, it was found that approximately three out of four Hispanic infants were exposed to some level of Spanish in the home.

The positive attributes which Hispanic children and families demonstrate, e.g., two-parent households, strong work ethic, physical health, positive attitude toward school and education, tend to decrease the negative effects of poverty and low parental education (Shields and Behrman 2004). However, these attributes are not generally sufficient to sustain Hispanic students on a trajectory of educational success over time. Robust early interventions are necessary and have proven successful to increase school readiness and decrease pervasive achievement gaps.

Early Education

Currently, Hispanics lag behind their White and Asian American peers at all proficiency levels of reading and mathematics (at least a half of a standard deviation) at the beginning and throughout schooling from kindergarten to twelfth grade (García et al. 2005; NCES 2003a; NCES 2003b; Reardon and Galindo 2006). Educational achievement patterns of virtually all racial and ethnic groups are established during the early years of school and change little thereafter (García et al. 2005). Although some of the differences between racial and ethnic groups are accounted for by socioeconomic differences between groups (on average Hispanics have lower SES than Whites and Asian Americans), much of it is not (Reardon and Galindo 2006). Using data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal

Study, Kindergarten Cohort (ECLS-K; see NCES 2001b), Reardon and Galindo (2006) found that Hispanic children scored from 0.3 to 0.5 of a standard deviation lower in mathematics and reading than their White peers within all five SES quintiles (SES in ECLS-K is a composite of household income and parents' level of education and occupation) from kindergarten to fifth grade. Hence, race and ethnicity had a substantial effect on early achievement over and above SES. In a separate analysis of ECLS-K data, Reardon (2003) noted that these achievement differences by SES and race and ethnicity from kindergarten to first grade were attributable to processes within, between, and out of schools. That is, practices in the home and school bear meaningful influences on racial and ethnic and SES achievement gaps in early education (García, Jensen, and Cuéllar 2006).

Because academic achievement during the early elementary grades is strongly associated with sustained success throughout secondary and postsecondary schooling (Gilliam and Zigler 2004; Magnuson and Waldfogel 2005), Hispanic children are especially positioned to benefit from involvement in high-quality UPK programs. While no extensive study exists regarding the longitudinal impacts of Hispanic participation in prekindergarten across the country, current evidence suggests that Hispanics—and children in general—who attend prekindergarten programs learn language, social skills, and practical skills that are related with enhanced achievement in the future. Indeed, an evaluation of the UPK program in Tulsa, OK, revealed several benefits for young Hispanics (Gormley, Gayer, and Dawson 2005). In this study authors estimated the impact of prekindergarten on achievement—letter/word identification, spelling, and applied problems. The sample consisted of 1,567 children enrolled in prekindergarten and 1,461 kindergarten children who had just completed prekindergarten. As shown in Figure 1, gains for Hispanic students in this program were especially impressive. Hispanics experienced a 79 percent gain in letter/word identification, a 39 percent gain in spelling, and a 54 percent gain in applied problem solving. This progress outpaces gains which naturally would have occurred during one year of a child's development.

Momentum is currently building in the United States at all levels of government to make substantial investments and commitments to UPK programs. The provision of high-quality educational access for young children in the country is motivated not only by research in child development but also in economics. In terms of child development, neuropsychological research shows that the brains of very young children are extremely malleable during the early years of life (Ramey and Ramey 1998; Shonkoff and Phillips 2000). Indeed, a key characteristic of early childhood (from birth to age three) is the remarkably rapid brain development that occurs during this period. In many ways, these early years provide the foundation for the brain's lifelong capacity for growth and change. A strong neurological groundwork is established in early childhood through rich experiences that allow the brain to develop to the point of being able to process, encode, and interact with the environment (Kagan and Kauerz 2006). High-quality early education programs are able to provide the necessary scaffolding and facilitate this development.

With regards to the financial investment in early education programs, economists Heckman and Masterov (2004) found that “enriched prekindergarten programs

available to disadvantaged children on a voluntary basis . . . have [a] strong track record of promoting achievement for disadvantaged children, improving their labor market outcomes, and reducing involvement in crime.” Moreover, educational policies that stress financial investment in early educational development are much cheaper than those that seek to remedy early educational deficits at the middle school and high school levels. Simply stated, the later in life that attempts are made to repair early deficits, the costlier remediation becomes (Ramey and Ramey 1998; Reynolds and Temple 2005; Reynolds 2003).

Given the size, rapid growth, and comparatively low achievement levels of young Hispanic children in the United States, these children are particularly situated to benefit from high-quality prekindergarten programs (García and González 2006). However, although enrollments among Hispanics are on the rise, these children are less likely than their White, Asian American, and African American peers to attend any sort of prekindergarten program (García et al. 2005). Currently, only 40 percent of three- to five-year-old Hispanics attend a prekindergarten program compared to about 60 percent of Whites and African Americans (NCES 2002). The low enrollment of Hispanic children in these programs is often misinterpreted as a function of the reluctance of Hispanic families to place their children in a center-based program. However, availability of high-quality and publicly funded programs is frequently limited in Hispanic communities, which reduces access and, therefore, enrollment (Fuller, Bridges, and Livas 2006).

Addressing UPK Quality

When they do enroll in prekindergarten, Hispanic children are more likely than their peers to attend low-quality programs: those with less-prepared teachers, fewer resources, higher teacher-to-student ratios, and larger class sizes. Moreover, even when high-quality programs exist within communities, many parents are unaware that services are available due to a lack of community outreach. Language can also be a barrier to enrollment. Parents need to be able to communicate with the center, understand the enrollment paperwork, and engage meaningfully with the children’s teachers.

Targeted preschool programs such as Head Start and some prekindergarten programs are often associated with low quality and do not always reach eligible children. Head Start, for example, reaches only about 35 percent of eligible children (Currie 2001). Arizona, California, and Texas offer targeted prekindergarten programs but these only meet four of the ten quality benchmarks identified by the National Institute of Early Education Research (Barnett et al. 2005). Thus, because Hispanic children from all socioeconomic levels have shown to benefit cognitively from enrollment in high-quality preschool, best evidence suggests that providing state-funded UPK programs constitutes a viable approach to early education delivery.

Research evidence also suggests that the success of UPK programs for Hispanics depends on the extent to which language and culture are incorporated into the center, classroom, and instruction. Because approximately 75 percent of young Hispanics are exposed to Spanish in the home (López, Barrueco, and Miles 2006), the integration of Spanish and culturally relevant content is essential. A trademark

of high-quality prekindergarten programs for young Hispanic children is the provision of dual-language content and instruction by school staff who are bilingual and culturally competent (Barnett et al. 2006; Borman et al. 2006). This approach validates the child's cognitive and linguistic abilities while bridging home/school cultural differences—establishing an environment in which parents feel comfortable and are able to express themselves to teachers.

In their study, Barnett et al. (2006) compared the effects of a dual language program to a monolingual English program within the same school district. Children in the study were from Spanish- and English-language backgrounds. Programs were compared on measures of children's growth in language, emergent literacy, and mathematics. Among the native Spanish speakers, those enrolled in the dual-language program demonstrated greater gains in Spanish vocabulary and in phonological awareness in both English and Spanish. Authors of this study concluded, therefore, that those programs built around valuing and teaching relevant culture and traditions and addressing language differences and needs directly are among the most effective. This is consistent with research by Borman et al. (2006), who conducted a meta-analysis of the research on the achievement effects of the nationally disseminated school improvement programs known as "comprehensive" school reforms implemented in predominantly Hispanic elementary school contexts.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are offered to improve educational opportunities for young Hispanics in the United States. They emphasize the need for policy and practice in early education to directly address language, and for curriculum and instruction to reflect relevant culture and traditions. Findings from the available research literature on schooling, language, and policy highlight the need for expanded UPK access and for these programs to have rich language environments, dual-language programs, and high-quality teachers and staff. These recommendations are directed to parties who influence early education policy and practice at the federal, state, and local levels, including governments, private foundations, not-for-profit organizations, and parents.

Universal prekindergarten: Young Hispanic children ages three and four should be given access to free, state-funded preschool whose enrollment is done on a volunteer basis—universal prekindergarten. Evidence suggests that high-quality UPK programs improve school readiness for young Hispanic children and decrease achievement differences between racial and ethnic groups at kindergarten entry. These programs should have bilingual and culturally competent staff to effectively engage students and to develop sustainable relationships with family members.

Moreover, states would be wise to adopt prekindergarten curricula in both Spanish and English. States and local communities should work together to offer high-quality educational experiences with a variety of schedule options. In states where access to state-funded prekindergarten is not yet universal, i.e., available to all children, policy makers and program administrators should expand definitions of eligibility to include children with limited English proficiency. This should be

an intermediate step, intended to increase Hispanic enrollments and serve more at-risk children until the larger goal of universal access is attained.

Rich language environments: UPK environments of young Hispanic children should be rich in language. Richness is defined through frequency and quality. In terms of frequency, research on cognitive development, language, and early experiences shows that the amount of talk and conversational exchanges between adults and young children are strongly associated with school readiness and academic success in formal schooling. Teachers, aides, and other school personnel should engage young Hispanic students in casual talk as much as possible and, where feasible, encourage parents to do the same. Quality refers to language systems and culture. Young Hispanics should be exposed to English and Spanish in the classroom and provided with many opportunities to speak and express themselves in either language—allowing for linguistic exploration and mixtures. For young children managing more than one language, academic skills are much more likely to develop and therefore transfer between languages when environments allow access to knowledge through all language systems, in culturally relevant ways (August and Shanahan 2006). Otherwise, cognitive development is stifled.

Rich language environments that integrate Spanish and English on an ongoing basis will also facilitate important parent/school associations. Spanish-speaking parents are more likely to involve themselves in schools and classrooms in which Spanish is used on a regular basis.

Dual-language programs: Young Hispanic children should have access to high-quality dual-language programs (i.e., two-way immersion), which teach English and Spanish language skills through content. Integrating native English and Spanish speakers in the same classroom, thereby fostering linguistic and ethnic equity among students, dual-language programs have been shown to support literacy development in English for Hispanic students without compromising Spanish skills. Moreover, research shows that academic achievement levels of young Spanish-speaking Hispanics as well as their native English-speaking peers enrolled in dual-language programs are equivalent or, in many cases, superior to outcomes of students in mainstream classrooms.

Dual-language programs should be strategically structured to promote and sustain the development of students enrolled. Researchers at the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL 2005) have provided a set of principles to help school personnel establish and maintain high-quality programs. These principles suggest that the program: (1) create and maintain an infrastructure that supports an accountability process, (2) use a curriculum that promotes and maintains the development of bilingual, biliterate, and multicultural competencies for all students, (3) use student-centered instructional strategies derived from research-based principles of dual-language education, (4) recruit and retain high-quality dual-language staff, (5) have knowledgeable leadership who promote equity among groups and support the goals of additive bilingualism, biliteracy, and cross-cultural competence, (6) have a responsive infrastructure for positive, ongoing relations with students' families and the community, and (7) be adequately funded and supported by school staff, families, and the community.

High-quality teachers: The provision of rich language environments and high-quality UPK programs necessitates high-quality teachers. This means teachers are bilingual and knowledgeable regarding the cultural and linguistic circumstances of Hispanic families, particularly the educational strengths and needs of their children. Indeed, research shows that the transfer of academic skills between languages is heightened and early achievement outcomes increased for young bilingual and emergent bilingual students when teachers use Spanish (in addition to English) in classroom instruction. The most successful teachers are fluent in both languages, understand learning patterns associated with second-language acquisition, have a mastery of appropriate instructional strategies (i.e., cooperative learning, sheltered instruction, differentiated instruction, and strategic teaching), and have strong organizational and communication skills. These skills will allow teachers to interact with Hispanic parents appropriately in order to encourage them to engage in literacy activities with their children at home. Such interactions will help teachers find out as much detail as possible about the linguistics backgrounds of their students, and develop creative and accurate assessments of each child's linguistic ability and development.

The optimal situation is for lead teachers and school staff, in general, to be proficient in both languages and familiar with students' cultures. However, when this is not possible, it is recommended that a language specialist be provided. Language specialists are bilingual professionals who serve as consultants to teachers and aides in the classroom to help ELL Hispanic students learn and achieve, recognizing and leveraging existent strengths. Having a language specialist in the classroom will also help monolingual teachers make essential links with Spanish-speaking parents.

Conclusion

Success of the abovementioned recommendations is contingent upon the development of educational policies that target the needs of young Hispanic children. Specific policies at all levels of government should strive to provide rich language environments and high-quality dual-language and prekindergarten programs, and to support efforts to recruit and prepare highly qualified teachers. In addition, it is recommended that educational policies support the expansion of state-funded prekindergarten, increase Hispanic enrollments in these programs, develop parent outreach initiatives, and improve assessment procedures and accountability measures.

Regarding teacher quality, it is recommended that state governments fund programs to increase the number of prekindergarten teachers in their states who are proficient in Spanish, and that the federal government develop strategic programs designed to this end. Teachers should receive training in second-language acquisition and how content learning intersects with the process of managing two language systems. States may consider aggressively recruiting teachers within Hispanic communities as a way to increase the body of linguistically and culturally competent teachers. Colleges and universities should be engaged as partners to ensure that bilingual teachers are recruited to the field of early education and that teachers receive appropriate training.

State governments should continue to expand their state-funded prekindergarten initiatives with the objective of creating voluntary UPK systems within the next ten to twenty years. For Hispanic children, expansion should be accompanied with curriculum development and instructional approaches that integrate both Spanish and English. In addition, educational policy should seek to increase enrollment rates of Hispanics in these programs—to fund extensive local efforts to provide information to Hispanic parents on the availability of prekindergarten programs in their communities.

Educational policies should allot local education agencies with the necessary supports to develop dual-language programs. These programs should be developed based on empirical evidence and strategies shown to be successful (CAL 2005). Such programs should constantly be assessed and, where and when necessary, modified to optimize learning, language development, and general academic performance of Hispanic children.

Finally, actions should be taken to improve assessment practices geared at evaluating the academic progress of young Hispanic students. Accountability is an important way of measuring progress and evaluating program effectiveness. The fundamental purpose of assessment tools and procedures should be to improve learning outcomes and service provision for these children. In order to accurately determine language and cognitive competency of young Hispanic students, appropriate tests and testing procedures are necessary.

Many of these specific reform initiatives have been aimed at linguistically and culturally diverse students for several decades. These have generated some movement at the policy, practice, and achievement levels. However, reform, as it has been implemented to date, has not produced the robust changes in early educational performance that are needed. These reforms have ignored what counts for the academic success of young Hispanic students. New educational practices that have the following characteristics are beginning to demonstrate significant promise for young Hispanic students:

- Strategies that begin with the linguistic and cultural attributes of the students and build from there; they respect and engage previous knowledge bases regarding the student and cultural conceptualizations of academic content areas
- Strategies that are directly responsive to the utilization of the linguistic background of the student that bridges to high levels of vocabulary, concept, and repertoires in English
- Strategies that assess in various ways development and learning, and which are utilized for changes in instructional architectures and delivery
- Strategies that utilize multiple resources—human, fiscal, physical, temporal, and technological—to address instruction
- Strategies that invest in early development of linguistic and cognitive development, building on the child’s existing competencies

Thinking differently about these students involves viewing them and our education system in new ways that may contradict conventional notions. This change in thinking allows us to come to a new set of realizations about the value and importance of schooling experiences and is leading us toward the direction of innovation in education versus reform.

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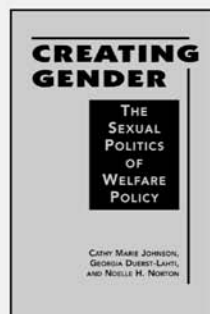
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The “Data Slant”: Why Lack of Media Generated by Minority Users Online Is an Offline Problem

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Abstract

User-generated media, such as blogs, vlogs, and podcasts, are rapidly becoming an integral aspect of political and commercial discourse. However, the information derived from this media is fundamentally biased due to the disproportionately low amount of minority user-generated media on the Web. In order to correct what I term the “data slant,” politicians and commercial entities must seek information from minorities offline to supplement data derived from user-generated media online, or markedly increase investment in measures designed to bridge the digital divide—the primary source of the data slant problem. Failure to act will lead to the neglect of a significant portion of potential consumers and constituents because of the inevitable effects of online activities upon the offline world.

Introduction

As society continues its transition into the digital age, it should be no surprise that online activities increasingly influence the offline world. These online activities, specifically user-generated media such as blogs, vlogs, and podcasts, are rapidly becoming an integral aspect of political as well as commercial discourse. David Bohrman, CNN’s Washington bureau chief, told MiamiHerald.com on 1 November 2006, “[M]ost of the political dialogue in this country is happening online, so if you don’t incorporate that into your coverage, you’re missing a major element. Moreover, commercial advertising expenditures “on user-generated online media is forecast to grow at a compound annual rate of 106.1 percent from 2005 to 2010, reaching \$757 million in 2010” (PQ Media 2006). This is due in part to services such as Nielsen BuzzMetrics, which analyze user-generated media for the specific purpose of leveraging that information to the benefit of their clients.

However, the usefulness of the information derived from user-generated media is contentious. I argue that what could be exceptionally valuable data is fundamentally biased and skewed, an outcome owing to the disproportionately low amount of minority user-generated media on the Web. Therefore, as reliance upon this inaccurate information proliferates, commercial entities and politicians neglect a significant portion of potential consumers and constituents because of the inevitable effects of online activities upon the offline world.

In order to correct what I term the “data slant,” politicians and commercial entities must actively seek information from minorities offline to supplement data derived from user-generated media online, or markedly increase investment in measures designed to bridge the digital divide—the primary source of the data slant problem. Ultimately, without political and commercial intervention, failure to remedy the data slant will likely lead to long-term economic, political, and social consequences.

This paper is organized into four sections. The first section provides an overview of the most common forms of user-generated media, the demographics of its producers, and notable instances of its growing influence beyond the Web. Second, I briefly describe the digital divide—the primary source of the data slant problem—and highlight the significance of Internet access. Accordingly, the third section considers the likely economic and political consequences of failure to address the data slant. The fourth section discusses potential uses for user-generated media (UGM) within the Latino community and its resultant internal and external effects. The final section offers recommendations concerning offline data supplementation and outlines past proposals to overcome the digital divide.

User-Generated Media: What Is It? Who Does It? And Why Should You Care?

Blogs, Vlogs, and Podcasts

UGM encompasses the content developed and circulated by users on the Web. The most prominent forms of this type of online expression include blogs, vlogs, and podcasts.

Presently, the most pervasive form of UGM is the blog. A *Web log*, as it was originally named, “describe[d] the simple web pages people made to post links to interesting sites that they had found while surfing the Web” (Kuhns and Crew 2005, 5). Web logs gained momentum in the mid-1990s and became known as “blogs” in 1998, due to a Web log post by Peter Merholz, president and founding partner of the San Francisco-based consulting firm Adaptive Path (Kuhns and Crew 2005, 5). Within three years of the term’s creation, blog “became the most consulted term in the Merriam Webster dictionary” (7th Society and Information Technologies Encounter).

With the help of publishing platforms such as Blogger.com and LiveJournal, the popularity of blogging—the “process of posting a text journal entry (to your own . . . blog page) or contributing a comment or response as a visitor (to another person’s . . . blog)” —steadily rose (Dagys and Hedtke 2006, 220). Yet it was not until September 11 and the subsequent wars in the Middle East that bloggers—people who contribute to blogs—became an undeniable force (Kuhns and Crew 2005, 6).

By 2004, “politicians, corporations, and consultants began using [blogs] as tools for influencing opinion or spreading a specific message,” going so far as to “grant bloggers access as bona fide journalists” to “both the Democratic and Republican National Conventions” (Kuhns and Crew 2005, 6). Today, according to Technorati, a search engine for blogs, “there are over 175,000 new blogs . . . [created] every day. Bloggers update their blogs regularly to the tune of over 1.6 million posts per day, or over eighteen updates a second.”

Oftentimes incorporated into blogs, podcasts are the audio (and sometimes video) form of UGM. A podcast (coined from the combination of the words *iPod* and *broadcast*) is a digital audio broadcast, which a user can download to any device supporting MP3 files, such as an iPod, a computer, or a PDA. Similar to the blog, “in 2005, the *New Oxford American Dictionary* declared ‘podcast’ the word of the year” (Madden 2006). Podcasting involves “posting an audio entry . . . or listening to the podcast audio on a Weblog” or Web site (Dagys and Hedtke 2006, 224). There are countless uses for podcasts in addition to general entertainment. For example, at the Museum Podcast Tours at PodTrip, tourists can download museum tours onto their portable media devices and explore at their own pace instead of depending on costly tour guides.

Closely related to podcasting, a vlog is the video counterpart of a blog. Vloggers create, post, and watch videos (with or without sound) on blogs or Web sites like MySpace and Yahoo! (Dagys and Hedtke 2006, 227). Like blogs and podcasts, vlog subject matter ranges anywhere from sports, as in Kate Troescher’s *Kate on Sports*; to news, like Joanne Colan’s *Rocketboom*; to comedy, as on the Web site *You Got Questions, Ninja Got Answers*; to the war in Iraq, like *Alive in Baghdad*. In the fall of 2006, this form of UGM received a great deal of press coverage, due in part to Google’s \$1.65 billion purchase of YouTube in October of 2006, a mere twenty months after YouTube’s founding, as noted by Paul La Monica in an article for CNNMoney. YouTube is a self-proclaimed “consumer media company,” and according to Ellen Lee in the 10 October 2006 *San Francisco Chronicle*, “on any given day, YouTube plays more than 100 million clips, drawing a greater viewership than many cable television channels.”

Content Creators by the Numbers

Nielsen/NetRatings (2006) estimates that “overall internet penetration in the United States has stabilized over the past few years, reaching 74 percent of homes in February 2006.” This suggests that roughly 220 million Americans access the Internet from home, while other sources indicate the range is more likely between 146 million, as stated by the European Travel Commission, and 207 million (Miniwatts Marketing Group). According to a 2004 survey by the Pew Internet and American Life Project, of those Americans with Web access, “44 percent . . . [had] created content for the online world through building or posting to Web sites, creating blogs, and sharing files” (Lenhart, Horrigan, and Fallows 2004).

In addition, Pew found that 77 percent of all UGM creators are White (see Table 1), despite the higher propensity of Blacks and Latinos to generate online content (see Table 2). Interestingly, as Table 1 displays, Pew’s survey indicated that while Web users with incomes of \$75,000 and above are the most likely to generate content, the probability of Web users to generate online content from the three lower

income levels was relatively equal (Lenhart, Horrigan, and Fallows 2004; Horrigan 2006).

Another characteristic of those most likely to generate online content is that the majority of these users have home broadband access. As defined by the FCC, the “term ‘broadband’ refers to advanced communications systems capable of providing high-speed transmission of services such as data, voice, and video over the internet and other networks.” Pew researchers observed a “significant statistical association between having a home broadband connection and users’ putting content online” (Horrigan 2006). Consequently, the Government Accountability Office’s (2006) conclusion that “White households are more likely to purchase broadband service than households of other races” further reduces the probability of online media arising from minority users.

I do not include the Asian American and Pacific Islander demographic group when referring to “minorities” throughout this paper because this group has the “highest level of home Internet access at 56.8 percent, compared to a national rate of 41.5 percent” (Kuttan and Peters 2003, 26). Therefore, the digital divide does not affect the ability of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders to generate online media.

Electioneering, Corporate Libel, and Other Fun Things to Do Online

Political bloggers were described by K. Daniel Glover and Mike Essl as “the pamphleteers of the 21st century” in a 3 December 2006 article in the *New York Times* and are, according to Jeanne Cummings in the 14 October 2003 *Wall Street Journal*, an entity whose “effect is a never-ending virtual town-hall meeting.” As such, they irrefutably receive the most offline attention compared to other users generating online media. As noted by Anne Kornblut in a 5 November 2006 *New York Times* article, since the advent of the campaign blog in 2003, the “movement known as the netroots—that amalgam of bloggers and online fund-raisers—has grown more forceful with every election cycle.” An October 2006 AP-AOL news poll, as reported on 27 October 2006 by Laurie Sullivan of TechWeb Technology News, “suggested that some 35 percent of Americans, or 43 percent of likely voters, go online for election information,” and nearly a quarter of the poll’s respondents reported visiting a political blog.

The proven efficiency of UGM concerning online fund raisers continues to spur political investment online. Specifically, Web fund raisers “net . . . at least ninety-five cents for every dollar given” versus direct mailings and banquet events, which net seventy-five cents and thirty cents, respectively, as Cummings’s *Wall Street Journal* article notes. In recognition of this high rate of return, governors, members of Congress, and “potential presidential hopefuls like Hillary Rodham Clinton and John McCain,” actively campaign on the Web, even hiring bloggers as consultants to maneuver their online efforts according to Glover and Essl. The rising incidence of these hiring practices compelled Markos Moulitsas Zúniga, founder of the Daily Kos, one of the most popular political blogs in the blogosphere, to explicitly state on his page:

I don’t consult now. I haven’t consulted since 2004. I don’t plan on consulting in the future. I don’t want to consult . . . Did I mention I’m not a consultant,

and will not be a consultant in the future? Because if I didn't, let me make clear—I'm not a consultant. And I won't be.

Aside from offline political effects, UGM concerning products and services increasingly influence the business world, sometimes resulting in devastating consequences. For example, in 2004, bloggers discovered “industry-leading Kryptonite-brand bike lock[s]” could be opened with a Bic pen, and began posting videos on vlogs and online forums to demonstrate how to pick the lock (Neuhaus 2005). Accordingly, offline media caught wind of the bloggers' findings, further publicizing the defect. As a consequence, Ingersoll Rand, the parent company of Kryptonite received the Grand Prize for “Dumbest Moment of 2004” (Horowitz 2005) and claim on their site to have replaced over 380,000 locks and lost several million dollars. Videos illustrating the simplicity of Kryptonite lock-picking remain available on YouTube today.

In November 2006, PodTech, an online marketing company specializing in “customized social media services,” hosted the Vloggies, an award ceremony “celebrating achievement in vlogs and online video.” With over six hundred nominees and seventy award categories ranging from Best Cooking Vlog to Best Instructional/Educational Vlog, the ceremony was such a success that Podtech has scheduled the Second Annual Vloggies and chosen to move the event from San Francisco to Los Angeles.

As reported by Laura Blum in a 14 November 2006 article for the AdWeek Web site, in recognition of the talent behind Rocketboom, a Vloggie award-winning news vlog, the ABC network hired Amanda Congdon, Rocketboom's former anchor. Rocketboom is self-described as “currently one of the most popular [vlogs] on the Internet with more daily subscribers for original syndicated multi-media content than nearly any other site, including podcasts.” HBO has also recruited Congdon to develop a comedy show.

In contrast to Congdon's positive offline interactions, vlogger Josh Wolf has been in and out of jail since July 2006 for “refusing to turn over video he took at an anticapitalist protest” and refusing to testify concerning crimes committed at the protest, as reported in a 8 July 2005 post on Wolf's eponymous Web site and by Jesse McKinley in the 2 August 2006 New York Times. As of this writing, he maintains his vlog, *The Revolution Will Be Televised*—winner of the Most Controversial Vlog award—from a federal correctional facility in Dublin, CA.

The Digital Divide: In This Case, Quantity Does Equal Quality

As the primary cause of the data slant, the digital divide signifies “the gap between those who can effectively use communication and information tools such as the internet and those who cannot.” (Edwards 2005, 585). There is an innumerable amount of information concerning the subject of the digital divide, which “is usually measured in terms of personal computer ownership and Internet access” (Kuttan and Peters 2003, 5). In consideration of that fact I limit this discussion to one aspect of the problem, the disparity between those with and those without Internet access. Ultimately, as more Whites have Internet access or, more

significantly, broadband Internet access, Whites constitute a substantial majority of the users generating online content.

In order to define the data slant, one must compare the biased Web (the present Internet population resulting from the digital divide) with a nonbiased Web (the Internet population absent from the digital divide). The biased Web leads to an overrepresentation of Whites among online content creators, whereas the demographics of a nonbiased Web would likely reflect that of the offline population. Thus, while minorities as a demographic group are relatively more likely to generate online content, as suggested above, the biased Web leads to the diminished presence of minority UGM online relative to its potential presence were there no digital divide. Therefore, as long as the digital divide persists, data derived from UGM will be distorted.

While attributing the lack of minority UGM online to Web access may appear overly simplistic, basic principles of economic efficiency dictate that minimal demand warrants an equally minimal supply. Thus, the disproportionately low numbers of minorities with Web access presumably demand an equally low supply of minority-user-generated media. In contrast, a 2005 offline poll “by the New California Media, a national association of more than 700 ethnic media organizations, found that nearly half of U.S. minorities . . . prefer ethnic media to mainstream media,” according to a 28 July 2005 article by Joyce King on the *USA Today* Web site. Offline, despite this high demand for minority-generated media, substantial barriers to entry such as access to capital and federal licensing inhibit the provision of a corresponding supply.

If decisions based upon data derived from UGM had solely online effects, use of that data would be appropriate because it is functionally representative of the likelihood of the present online population to create content. Yet with the rising number of decisions based upon this data affecting the offline world?such as the migration of market research surveys to the Web, as advocated by Bradley Johnson on 17 July 2006 in *Advertising Age*, and, most significantly, the increasing adoption of Internet voting, which a 23 January 2004 editorial in the *New York Times* warns against?the data slant threatens to cause commercial and political neglect of prospective consumers and constituents. Aside from offline data supplementation, only a combined effort by political and commercial entities to invest in increasing opportunities for Web access and methods of overcoming the digital divide will cure the data slant.

Indisputably, the digital divide is a multi-faceted issue. Apart from access limitations, the following are a number of other factors affecting the future of the digital divide:

- (1) the quality of . . . the telecommunications network; (2) the capacity of computing devices, such as computers and modems; (3) pricing systems for online access; (4) content and services; (5) relationship of users to internet service providers; (6) issues of technological literacy and the degree of support and facilitation available for new [information and communication technology] users; and (7) overarching national and international policies toward internet access and use, such as support for

computing in schools and universities, universal service obligations for telecommunications service providers, or measures to promote more equitable access to information resources globally (Flew 2005, 74).

Dollars and Sense: The Perils of Failure to Remedy the Data Slant Political Action Based on Biased Data

The likely consequence of failure to cure the data slant in the political realm is the exclusion of minorities from new forms of civic engagement. Coverage and incorporation of the political views and actions of a small, yet rapidly expanding, sector of the Web population into television newscasts, newspaper editorials, and other forms of offline media makes the influence of UGM on politics irrefutable. Politicians should actively seek information from minorities offline to supplement data derived from UGM online because this data increasingly influences campaign strategies and ultimately the way people vote.

A prime example of the data slant resulting in the exclusion of minorities from new forms of civic participation arose during the 2003 presidential primaries. In a interview on the 5 August 2003 *News Hour with Jim Lehrer*, former Vermont governor Howard Dean explained,

We have the most advanced Internet campaign in the country. We have 34,000 volunteers all over the country because of the Internet. The next biggest campaign has 1,300. [Yet] we have a disproportionate number of White middle-class kids, because the Internet does not reach enough people in the Latino and the African American community.

Dean's initial campaign success drew largely from his partnership with Meetup.com—"a Web tool for forming social groups"—and "the help . . . of hundreds of bloggers." Dean used the Web "to organize thousands of volunteers who go door-to-door, write personal letters to likely voters, host meetings, and distribute flyers" (Wolf 2004).

In November 2003, the Michigan Democratic Party chose to offer constituents the opportunity to vote online. Its action received a great deal of criticism from the press, several members of the Michigan Democratic Party, and a number of Michigan voters, who argued that the plan "create[d] a clear and colossal digital divide between those who have easy Internet access and those who do not." One Black DNC member from Lansing said to *USA Today*, "Internet voting puts the party's most reliable constituency—Blacks and the poor—at a disadvantage," according to a 20 November 2003 article by Nedra Pickler. Although a number of the Democratic candidates objected to the plan, Howard Dean did not, owing to his strong online following. Hence, as more states adopt online voting, candidates, like Dean, may increasingly concentrate on online campaigns, which will further exclude minorities from these new forms of civic engagement.

Commercial Action Based on Biased Data

Commercial entities must actively seek information from minorities offline to supplement data derived from UGM online or risk neglecting potential consumers. Consumers no longer consider a company's CEO its "most credible source of information." Today, "a person like me" is the consumer's preferred source,

“according to a survey of 2,000 ‘opinion leaders’ by PR firm Edelman” (Boyle 2006). What “a person like me” refers to is that consumers increasingly trust recommendations from colleagues, word of mouth, and “peer-to-peer dialogue among consumers and [rank-and-file] employees” over the statements of a CEO, as described by Derek Creevey in an article posted 23 January 2006 on the Edelman News Web site. Due to this shift, as Pete Blackshaw describes in his 28 June 2005 Clickz.com post, corporate entities are utilizing blogs, “industry or interest-focused” message boards and forums, and review and ratings Web sites, where “consumers combine online reviews with aggregated ratings about product and services,” to connect with and to understand their customers (Nielsen BuzzMetrics).

If consumers are largely influencing each other’s buying patterns through these online communities, and market research companies such as Nielsen/NetRatings are leveraging that information to the benefit of their clients, then the effectiveness of that information is most likely limited to consumers with Web access.

DoubleClick, a service used by online market researchers, maintains that its ad server reports “include a relatively small subset of the total universe of U.S. Internet users in a panel from which they can make statistically reliable projections about the characteristics of the whole audience” (Bruner and Koegel 2005). Yet commercial entities remain skeptical. Seth Diamond, director of Consumer Insights and Strategy at Kraft Foods, explains to Johnson in the 17 July 2006 *Advertising Age* article, “Online is not a solution in and of itself to all of our business challenges . . . but it does expand our toolkit.”

While corporations such as Kraft alleviate the potential neglect of offline consumers due to the data slant, saving money continues to motivate marketers to shift from offline to online research. Some marketers, according to Johnson, claim to “cut costs 15 to 20 percent by moving from mail surveys to online and about 30 percent by shifting from phone surveys to online.” In the words of Laurence Gold, the editor and publisher of the newsletter *Inside Research*, as quoted in *Advertising Age*, “Faster. Cheaper. It boils down to that.”

User-Generated Media and the Latino Community

User-generated online media present the Latino community with virtually limitless opportunities for self-expression, at a level unattainable in the offline world. Through UGM, Latinos may produce short films or engage in photojournalism on vlogs; they may maintain discussion forums or message boards in order to facilitate communication between family, friends, or the curious Web surfer; or they may create podcasts to expose listeners to musical artists that radio conglomerates fail to play on their limited play lists. Most significantly, Latino bloggers may offer perspectives on issues neglected by traditional news media, due to the unrestricted nature of UGM subject matter.

In a Google search for “immigration blog,” the first ten results produce only one Web site semi-supportive of immigrants—the online opinion presence of the *Los Angeles Times*—while the rest link to either immigration attorneys or Web sites similar to the first result—FOX News contributor Michelle Malkin’s Immigration Blog, an anti-immigrant blog featuring links to similar blogs such as

DeportAliens.com. According to Google, found the largest and most popular search engine on the Web by SearchEngineWatch.com, “important, high-quality sites receive a higher PageRank”—Google’s system for ranking Web pages—“which Google remembers each time it conducts a search.” Thus, Google’s search results indicate that blogs offering anti-immigration content are ostensibly more important and of higher quality than those lower on the results list. Absent the digital divide, these search results would likely change, particularly because of minorities’ inclination to generate online content.

In addition, politicians could benefit from a rise in UGM produced by Latinos because it may help define what many consider an “elusive” voting bloc and subsequently increase civic participation among the Latino community, as Sandra Nygaard notes in a 28 August 2003 article for the Medill News Service. Moreover, Latino candidates could use the Web to help finance their campaigns and connect with potential voters through UGM. Defining this demographic group through deriving data from UGM will also benefit online marketing firms, such as Carrera Ecommerce, that specialize in multicultural marketing. Perhaps, like Amanda Congdon’s success, popular online media generated by Latinos will find its way offline, leading to new employment opportunities and increased coverage minority viewpoints.

Recommendations and Realizations

Essentially, seeking information from minorities offline to supplement data derived from UGM online, or markedly increasing investment in measures designed to bridge the digital divide, are the likely remedies to the data slant. This final section offers recommendations concerning offline data supplementation and outlines past proposals by which to overcome the digital divide.

Enhancing Information Derived From UGM Through Offline Resources

First, commercial entities and politicians must acquire information to supplement the data derived from UGM. One option available to supplement both political and commercial data is the provision of free, promotional, or subsidized Internet access targeted at minorities. These online sessions could expose the user to new products or candidates, allow the user the opportunity to generate online media, or simply track user search habits. Additionally, partnerships with electronics or software manufacturers and Internet service providers in providing these sessions would decrease the financial burden on politicians and spread the risk for corporations.

Another potential means by which to supplement information derived from UGM, already practiced by a number of corporations, is the continued funding of offline surveys. As long as UGM remains dominated by White users, decisions based upon the information derived from such media will be less effective offline. Commercial and political entities must not rely solely on online researchers until the Web better reflects the offline world. Further, as other states begin offering online voting, politicians must be careful not to develop campaigns depending largely on information from those with Web access or risk further excluding minorities from civic participation.

Past Policy Recommendations Concerning the Digital Divide

For years, scholars, researchers, and legislators have offered solutions for overcoming the digital divide. As access is the largest barrier to minority users generating content, bridging the digital divide is the central means by which to cure the data slant. The following are the leading policy options for overcoming the digital divide in abbreviated form:

1. Let the market fix the problem
2. Government action
3. Rely on philanthropy and community action
4. Private/public partnerships (Kuttan and Peters 2003, 141–154)

While each of these options on its own or in combination would probably lead to universal access in the long term, an emphasis upon providing Web access to minorities in the short term is necessary in order to reduce the data slant. Online UGM frequently and significantly affects the offline world, and the data slant will persist as long as the digital divide inhibits minorities from meaningfully contributing to UGM. As long as commercial and political entities make decisions based on information derived from UGM, it is in their best interest economically and politically to ensure that data is not biased.

In the end, the ease with which Web users may create and share media online relative to the offline world is unprecedented. This content, created for the people and by the people, is rapidly becoming an integral aspect of political and commercial discourse. As long as the ability of creating such content is not widespread, skepticism must accompany choices based upon information drawn from it. Thus, politicians and commercial entities must actively seek information from minorities offline to supplement data derived from UGM online or markedly increase investment in measures designed to bridge the digital divide. Without such intervention, the data slant will persist.

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Who Creates Content

<i>The Percentage of Online Content Creators Who Come From Each Demographic Group</i>	
Men	51%
Women	49%
Race/Ethnicity	
Whites	77%
Blacks	9%
Hispanics	9%
Household Income	
Less than \$30,000	19%
\$30,000–\$50,000	21%
\$50,000–\$75,000	17%
\$75,000+	31%

Source: Lenhart, Horrigan, and Fallows 2004. N for Internet users = 1,555. Margin of error is ±3 percent.

A Portrait of Those Who Post Content Online

The Percentage of Internet Users in Each Group Who Have Done at Least One of the Following Online: Shared Something They Created Themselves Like a Story or a Video, Created Their Own Web Page, Worked on Others' Web Pages, or Created a Blog	
	Percent Who Are Content Creators
Gender	
Men	37%
Women	32%
Race/Ethnicity	
White (not Hispanic)	32%
Black (not Hispanic)	39%
Hispanic (English speaking)	42%
Household Income	
Less than \$30,000	32%
\$30,000–\$50,000	32%
\$50,000–\$75,000	33%
\$75,000+	41%

Source: Horrigan 2006. N for Internet users = 1,931.

**1 Abel Ramirez, *Metroplex*, 2004. Acrylic on Wood; 4' x 3'.
Latino Art Museum**

"This work is for the visually literate. It is for the enhancement of your living space and for the sheer pleasure of viewing."

Origin of artist: Chicano

The arts are commonly considered a form of entertainment, a medium of expression produced to please the senses. Indeed, art is revered around the world as a means to communicate, stimulate, celebrate, appreciate, and articulate what words cannot.

Few, however, realize the significance of art when used as a policy tool. Thomas L. Birch, writing in the 2002 issue of the online newsletter for the National Association of State Arts Agencies, describes the efficacy of art as a tool for policy makers "in improving student learning, in building a strong workforce, in developing America's creative industries, and in offering positive alternatives to troubled youth." Investing even minimally in the arts can "strengthen the economy . . . by promoting tourism, revitalizing the core commercial district, and attracting business to expand local job opportunities."

**2 Mario Gee Lopez, *Funky Donkeys*, 2007. Acrylic on Canvas; 10' x 4'.
Latino Art Museum**

"My new art creations are part of my colorful past childhood."

Origin of artist: Honduran

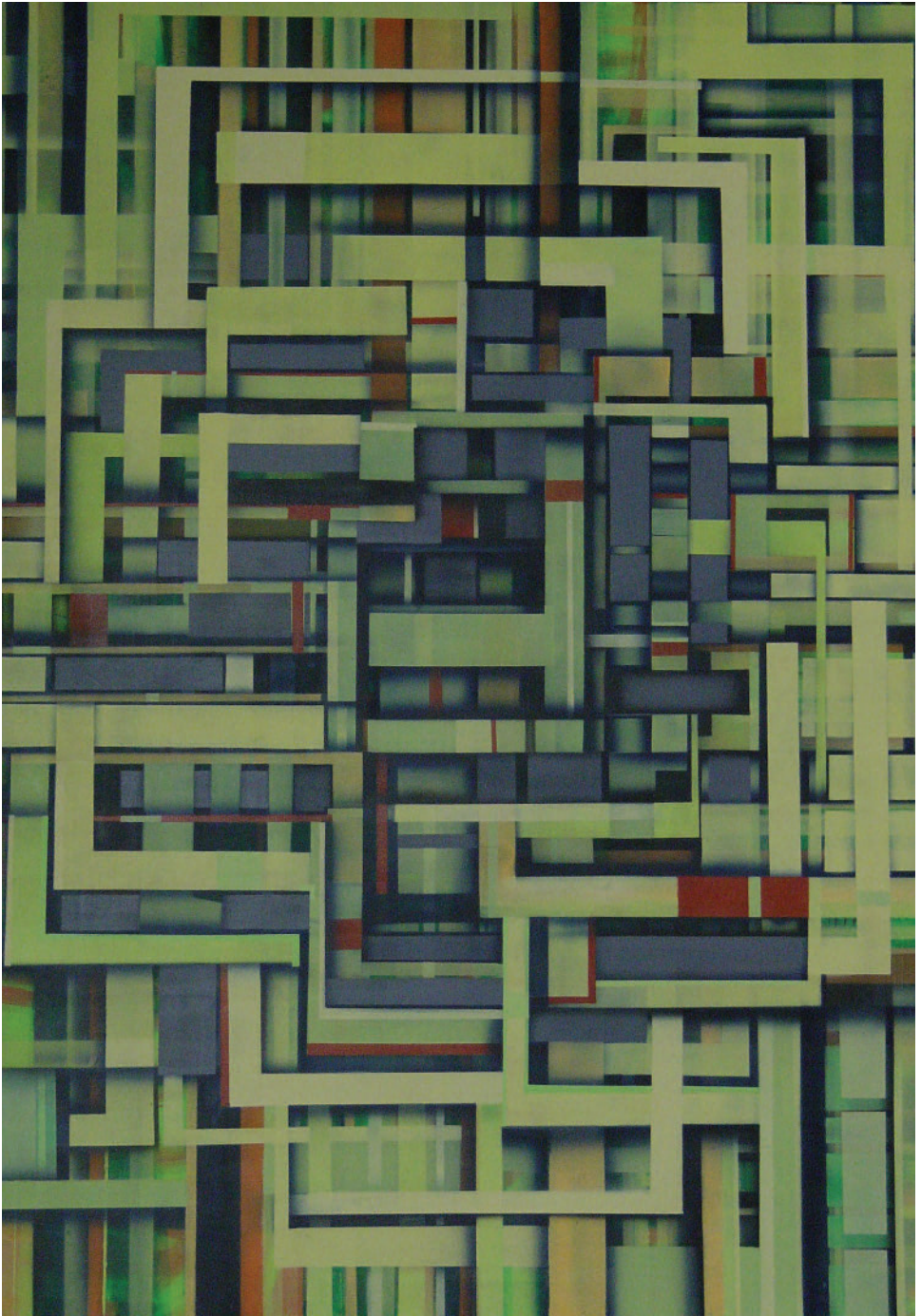
The artwork featured here comes from the Latino Art Museum, a not-for-profit organization located in Pomona, CA, created to promote the works of talented Latin American contemporary artists living in the United States. Its mission is to instill a sense of appreciation for Latino art in the minds and hearts of children and adults.

**3 Graciela Horne Nardi, *Tango IV*, 2005. Oil on Wood; 22" x 19".
Latino Art Museum**

"Art is like good vintage that ripens well in passion."

Origin of artist: Argentine

The staff of the Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy chose pieces that represent a microcosm of the diversity that exists within the U.S. Hispanic community. These paintings serve as a reminder that the policies discussed in this volume affect individuals from diverse geographical locations with diverse interests and diverse histories. We at the journal plan to continue featuring the vibrancy of Latino artwork in subsequent years.









Evaluation of a Longitudinal Six-Site Pilot Study of a Mentoring Program for Latina Girls: Results and Recommendations

Sonia Y. Ruiz

Sandra Rodriguez

Glendelia M. Zavala

Sonia Y. Ruiz received her doctoral degree from Arizona State University in clinical psychology and completed her pre-doctoral clinical psychology internship at the VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System, Sepulveda. She completed a clinical psychology postdoctoral fellowship at the San Diego State University/University of California, San Diego Joint Doctoral Clinical Psychology Program's Eating and Weight Disorders Clinic. She is currently an assistant professor in the Department of Psychology at California State University San Marcos (CSUSM). She is also a faculty associate at the CSUSM National Latino Research Center and in that position served as the principal investigator for the Hermanitas® study for MANA, A National Latina Organization.

Her current research agenda includes the study of childhood obesity in Mexican American families. Her interests include ethnic minority mental health, cross-cultural psychology, family socialization, and teaching psychology.

Dr. Sandra Rodriguez received her doctorate in early childhood and multicultural teacher education from the University of New Mexico. She was the first tenured Latina faculty member at the College of Sante Fe (CSF) and as the current chair of the Education Department, the first Latina to be a department head at the college. In 2004, she received the CSF's Fairfax Award for Excellence in Teaching, the highest faculty award.

Rodriguez is an active member of several statewide committees working on educational and legislative reform. Her current focus of study is in the development of online teacher education programs. She most recently designed an online delivery program for New Mexico's Reading First Initiative and a viable option for the No Child Left Behind's mandate of "highly qualified."

Rodriguez is an active board member of MANA del Norte, a New Mexico Chapter of MANA. She has also served as a member on its National Board of Directors and was elected as chair of the board for MANA.

Dr. Glendelia M. Zavala is a program manager in the Division of Educator Excellence at the Texas Education Agency in Austin. She earned her doctorate in educational leadership from the University of Texas-Pan American after being awarded a three-year fellowship by the Kellogg Foundation. Her current interests include mentoring beginning teachers and alternative certification programs.

Zavala is the founder and immediate past president of MANA de Hidalgo County in South Texas. In 2005, she was awarded MANA's first Blandina Cardenas Distinguished Service Award, and the chapter was presented the first Evangeline Elizondo Overall Best Chapter Award.

Abstract

A report on a three-year study funded by the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and its Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, looking at the impact of mentoring on the health attitudes and practices of young Latinas through the Hermanitas® Program run by MANA, A National Latina Organization at six sites across the United States. The report addresses the design, process, findings, outcomes, barriers, implications, and recommendations for future implementation.

Introduction

The United States has experienced major demographic changes among the Hispanic population in the past three decades. Latinos currently make up a significant portion of the U.S. population, especially among individuals under the age of eighteen years, with the percentage projected to grow even larger in the future. By the year 2020, more than one in five children will be of Hispanic origin. Currently, the number of Hispanic children under age eighteen is 19.5 million, which represents 34.4 percent of the total Latino population and 20.8 percent of the total population. Latinas under eighteen represent 16.9 percent (5.1 million) of the total Hispanic population and are the largest minority group of girls (COSSMHO 1999).

Adolescence is a time of physical, psychological, and social change. It is often a period during which adolescents experiment in the quest toward finding their identity in young adulthood. For many adolescents this can be an exciting time, yet for many others it is a time in which they may be led to engage in high-risk behaviors with serious long-term consequences. Adolescence has also been noted as a more difficult experience for girls than for boys (COSSMHO 1999).

Four serious threats to health and education have been identified among female teenagers in the United States: pregnancy, depression, substance abuse, and delinquency (Grunbaum et al. 2004). Because of the individual and social costs associated with these threats, it is imperative to create environments to help these young females feel safe and empowered to make better decisions. This is especially the case for Latina female adolescents.

Teen Pregnancy

Teen pregnancy is a major problem among all female adolescents; however, the issue is particularly pronounced among Latinas, who have the highest teenage pregnancy rate when compared to other ethnic groups. According to the National Center for Health Statistics, there has been a steady decline in teenage birth rates from 1990 to 2004. However, birth rates for Hispanic teenagers continue to be higher when compared with other population groups. In 2004, birthrates for every one thousand females ages fifteen to nineteen were 82.6 for Hispanics, 62.7 for non-Hispanic Blacks, and 26.8 for non-Hispanic Whites (Hamilton 2004).

The importance of focusing on the health of Latina youth is highlighted in the recommendations from a recent comprehensive report entitled *The State of Hispanic Girls* (COSSMHO 1999). In addition, according to a report entitled *Voices of California: A Multicultural Perspective on Teen Pregnancy* (Get Real

2002), efforts at preventing teenage pregnancy should not only consider a health perspective, but also culture and community. Moreover, prevention programs will need to consider the influence of culture, especially its role in how parents, community leaders, and teens deal with information about adolescent pregnancy.

Health Risk Behaviors

Statistics for Latinas reveal a disproportionate share of substance use, depression, suicidal ideation, and high-risk sexual behaviors. According to the 2003 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance (YRBS) study of 15,214 high school students across the country, Hispanic girls reported the highest percentages of lifetime alcohol use, current marijuana use, lifetime cocaine use, current cocaine use, lifetime illegal injection drug use, lifetime inhalant use, current inhalant use, lifetime heroine use, and lifetime methamphetamine use compared to White and Black girls (Grunbaum et al. 2004, 21). A separate study of 6,748 adolescents, showed that Whites and Latinas reported higher levels of risky behaviors (smoking, drinking, and using illegal drugs) than Black and Asian girls (Schoen et al. 1997).

The same study by Schoen et al. (1997) reported that mental health is another area in which young Latinas are suffering. They found that 44.9 percent of the Latinas reported “feeling so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more that they stopped doing some usual activities” in comparison to White (33.3 percent) or Black girls (30.8 percent). A higher percentage of Latina girls also reported they “seriously considered attempting suicide” (23.4 percent) in comparison to White (21.2 percent) and Black girls (14.7 percent). A greater percentage of Latinas also reported having “made a suicide plan” (20.7 percent) relative to the White (18.6 percent) and Black girls (12.4 percent). Most disturbing was that a greater percentage of Latinas reported having attempted suicide (15.0 percent) and having attempted suicide that required medical attention (5.7 percent) compared to the White (10.3 percent and 2.4 percent, respectively) and Black girls (9.0 percent and 2.2 percent, respectively). In addition, Latina and Asian girls reported higher levels of depressive symptoms (27 percent and 30 percent, respectively) than White and Black girls (22 percent and 17 percent, respectively).

While the Latinas in the YRBS study were not as likely to engage in sexual activity as other groups, they did report the lowest percentage of condom use during their last sexual intercourse (52.3 percent) compared to White (56.5 percent) and Black girls (63.6 percent). Latinas also reported the lowest percentage of use of birth control pills before sexual intercourse (12.1 percent) relative to the White (26.5 percent) and Black girls (11.7 percent) (Grunbaum et al. 2004, 24). Furthermore, while birth rates for teenagers are declining for all racial and ethnic groups, Hispanic birth rates declined at a lower rate (5 percent) from 1991 to 1996, compared to Blacks (23 percent) and Whites (7 percent) in the same time period (CDC 1997). Due to the strong association that exists between depression, suicide risk, and sexual and drug behavior, these statistics are particularly alarming (Hallfors et al. 2004). Given these findings, and the costs associated with teen pregnancy, psychological disorders, and delinquency, it behooves those in the public health sector to address the threats to young females, especially young Latinas. The utilization of cost-effective, preventative interventions will be a necessary

component of any effort to combat these health and/or social problems among Latinas.

Proposed Intervention

A common theme among individuals who have overcome adversity is the presence of a supportive relationship with a non-parent adult or mentor (Rhodes et al. 2002). Mentoring relationships have been associated with such outcomes as scholastic competence, good school attendance and grades, and lower rates of substance initiation and use (Grossman and Tierney 1998, 402–425). Moreover, in one meta-analysis of over fifty-five empirical studies of mentoring programs, significant positive effects were reported for those who were mentored in the areas of psychological, social, academic, and job and employment functioning (DuBois et al. 2002).

Although peer influence often outweighs parental influence during adolescence, adolescents may still be receptive to developing a mentoring relationship with a non-parent adult. More importantly, previous research has suggested that enhanced adolescent-parent relationships have been associated with adolescent involvement in mentoring programs (Grossman and Tierney 1998). Thus, mentoring programs that target adolescents can be effective by both providing a positive adult role model and improving family relationships.

This study presents the evaluation of a pilot study conducted by MANA, A National Latina Organization. MANA is a not-for-profit, advocacy organization established in 1974 that has expanded to become a national community of Latinas actively working to create a better quality of life for Hispanics. Its mission is to empower Latinas through leadership development, community service, and advocacy. One way in which MANA empowers Latinas is through the Hermanitas[®] Program, a national initiative for young Latinas ages eleven to seventeen that focuses on (1) promoting educational achievement and personal enrichment, (2) developing leadership qualities, skills, and abilities, (3) promoting cultural identity, respect, pride, and multicultural awareness, and (4) promoting proactive community involvement.

More detailed program objectives can be found in Table 1. Adult MANA members and other community members volunteer their time to mentor *hermanitas*, or young Latinas.

The pilot study evaluated the effectiveness of the Hermanitas[®] Program across six sites in the United States representing areas with large Latino populations. The project also partnered with the families of the young Latinas, the schools they attended, and other organizations within their communities.

The goals of the pilot study were to create a standardized curriculum that can be implemented across sites and to evaluate the effectiveness of the program on reducing risk behaviors and increasing protective factors for adolescent Latinas. In accomplishing these two goals, MANA will be able to further refine the Hermanitas[®] Program and subsequently replicate it. The objective then is not only to create a model program designed specifically for Latina female adolescents, but to provide preliminary evidence of its effectiveness.

The expected outcomes for the proposed study were based on the findings presented above that describe the negative outcomes young Latinas are currently experiencing. Thus, the pilot study hoped to prevent or mediate the negative outcomes that plague adolescent Latina girls in the below categories.

1. Substance use
 - a. Delay or omission of reported substance use
 - b. Self-report of attitudes consistent with delay/omission
2. Esteem
 - a. Increased or stable self-esteem
 - b. Increased or stable collective esteem
3. Depression: no change (if low at baseline) or decreased (if high at baseline), based on clinical standards
4. Attitudes toward school: increased positive attitudes with time
5. Self-report of grades: no change (if grades are satisfactory) or increased (if low at baseline)

Methodology

Sample

The sample consisted of 163 Latina girls from six sites in the United States. Sites represented the West Coast, Midwest, and the Southwest regions of the United States. The sample was a convenience sample. The primary sampling strategy consisted of including girls from an area in which a MANA chapter existed with an established Hermanitas® Program and who were willing to participate in the study for three years. Site participants were selected based on the following criteria: (1) there were at least twenty females between the ages of nine and sixteen at the time of acceptance into the program, (2) the participants were Latina, and (3) the participants were willing to commit to three years in the Hermanitas® Program. Table 2 shows the number of participants for each site in years 1, 2, and 3.

Methodology

A longitudinal, repeated-measure design was implemented. Data were collected at each of these times with the same sample of participants. There is no comparison (control) group. The mentorship program (i.e., the intervention) was ongoing during that time. For all three years, all personnel administering the evaluation questionnaire were given a training manual, which detailed the protocol. In addition, the majority of administrators attended a training that addressed the administration of the questionnaire each year of the project. Signed parental consent forms were secured from participants' parents by each Hermanitas® administrator during the first year of the evaluation. All methods and procedures for administering the evaluation remained the same for all three years of the project.

Girls participated in a three-year program throughout which they attended various seminars, workshops, and community events and activities, and met with a mentor with whom they had been matched in the first year of the program.

Program Curriculum and Implementation: The following seven components were included in the Hermanitas® Program: (1) journaling, (2) interactive seminars and social skills trainings on topics such as substance abuse, sexual and reproductive health, culture, goal setting and achievement, and sports and fitness health, (3) reading for knowledge and for pleasure program (participants were required to read three books on topics such as culture, social issues, biography and nonfiction, and positive development), (4) goal setting and monitoring successful achievement of goals with mentors, (5) leadership development, (6) community service, and (7) school participation (i.e., attendance and school activities). In addition, the girls were required to participate in at least one community activity (preferably with family), participate in a least one depression management activity such as exercise, and access mental health services as needed.

Mentor Recruitment and Training: Mentors were recruited from among MANA members, university women, and other successful Latinas from the community. The program attempted to pair a single mentor with a single participant. When this was not possible, two participants would be assigned to a single mentor. However, mentors were assigned no more than two participants. Mentors were provided with at least two mentor trainings per year (some only attended the initial training). Topics included in the training were: Hispanic values; discrimination management and bicultural struggles; an overview of the mentor training handbook; an overview of mentor requirements; and rules and regulations of mentoring (i.e., driving, communication, laws and legal issues, parental notification, etc.). Contact between the mentor and the girls could be in person, by telephone, or through electronic means. Mentors were required to initiate one thirty-minute meeting with an adult family member and at least one hour-long activity with the mentee and an adult family member. In addition, each mentor was required to meet with her mentee on a weekly basis throughout the course of the program (three years). Both the mentor and the mentee tracked the time, mechanism, and topics of the contact. On the occasion that a mentor could not fulfill all expectations, another mentor or program coordinator would step in and fulfill program commitments.

Measures: The measures for this study were designed to assess substance use, mental health, and academic variables (i.e., grades and attitudes toward school). These three areas were targeted based on findings from the literature cited above that suggests young Latinas are at risk for getting involved with drugs and alcohol and experiencing mental health problems. Due to the young age of many of the girls, questions could not be asked about their sexual activity; however, data regarding any incidents of pregnancy while in the program were tracked.

Primary outcomes consisted of assessing substance use and various mental health outcomes. SAMHSA and the *Government Performance and Results Act* (GPRA) client outcome measures were utilized to assess drug and alcohol use. Items from the GPRA assess use and perceived risk associated with substance use. Questions that assumed that the participant was partaking in alcohol and/or drug

usage were omitted because an assumption could be interpreted as an expectation rather than a question soliciting information.

Psychological health outcome variables included depression, self-esteem, and collective esteem. Rosenberg's Self-esteem Scale is a well-established ten-item scale that is commonly used with adolescents (Dahlberg, Toal, and Behrens 1998). It has good internal consistency and has demonstrated convergent and predictive validity for both males and females (Bolongnini et al. 1996). Its internal consistency alpha coefficient was 0.92 (Bolongnini et al. 1996). The alpha coefficients for the present study were 0.87 at Time 1; 0.78 at Time 2; and 0.80 at Time 3.

The Collective Self-esteem Scale is a sixteen-item measure with a seven-point Likert response set. Questions pertain to how one feels in relation to one's significant social groups, which may include gender, race, religion, nationality, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status (Luhtanen and Crocker 1992). This measure was included because it was thought to complement the traditional concept of self-esteem (individualist) with a more culturally appropriate measure of collective esteem (collectivist). Subfactors include the following: membership, private, public, and identity. Luhtanen and Crocker (1992) reported 0.88 as the overall reliability coefficient for this measure. Subfactors of the measure correlate with the Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale at various degrees: $r=.04-.38$ (Luhtanen and Crocker 1992). The alpha coefficients for the present study were 0.86 at Time 1; 0.81 at Time 2; and 0.85 at Time 3.

The Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) (Beck et al. 1961) was used to assess depressive symptoms. This is a twenty-one-item scale, with response sets similar to a Likert scale, measuring affective, behavioral, cognitive, and somatic symptoms that are thought to be indicative of unipolar depression. Chronbach's alpha of 0.85 was reported for the scale (Beck et al. 1961). Carter and Decey (1996) report convergent and predictive validity with both adolescent male and females. One question was omitted from this scale that was deemed inappropriate for the age of the sample group. The alpha coefficients for the present study were 0.95 at Time 1; 0.91 at Time 2; and 0.86 at Time 3.

The academic variables that were included were self-report of grades and attitudes toward school. The Attitude Towards School—Denver Youth Survey (Institute of Behavioral Science 1990) was used to measure attitudes toward school (e.g., homework, teachers' opinions, etc.). This is a five-item scale with a four-point response scale. An internal consistency alpha coefficient of 0.38 was reported. In the present study, alpha coefficients were 0.74 at Time 1; 0.63 at Time 2; and 0.64 at Time 3.

Academic achievement was measured with self-report of grades. (Some sites required counselors to provide actual report cards and progress reports; one site required the counselor's report along with the self-report.) The girls were asked to respond to the following question: "Putting them all together, what were your grades like in the Spring 2003 semester? Mostly F's, mostly D's, mostly C's, mostly B's, mostly A's."

Results

Means, standard deviations, and alpha coefficients are presented in Table 3. Analyses were conducted in aggregate form because there were not enough cases at all the sites across the three years to conduct analyses by site. For a variety of reasons, known (i.e., participants moved or changed schools) and unknown, many of the participants who started the program did not complete the program, thus affecting the sample size for the current analyses. As a result, comparison tests were conducted for the participants who completed questionnaires for all three years of the project ($n = 70$).

Expected Outcomes

Substance Use: Delay or Omission of Reported Substance Use

There were only two statistically significant results (out of seventeen possible analyses that measured substance use and abuse). The question “During the past thirty days, how many days have you used any alcohol?” was recoded in the analysis to compare use vs. non-use in the past thirty days. The proportion of girls who reported drinking to intoxication were 0.02 in Year 1, 0.17 in Year 2, and 0.06 in Year 3. A Cochran’s test, which evaluates differences among related proportions, was significant: $\chi^2 (2, N = 47) = 9.75, p = 0.008$. The Kendall coefficient of concordance was 0.10 and was fairly small (this coefficient indicates the effect size). Follow-up pairwise comparisons were conducted using a McNemar’s test. The proportions differed significantly between Year 1 and Year 2, $p = 0.016$, but not between Year 1 and Year 3, $p = 0.50$, or between Year 2 and Year 3, $p = 0.13$ (see Table 3). In examining Table 3, participants’ mean proportion for using alcohol was fairly low, with slightly higher mean proportional use in Year 2 compared to Years 1 and 3.

The second significant finding relates to the question “During the past thirty days, how many days have you used benzodiazepines, barbiturates, other tranquilizers, downers, sedatives, or hypnotics?” Again, this question was recoded to assess use vs. nonuse. The proportions of girls who reported using benzodiazepines were 0.00 in Year 1, 0.09 in Year 2, and 0.00 in Year 3. A Cochran’s test which evaluates differences among related proportions was significant: $\chi^2 (2, N = 47) = 8.00, p = 0.05$. The Kendall coefficient of concordance was 0.09, again indicating a small effect. Follow-up pairwise comparisons were conducted using a McNemar’s test. The proportions did not significantly differ between any of the years. Thus, while it appears that a small percentage of girls reported some alcohol and drug use, the majority of the girls started and ended the program not using alcohol or drugs.

Substance Use: Self-Report of Attitudes Consistent with Delay/Omission

There was only one significant finding for the attitude toward drugs. The question “How wrong do you think it is for someone your age to smoke marijuana?” had four responses: 1 = very wrong, 2 = wrong, 3 = a little bit wrong, and 4 = not wrong at all. A repeated measures one-way ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the differences between responses to the question about wrongfulness of substance abuse from Year 1 to Year 2 and Year 3. While there was a significant difference in

scores, how meaningful the change is debatable. That is, average scores increased from 1.22 in Year 1 to 1.23 in Year 2, and then to 1.41 in Year 3. Essentially the girls still believed it was “very wrong” or “wrong” for someone their age to smoke marijuana. Time was a within subjects factor with three levels (Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3 referring to the three years of the study). The result was significant: $F(2,100) = 3.68$, $p = 0.02$, $\eta^2 = 0.07$. This result indicates that there was a significant difference across the three years in how wrong the girls thought it was for someone their age to smoke marijuana. Follow-up comparisons were conducted and significant differences were found between Year 2 and Year 3: $t(100) = 2.20$, $p = 0.032$, Cohen’s $d = 0.27$ (see Table 3).

Two significant findings were found for questions related to the “commitment to living a drug-free life.” The statement “I have made a final decision to stay away from marijuana” had three responses: 1 = false, 2 = maybe, and 3 = true. A Friedman test was conducted to evaluate differences in medians among the responses reported by the girls in Year 1 (median = 3.00), Year 2 (median = 3.00), and Year 3 (median = 3.00). The test was significant: $\chi^2(2, N = 52) = 7.40$, $p = 0.05$; however, the Kendall coefficient of concordance of 0.07 indicated fairly small differences among the three years. Follow-up pairwise comparisons were conducted using a Wilcoxon test, and the median for Year 3 was significantly different from the median for Year 2, $p = 0.01$, but did not differ significantly from the median for Year 1, $p = 0.31$. Nor was the mean for Year 2 significantly different from the median for Year 1, $p = 0.16$. While the medians were all the same, mean ranks were different for Years 1, 2, and 3. Year 3 had a significantly lower mean rank suggesting that the girls in Year 3 reported less of a commitment to staying away from marijuana (e.g., in Year 1, 90.4 percent reported the statement was true for them, in Year 2, 96.2 percent indicated it was true for them, and in Year 3, 84.6 percent indicated it was true for them).

A second significant finding concerns the statement “I plan to get drunk sometime next year,” which also had three responses: 1 = false, 2 = maybe, and 3 = true. A Friedman test was conducted to evaluate differences in medians among the responses reported by the girls in Year 1 (median = 1.00), Year 2 (median = 1.00), and Year 3 (median = 1.00). The test was significant: $\chi^2(2, N = 51) = 7.00$, $p = 0.03$; however, the Kendall coefficient of concordance of 0.07 indicated fairly small differences among the three years. Follow-up pairwise comparisons were conducted using a Wilcoxon test, and the median for Year 3 was significantly different from the median for Year 1. No other comparisons were significantly different. While the medians were all the same, mean ranks were different for Years 1, 2, and 3. Year 3 had a significantly higher mean rank, suggesting that the girls in Year 3 reported a greater likelihood of planning to get drunk sometime in the next year (e.g., in Year 1, 84.3 percent reported the statement was false for them, in Year 2, 84.6 percent indicated it was false for them, and in Year 3, 71.2 percent indicated it was false for them).

Esteem: Increased or Stable Self-Esteem

There was a significant difference in girls’ self-report of self-esteem. A repeated measures one-way ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the differences in self-

esteem scores from Year 1 to Year 2 and Year 3. Time was a within subjects factor with three levels (Year 1, 2, and 3). The result was significant: $F(2,90) = 5.74$, $p = 0.01$, $\eta^2 = 0.13$. This result indicates that there was a significant difference across the three years in self-esteem scores. Follow-up comparisons were conducted and significant differences were found between baseline Year 1 and Year 2, $t(45) = 2.26$, $p = 0.001$, Cohen's $d = 0.537$, and between Year 1 and Year 3, $t(45) = 1.599$, $p = 0.049$, Cohen's $d = 0.123$ (see Table 3).

Esteem: Increased or Stable Collective Esteem

No significant differences were reported for collective self-esteem.

Depression: No Change (If Low at Baseline) or Decreased (If High at Baseline), Based on Clinical Standards

There were no significant differences in self-reported depression scores across the three years. They were low at baseline and remained low for the three-year program.

Attitudes Toward School: Increased Positive Attitudes With Time

There was a significant difference in attitudes toward school: $F(2,116) = 6.77$, $p = 0.002$, $\eta^2 = 0.10$. A significant increase was reported from Year 1 to Year 3, $t(58) = 1.309$, $p = 0.012$, Cohen's $d = .707$, and between Year 2 and Year 3, $t(58) = 1.309$, $p = 0.012$, Cohen's $d = 0.707$ (see Table 3). Thus, the girls' attitudes toward school increased in a positive direction across the three years of the program.

Self-Report of Grades: No Change (If Grades Are Satisfactory) or Increased (If Low at Baseline)

There were no significant differences based on self-report of grades; however, there was a trend for slightly higher self-reported grades across the three years (see Table 3).

Discussion

A relatively large number of girls remained in the *Hermanitas*[®] Program throughout the three years. This could be an indication that if girls are provided with the opportunity to participate in a positive, supportive program, they will participate. The most promising finding from the pilot study was the relatively small number of girls who initiated alcohol and substance use in the three years of the program. Further research as to why those who initiated alcohol and drug abuse did so could reveal other pertinent information that may help other *hermanitas* in the future.

In addition to actual drug and alcohol consumption, the study found that *hermanitas'* attitudes about drug and alcohol use and their perceptions on peer drinking are important. While a significant change was reported in the girls' attitudes toward drinking ("I plan to get drunk in the next year."), the difference was negligible. That is, 84 percent of the girls reported that statement was false to them at baseline and in Year 3, 71 percent said it was false for them. Similarly, while there was a significant change in the girls' attitudes about how wrong it is

for girls their age to smoke marijuana, 94 percent of the girls still thought it was “wrong” or “very wrong” to smoke marijuana. Furthermore, in response to the statement, “I have made a final decision to stay away from marijuana,” 85 percent of the girls at the end of the program reported that this statement was true for them (at baseline, 90 percent had said it was true for them). Thus, not only was there little drug and alcohol initiation or use among the girls, but most of them also had negative attitudes toward drugs and alcohol throughout the three years of the project. These results indicate that positive attitudes toward healthy lifestyles are vital as adolescents get older and the opportunities to engage in unhealthy lifestyles increase.

Other significant findings that are noteworthy include the significant positive changes in self-esteem scores, the absence of depression at baseline and throughout the three years of the program, and attitudes toward school. It is important to consider these three factors when examining substance use among Hispanic youth. For example, Griffin et al. (2000) examined cumulative psychosocial risk and protection as predictors of alcohol use. The study included low self-esteem and psychological distress in the cumulative risk measure, and one of the indicators included in the protective factor measure was grades in school (i.e., earning mostly A's). The present study examined these outcomes, and favorable results were reported for each of the factors.

Limitations

Despite the care that was taken in the research design of this project, there were limitations. No control group or comparison group was included, thus it is unknown whether the positive changes could have occurred without the program, though it is highly unlikely if national trends are considered.

In addition, attrition was high at some of the sites. While the sites were specifically selected to cover urban, rural, and border state areas, sites also included the additional variable of new immigrant status to fifth generation and beyond. Additional research is needed to investigate this area.

While having all volunteers implement the program was cost effective for the implementation of the study, turnover of staff was cited as an issue among the sites. Dependency on a staff of volunteers may not achieve the most favorable outcomes. Additionally, a more objective measure of grades was difficult to obtain at all the sites. However, these are issues that often plague community-based research projects. The same degree of experimental control that is seen in laboratory studies is not feasible nor is it desired. Thus, despite these limitations, the *Hermanitas*[®] Program accomplished a great task and offers a promising prevention program for Latina youth.

Future Directions for Implementation and Research

There was great variance among the site coordinators with regard to stipends, office space, and full-time and part-time work status. While these variables were not investigated as part of the study, informal MANA chapter reporting indicated that the site coordinators who were paid at least for part-time work had an easier time implementing the program compared to those coordinators who had to juggle

outside work, family, and Hermanitas® Program responsibilities. Thus, minimal compensation would seem to be helpful in fully implementing the Hermanitas® Program curriculum.

Each of the six program sites had a MANA chapter. There was also variability across sites with regard to their history and visibility and recognition within their communities. Having a longer history and greater visibility in the community is a potential resource and allows for greater opportunities for collaboration with other community members (i.e., schools and recreation centers). These factors can have an impact on the success of programs such as the Hermanitas® Program.

Some components of the program had to be modified. For example, an *E-Hermanitas* component was initially included. This component involved having the girls correspond with their mentors electronically in order to help them become computer literate. However, most of the girls came from homes that did not own a computer. While access to public computers may be limited in low-income communities, partnerships with schools or local businesses and organizations can provide better access and should be factored into the program. Mentors could work with the *hermanitas* to find alternatives, such as a local library with public access to computers, program activities after school, and other local organizations that may have computers (e.g., Boys and Girls Clubs and the YMCA). Some of the sites' efforts to work with schools to allow the girls to have access to computers for the Hermanitas® Program experienced limited success due to schools' limited resources. While this option helped, it was not a viable solution.

While the findings for the current project demonstrate that the Hermanitas® Program offers great promise, more research is needed. This was a large research project that involved six sites across the country. Moreover, the Hermanitas® Program staff at each site was fully responsible for data collection (i.e., administering questionnaires with training, obtaining parental consent, and ensuring standardized procedures). Continued research with sufficient funding can help to further examine the potential positive effects of mentoring on Latina youth (as well as other at-risk groups). In addition, the field of community psychology has evolved such that it is no longer necessary to use the same "cookie cutter" program and research designs when implementing prevention programs at other sites (Dalton, Elias, and Wandersman 2007). This will be an important consideration as the Hermanitas® Program is disseminated to other communities.

With funding, future research could further examine which variables were the most effective components of this program. For example, was it the community of girls and the friendship that provided that was most effective? Was it time spent with one's mentor, the quality of the relationship between the mentor and mentee, the information provided during their interactions, or was it all of the components?

Policies that emphasize the prevention of high-risk behaviors (i.e., alcohol and drug consumption) and funding that helps not-for-profit organizations to offer prevention programs are critical. Those not-for-profit organizations that are tightly imbedded within the communities they serve can offer a viable vehicle to implement programs at a grassroots level that large organizations cannot do because of limited access.

Conclusion

Programs such as the Hermanitas® Program are crucial because they may help prevent young Latinas from initiating drug and alcohol use. Stueve and O'Donnell (2005) report that those who started drinking at an early age are more likely to report later alcohol problems, multiple sex partners, unprotected sexual intercourse, being high or drunk during sexual intercourse, and pregnancy. More importantly, promoting self-esteem has a direct impact on building positive attitudes toward school, peer relationships, family, and dating. It is also associated with helping young girls believe that they have a promising future.

The problems Latinas face are not without social costs; the impact that a prevention program such as Hermanitas® has on society can be beneficial. While a mentoring program of this magnitude is costly, it pales in comparison to the amount of money that is spent on the prosecution and incarceration of individuals for drug-related crimes. Each site ($N = 6$) was provided \$16,000 for implementing the program at their respective sites ($6 \text{ sites} * \$16,000 = \$96,000$). A total number of seventy participants completed the three-year program across all six sites. The average cost for each participant was \$1,371 ($\$96,000/70 \text{ participants} = \$1,371$). In comparison, the costs associated with prosecution and one year of incarceration for drug-related crimes are an estimated \$18,400 per person (McCollister et al. 2003). Such savings (including those from treatment and health care) can exceed costs by a ratio of twelve to one. It is important to note that these monetary costs do not even begin to touch on the cumulative social costs of teenage pregnancy, dropout rates, drug and alcohol use, etc.

Although questions pertaining to sexual activity were not included in the questionnaire, it was determined that only one *hermanita* became pregnant during the course of the program. This could be an indication that girls who are provided the opportunity to participate in a positive, supportive program will be less inclined to participate in risky behaviors. Moreover, the overall positive outcome of the pilot study is indicative that participating in a mentoring program such as Hermanitas® can be an alternative to addressing many of the obstacles faced by Latinas during their adolescent years.

Overall, the study provides preliminary support for the Hermanitas® Program. The continued implementation of such prevention programs will be essential in the future, as the Hispanic youth population—now the largest percentage of the youth demographic—continues to grow. This study demonstrates that mentoring is a wise, cost-effective approach to preparing young Latinas to overcome challenges and to go on to become productive citizens of this country.

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Hermanitas® Program Curriculum Objectives

1. Educate adolescent Hispanic females on consequences of substance abuse and other risk behaviors by providing accurate factual information in a group setting via knowledgeable and professional presenters, speakers, and presentations.
2. Improve coping skills that promote social competencies in making lifestyle choices and enhance self-esteem, including service utilization, depression management, goal setting, and goal attainment.
3. Provide positive reinforcement through a motivational and educational experience that maintains a high level of expectations while providing boundaries. These expectations, as well as boundaries, provide a sense of purpose and accountability, which promote positive behaviors and commitment to the program.
4. Provide positive reinforcement in the form of shared experiences with other Hispanic adolescents of similar age and background. Enhance support systems, which are culturally validating.
5. Provide positive role models who promote high academic achievement, goal setting, and goal attainment in order to succeed as a professional and as a Hispanic woman. These role models take the forms of coordinators and chapter presidents, MANA members, workshop speakers and presenters, mentors, Latina volunteers and other women with whom the hermanitas will have contact throughout the program.
6. Develop leadership skills to boost self-esteem, overcome barriers, cultivate community, and provide opportunities for empowerment and recognition of success.

Source: MANA, internal documents.

Number of Participating Girls for Each Year

Program Site	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
West Coast Site 1	35	24	19
West Coast Site 2	21	16	12
West Coast Site 3	22	19	10
San Antonio Site 4	33	12	7
Southwest Site 5	27	16	15
Midwest Site 6	25	12	2

Comparisons between Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3: Overall Sample

Outcome Matrix of Significant Findings						
Domain	Measure/Scale	Means	SD	Test	Df	P <
Alcohol/Substance Use/Abuse and Attitudes						
Any Alcohol (SAMHSHA/GPRA)	During the past thirty days, how many days have you used any alcohol?	Y1 = 0.02 Y2 = 0.15 Y3 = 0.06	0.15 0.38 0.25	1. Cochran = 9.75 2. McNemar (follow-up test)	2	0.008
Benzodiazepines, barbiturates, other tranquilizers, downers, sedatives, or hypnotics (SAMHSHA /GPRA)	During the past thirty days, how many days have you used benzodiazepines...?	Y1 = 0.00 Y2 = 0.10 Y3 = 0.00	0.00 0.30 0.00	1.Cochran = 8.00 2. McNemar (follow-up test)	2	0.018
Attitudes towards drugs (SAMHSHA/GPRA)	How wrong do you think it is for someone your age to smoke marijuana?	Y1 = 1.22 Y2 = 1.24 Y3 = 1.41	0.09 0.08 0.12	Repeated Measures One-way ANOVA F = 3.68	2,100	0.029
Committed to living a drug-free life (SAMHSHA/GPRA)	I have made a final decision to stay away from marijuana.	Mean Ranks Y1 = 2.01 Y2 = 2.10 Y3 = 1.89	Na	1.Friedman 2.Wilcoxon	2	0.025
Committed to living a drug-free life (SAMHSHA/GPRA)	I plan to get drunk sometime next year.	Mean Ranks Y1 = 1.91 Y2 = 1.96 Y3 = 2.13	Na	1.Friedman 2.Wilcoxon	2	0.03
Mental Health Outcomes						
Self-esteem	Rosenberg	Y1 = 2.99 Y2 = 3.25 Y3 = 3.18	0.59 0.50 0.52	Repeated Measures One-way ANOVA F = 5.74	2,90	0.01
Social alienation		Y1 = 2.82 Y2 = 2.82 Y3 = 3.01	0.52 0.52 0.42	Repeated Measures One-way ANOVA F = 8.17	2,116	0.001
Educational Outcomes						
Education	Attitudes towards school	Y1 = 2.92 Y2 = 2.92 Y3 = 3.18	0.72 0.72 0.49	Repeated Measures One-way ANOVA F = 6.77	2,116	0.002
Academic extracurricular activities		Y1 = 5.09 Y2 = 4.78 Y3 = 4.18	2.34 2.05 1.78	Repeated Measures One-way ANOVA F = 5.094	2,108	0.008

Resegregation by Referendum: Affirmative Action “E-Raced” in Michigan

Khaled Ali Beydoun

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Introduction

I have been going over and over in my head about what to say, to my children, the morning after. They were a part of the movement, in marches, rallies, passing out literature. Before I had a chance to explain to my son, he shouted from the living room—“we won!” I had to explain to him, he saw the wrong proposal. We lost that battle.

—Tiffany Tilley, Detroit Activist

On 7 November 2006, Michigan voted yes to the Michigan Civil Rights Initiative (MCRI), a proposal to ban affirmative action and race- and gender-conscious programs. Michigan became not only the third state to do so by way of state referendum, joining California¹ and Washington,² but also the gateway for the continued national assault on affirmative action. Michigan, in fact, was a crossroads for affirmative action abolitionist Ward Connerly, and this recent victory is allegedly expected to carry him into Oregon, Nevada, Arizona, Utah, Missouri, South Dakota, or all of them, according to Richard Paddock of the *Los Angeles Times*. Although the campaign to safeguard affirmative action in Michigan was well-coordinated and focused, the state’s sociopolitical, cultural, and economic conditions proved insurmountable. Connerly himself even acknowledged in the *Los Angeles Times* interview the difficulty of the Michigan campaign, and the challenge put up by One United Michigan (OUM), the coalition to defend affirmative action. But following Connerly’s forecast, Michigan’s fledgling economy only exacerbated racial division and sexism, and fueled the anti-immigrant sentiment levied against several communities of color, specifically Latinos.

Disgruntlement and racism was not only directed at individuals and communities, but also institutions catering to immigrants, women and people of color; particularly, affirmative action (OUM 2006). White Michiganders³ contended that

affirmative action programs “took away” their opportunities and consequently “handed out” jobs to “unqualified minorities or immigrants,” thus decimating the state’s economy (OUM 2006). Accordingly, it is arguable that affirmative action was eliminated not by Connerly but by conditions on the ground. Not even the most well-orchestrated and properly funded campaign, in retrospect, could have undone the triumvirate of entrenched racism, gender inequity, and economic despair plaguing Michigan, which ultimately befell affirmative action. After all, Michigan was selected as the next front for Connerly’s colorblindness crusade for precisely these reasons.

A One, United Michigan?

Marked civil rights reform will not be had until it converges with the interests of Whites.

—Derek A. Bell, Jr. (2006)

Employing the divisive tactics used in California a decade earlier, Connerly sought to polarize Michigan as a conduit for abolishing affirmative action. Therefore, it was vital to form a front that reflected a diverse but galvanized Michigan, to counteract the division and confusion generated by Connerly. OUM convened a coalition that included the ACLU, the NAACP, the Michigan Catholic Conference, Latin Americans for Social & Economic Development, SER Metro Detroit, the Hispanic Center of Western Michigan, General Motors, the United Auto Workers, and over a hundred more organizations.⁴ OUM generated the bulk of its revenue from inside the state while the MCRI’s funds were funneled from prominent, wealthy conservatives including Rupert Murdoch and Joseph Coors (Cokorinos 2005, 1). Connerly’s finance base was unknown until the court compelled disclosure during 2003’s Racial Privacy Initiative (RPI/Proposal 54) campaign in California.

The disclosure of Connerly’s was forced under a legal settlement with California’s Fair Political Practices Commission. FPPC has sued Connerly’s preposterously named American Civil Rights Commission in response to a complaint . . . Connerly was paid \$1 million in compensation by his two organizations in 2003 (Cokorinos 2005).

Connerly’s monetary pipeline further reflects the non-transparent character of 209 and its progeny, including the MCRI. Moreover, Connerly’s yearly “salary” of \$1 million evidences that his investment in colorblindness is perhaps fueled as much by greed as it is by principle. Connerly’s niche, however, is indispensable because he brings to the fore a black face to voice and publicly champion the aims of specifically White financiers. As a result, Connerly’s role makes him one of the most lucratively remunerated affirmative action beneficiaries, considering that his blackness is inarguably a prerequisite for his job (Fancher 2006). Conflicting with the essence of colorblindness, Connerly’s race is intentionally deployed, manipulated, and leveraged to win over minds in the court of public opinion. A brand

race-consciousness, hypocritically, which is nothing short of an affront to the ideological underpinnings of colorblindness.

Following the misleading title of the proposal, MCRI circulators informed Michigan voters that the measure would “safeguard civil rights” and “protect affirmative action” while soliciting signatures.⁵ Also contradicting with their vision of colorblindness, proponents of the MCRI injected race and racism by invidiously defrauding African American voters into signing the petition. The Michigan Civil Rights Commission, the government agency responsible for investigating such matters, found ample evidence of fraud. Federal Judge Arthur Tarnow, who heard the legal challenge of MCRI’s tactics and ultimately ruled that the proposal stay on the ballot, also wrote that the signature-gathering process inflicted a fraud on not only those who signed, but the entire state of Michigan. In a letter submitted to me on 3 April 2006, a defrauded Michigan voter shared his experience with the MCRI circulators:

This instance of fraud occurred on or near the campus of Wayne State University. I remember that I was in a bit of a rush that day, hesitated for a few seconds considering whether or not I even had the time to stop and sign a petition that “supported affirmative action.” I decided that though I may be a little late, I too supported affirmative action and so perhaps I had better sign quickly and be on my way. I know many at that site signed because of that representation, which was a straight out lie.

Acknowledging the problematic character of the MCRI, the State Board of Canvassers⁶ ruled to compel the inclusion of the words “to ban affirmative action programs,” originally not included in the ballot language. The addition of this phrase was significant. First, it formally wrote into the ballot language that affirmative action would be banned with the passage of the proposal. Second, its inclusion acknowledged that an injury had been levied against potential voters who signed the petition not knowing its true aim. Third, the inserted language further confused the reading of the ballot, making it both contradictory and inaccessible. Finally, the revision of the MCRI marked the first time a Connerly ballot was revised, given that neither 209 nor I-200 included the words “ban affirmative action” in their respective texts. This constitutes one of OUM’s greatest victories in that it created a more transparent ballot for voters.

Considering that Detroit ranks in several studies as the most segregated city in the United States (Census Bureau 2002, 68) and Michigan an equally hyper-segregated state *in toto*, the campaign against the MCRI took place amid a backdrop of ripe racial tension and *de facto* segregation (Strum 2005). Metro Detroit’s various neighborhoods, enclaves, and suburbs are sharply homogenous, with individual ethnic communities almost exclusively inhabiting entire sections. Southwest Detroit houses Mexicantown, home to an established but rapidly growing Latino community that encompasses several nationalities. Therefore, although Detroit statistically may appear to be ethnically diverse, meaningful intercommunity interaction is effectively nonexistent. Moreover, Detroit’s culture of noncommuniqué across communities of color exacerbates tensions, and commingling across communities often results in violence. The abolition of affirmative action and equal

opportunity programs will surely pronounce this balkanization, given that it was perhaps the only serviceable bridge that facilitated meaningful interaction and a semblance of coexistence.

The Anticipated Impact of the MCRI

Evidence from California suggests that Prop. 209 eroded access to services, education, job training, and other opportunities . . . There is ample evidence to support expectations that passage of the MCRI in Michigan would result in a similar pattern of lost services and restricted opportunities.

—Susan W. Kaufmann and Anne K. Davis (2006),
University of Michigan, Center for the Education
of Women

With the passage of 209 and I-209, many affirmative action and equal opportunity programs were categorically eliminated, materially revised (independently or by court order), or challenged. The aftermath of 209 and I-200 provided a stirring indictment of the MCRI, but one that was largely ignored by Michigan voters. The *Detroit Free Press* reported on 8 November 2006 that, ultimately, Proposal 2 won by a comfortable margin of 58 percent to 42 percent. The programmatic and institutional repercussions of the MCRI will be preceded by its official insertion into Michigan's supreme law of the land. The MCRI will formally amend the Michigan Constitution, adding a §25 to Article 1. Given the conservative disposition of Michigan's highest state courts, a textual interpretation of the law poses considerable threat to a host of programs, affirmative action and otherwise, that use the proscribed-against criteria. Any state-funded program that takes into consideration race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin in its operation is automatically suspect and raises a *prima facie* presumption of illegality.

The aftermath of 209 in California foreshadows the MCRI's prospective imprint on Michigan. A host of institutions with *per se* affirmative action programs will have to reassess their schemes, while programs not commonly considered "affirmative action" will also be vulnerable.

The MCRI will bring about a proliferation of lawsuits against any program that (formally or functionally) services people of color and women, and with it, a hyper-litigious culture in which any program can be challenged. Therefore, contracting programs assisting women- and minority-owned businesses, outreach programs,⁷ apprenticeship and vocational programs,⁸ public health programs,⁹ and university admissions and scholarships¹⁰ are in danger (for full listing, see Kaufmann 2006). Comprehensive programs aiming to fully integrate women and people of color at the government level in terms of hiring were also removed (Kaufmann 2006).

However, it is no surprise that the MCRI's primary targets are Michigan's high-profile public universities, particularly the flagship Ann Arbor campus of the University of Michigan. The developments at California's flagship public

universities, UCLA and UC-Berkeley, signal what will likely take place at Ann Arbor and other selective schools in the state. The 2006 incoming undergraduate class at the UCLA campus was especially startling. Of the 4,852 freshmen enrolled, only ninety-six (roughly 2 percent) were African American. This statistic prompted Rebecca Trounson to write in the 3 June 2006 *Los Angeles Times*, “UCLA – which boasts storied alumni as Jackie Robinson, Tom Bradley, and Ralph Bunche, and is in a county that is 9.8 percent African American . . . the ninety-six figure is the lowest for incoming African American freshman since at least 1973.” Moreover, Trounson continues, twenty of the ninety-six enrolled African American students were recruited athletes, prompting NAACP-Detroit leader Donnell White’s (2006) apt observation that “Blacks can only attend UCLA to pitch, catch, and fetch a football, and the same will be said of the University of Michigan and Michigan State if Proposal 2 passes.” Proposal 209 effectively created an affirmative action program for White men and eliminated mechanisms for even recruiting promising students of color. The restriction of even considering an applicant’s race among the myriad of other factors converts admissions into an even more rigidly quantitative and impersonal process, which benefits affluent, White applicants with established university ties.¹¹

The *Gratz v. Bollinger and Grutter v. Bollinger*¹² decisions introduced a programmatic chilling effect on institutions of higher learning using race- or gender-conscious admissions or outreach programs, according to the *New York Times* 14 March 2006 Education section. Intimidated by the possibility of being sued, universities are choosing to do away with much-relied-upon “diversity programs.” The MCRI promises to further chill both public and private universities’ endeavors to increase diversity through outreach, scholarships, and courses of academic study.¹³ This proves detrimental not only to students, but also to universities.

Even before the passage of Proposal 2, with affirmative action still legal, public universities and colleges that could not attract a critical mass of students of color suffered. Michigan Technological University was one such school. In the 18 April 2006 edition of the school’s weekly paper, *Michigan Tech Lode*, Alexandra Matiella Novak wrote, “Just a year ago, Dow Chemical informed Michigan Tech that they would no longer be sending company representatives to Tech to recruit; concerns regarding the University’s lack of diversity played a major role in the decision . . . Employers want to hire a work force that reflects their customer base.”

Corporations like Dow Chemical are committed to recruiting employees who have not only technical expertise, but also the sociocultural acumen that comes with attending a diverse school. Echoing this argument, the Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce (2006, 2, 3) issued its position against the MCRI, resolving that:

Diversity strategies, including what has been referred to as Affirmative Action are essential tools necessary to attract and maintain a highly skilled workforce, reflective of diverse local, regional and global marketplaces in which businesses operate on a daily basis . . . Affirmative action is the foundation upon which today’s corporate diversity initiatives and strategies are based. Diversity has become synonymous with global competitiveness in Michigan and elsewhere.

The Detroit Area Chamber and other economic networks and collectives rendered similar statements, led by leading corporations like General Motors, which filed an influential amicus brief in the *Gratz* and *Grutter* decisions. These economic arguments championing affirmative action proved compelling during the campaign and convinced voters that the struggling Michigan economy would experience increased difficulty with the abolition of affirmative action (BLS 2006, 3). Perhaps the gravest consequences of the MCRI's passage, considering Michigan's fledgling economic condition, are corporations recruiting from other state schools, new businesses deciding to conduct their operations in a more diverse climate, and, ultimately, Michigan-based business picking up and going elsewhere. Ypsilanti and Flint have never recovered from General Motors' desertion, and a post-affirmative action Michigan may very well suffer from a similar fate.

An Unfortunate Intersection: The Erosion of Affirmative Action and Xenophobia Toward Latinos

The elimination of affirmative action uniquely impacts the growing Latino community, given that it intersects with a moment of overzealous xenophobia against Latinos. The anti-immigrant sentiment sweeping the United States has found a most receptive home in Michigan, only amplified by the state's declining economic condition. A center of the Rustbelt, Michigan's one-dimensional economy¹⁴ has experienced marked decline in recent years, and its urban centers, led by Detroit, are likewise shrinking in population and opportunity. Like most of the city's ethnic enclaves, Southwest Detroit is virtually economically independent, confined from neighboring communities, and almost homogeneously Latino. Consequently, its residents seldom travel out of its bounds, nor interact with residents from other communities—a phenomenon that has only increased with the state's robust climate of xenophobia.

Affirmative action has provided access to opportunity for Latinos, and its elimination in Michigan drastically amplifies the challenges faced by the community. Research demonstrates that Latinos rank among the most economically and educationally marginalized groups in the United States. For instance, Latinas earn only fifty-two cents to every dollar earned by White females, while Latinos earn sixty-three cents to every dollar earned by White men (LCCR). Michigan's rapid influx of Latino immigrants, who generally come from destitute origins, is only exacerbating these disparities. Latinos are progressing in key areas at a lower rate than any other demographic in the country,

Latino workers are more likely than their Black or White counterparts to earn low incomes and be poor. The median income for Hispanic workers in 2001 was \$19,651 . . . Also, compared to poverty rates for White workers (4 percent), the rate of poverty for Hispanic workers was 10.4 percent (LCCR).

Therefore, affirmative action and equal opportunity programs are not only sorely needed by established Latino communities, which historically have been underrepresented and intentionally denied access, but also new communities that are significantly disadvantaged.

In California, 209 severely compromised the ability of Latino-owned businesses to compete. In addition, equal opportunity programs aimed at integrating Latinos into public and private sectors of employment were also cut. In the realm of education, 209 significantly reduced the ability of Latinos to gain equal access and educational opportunities by gutting scholarships and programs that help people of color attend public universities, K–12 educational programs, and other public education programs (Campaign to Defeat 209). Before presenting his arguments defending affirmative action and denouncing 209's crippling impact on his state, University of California president Richard C. Atkinson discussed California's rich and growing Latino population and the inferiority of public school education in the 21 April 2003 *UC Santa Cruz Currents Online*:

California is a rapidly diversifying society. In 1990, 34 percent of the state's public school students were Latinos; in 2000, the figure was 43 percent, and by 2010 it is projected to be 52 percent. Against this backdrop of stunning demographic change stands a public school system characterized by vast disparities in educational opportunity.

With Michigan's Latino population rapidly growing, it faces many of the same problems long endured by communities in California. However, given that Michigan's Latinos are relatively far less established, and lacking the influence of California Latinos, affirmative action programs are perhaps more critical to Latinos in Michigan.

Conclusion: The End of the Affirmative Action Era?

I think the end is at hand for affirmative action as we know it.

—Ward Connerly to the Los Angeles Times,
only weeks after his victory in Michigan

For Connerly and his supporters, the victory in Michigan symbolically and strategically signals the beginning of the end of the affirmative action era.¹⁵ With the realignment of the United States' Supreme Court toward the right, the future of affirmative action in America seems bleak. Despite facing an impassioned and organized coalition, which by far ranked as Connerly's most formidable challenge to date, Proposal 2 passed by a wide margin. As a native of Michigan, raised in its streets and shaped by its schools, it was extremely empowering to educate my community about the consequences of the MCRI, but exponentially more deflating when it finally sunk because *my house* fell victim to Connerly. The Seldom Blues Restaurant, home to OUM's election-day party on 7 November 2006, felt surreal to me as the results came in and we learned of the jarring sixteen-point margin. As Michigan looks toward a resegregated horizon, proponents of affirmative action and equal access must search for and develop new means to integrate marginalized segments of the state.

One thing is clear, Ward Connerly and his campaign for colorblindness will continue into other states. Every Michigan institution of notice, except the voters, opposed Proposal 2—the Democratic and Republican Parties, religious communities, the universities, unions, civil rights groups, and even big business. Moreover,

the days after Proposal 2's victory in Michigan proved promising given that opponents of the proposal steadfastly vowed, in public forums such as the *Detroit Free Press*, to continue to work against its devices and even challenge it in court. The MCRI won handily on election day; now days in court will determine whether that victory can be nullified, in part or in whole. One thing that the MCRI cannot defeat, however, is the spirit so colorfully demonstrated by the leaders and activists that came together in defense of affirmative action—a collective that embodies the harmonious diversity that can be had in Michigan, an ideal that we will continue to strive toward today and well after the MCRI is implemented, further debated, and ultimately overturned.¹⁶

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¹ California passed the California Civil Rights Initiative in 1996, which was Proposal 209 (hereinafter “Proposal 209” or “209”).

² Washington passed the Washington Civil Rights Initiative in 1998, which was Initiative-200 (hereinafter “I-200”).

³ Particularly working class and poor whites.

⁴ Visit <http://www.oneunitedmichigan.org> to see the coalition’s entire roster.

⁵ The Michigan Civil Rights Commission held several hearings across the state, first in Detroit, followed by Flint, Jackson, and Grand Rapids, listening to testimony from individuals defrauded by MCRI circulators and from circulators themselves who were trained by MCRI personnel.

⁶ The government body that administrates and oversees state petitions and ballot measures.

⁷ The Early Academic Outreach Program, California Education Code 8631, which encompasses summer school, after-school and weekend classes targeting low-income students, and students of color.

⁸ The Minority Health Professionals Education Foundation and the Registered Nurse Program.

⁹ Breast cancer screening, domestic violence shelter, and prenatal smoking cessation programs were all threatened in court.

¹⁰ Extended Opportunity Programs and Services and the UC-San Diego Millennium Scholarship Program to cite two examples.

¹¹ Legacy points were not restricted by the MCRI, Proposal 209, or I-200.

¹² The latter upheld *Regents of Univ. of California v. Bakke*, which held that affirmative action is a compelling state interest to bring about campus diversity.

¹³ Academic departments that focus exclusively on a particular ethnic or national experience, like the Chicano-Boricua Studies Program at Wayne State University and the University of Michigan-Dearborn’s Arab American Studies Department, also face possible lawsuits.

¹⁴ Founded on its celebrated, but faltering auto industry, led by the Big Three: Ford Motor Company, General Motors, and Daimler-Chrysler.

¹⁵ As Richard Paddock wrote in the 26 November 2006 *Los Angeles Times*, “Connerly said that the overwhelming victory of Proposal 2 in Michigan at the same time that the state voted largely Democratic in other contests was a sign that anti-affirmative action measures could prevail anywhere in the country.”

¹⁶ A ballot initiative can be challenged ten years after its inception by counter-proposal. California is currently organizing to overturn Proposal 209, with the Overturn-209 movement burgeoning.

In the Midst of a Latino Leadership Crisis

Ernesto Nieto

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Immigration

When asked to identify the most significant challenges facing the U.S. Latino community today, immigration invariably comes to mind. The over 11.2 million noncitizen Latino immigrants in the United States (Census Bureau 2004b) represent a human social force that is undoubtedly changing our nation's landscape as well as impacting multiple facets of America's labor force, international relations, and structures for public education. The press keeps reminding us of the thousands of noncitizen immigrants from Mexico and other Latin American countries who cross our nation's southern borders daily in search of better paying jobs and opportunities to send money back home to their struggling families. Homeland security officials often characterize this modern-day problem as increasing the threat of terrorism, thus justifying the need to station troops along the border to help stem the flow of illegal entries. From an educational point of view, immigration has become fixed in the minds of our educators who find themselves increasingly concerned with the realities of teaching over 2.1 million¹ young noncitizen children who may not only lack the language skills and capacities to participate in traditional K–12 classroom settings, but who may also fail to have the essential educational references from their homes that encourage them to become active learners. Yet with all of the ills involved with this social force, immigration is not the most pressing challenge facing the leadership of the U.S. Latino community today. Instead, it must be understood as only a singular component of a much greater and more complex crisis.

Violence and Dropouts

In the views of some, the spread of violence, crime, drugs, and the growing number of Latinos incarcerated in our nation's prison system ought to be perceived as the number one challenge. Others point to an enormous population of Latino high school dropouts whose joblessness results in low earning potentials, which are frequently linked to family violence, illiteracy, and soaring teenage pregnancy rates.

Rising Latino Underclass

Together these social forces are fueling the apparent rise of a Latino underclass in this nation, which poses a significant threat and cause for alarm due to the instability it will cause in both Latino and non-Latino populations. This constantly expanding and seemingly inassimilable population is now becoming an economically depressed and socially volatile body of men and women. As a whole, it has a tremendously high propensity to become generationally dependent upon state structures, to perpetuate a normalized culture of underachievement, and to maintain a significantly diminished likelihood of producing highly prepared facilitators of change or development in the community. Undoubtedly these are important factors of consideration, yet they are not the core problem. This title goes to a less visible, more precocious and debilitating enemy that daily grows as a danger lurking in the dark.

Crisis Defined

As a population that has grown from less than ten million prior to 1965 to more than forty million forty years later, we have been losing our leadership capacities to maintain communication and coordinated campaigns within the multitude of internal sectors of the Latino community that are expanding and evolving daily. Despite being viewed as the fastest-growing population segment of America, as well as one of the largest incubators of “minority-owned” (i.e., Latino-based and/or -oriented) businesses, the growth in its internal leadership base and organized sectors (whether defined as civic, business, cultural, faith-based, etc.) has not been congruent to the growth in the overarching U.S. Latino population. Simultaneously, Latinos have lost contact with one another while the organizations that seek to benefit large sectors of the community have become unrecognized and uncoordinated.

As a generation, it appears that most of today’s Latinos no longer have the same capacities that their previous family members once enjoyed such as being able to influence thinking, alter the social trajectories and directions of collective bodies of Latinos, and cause significant shifts in the social perspectives, beliefs, and outlooks of either various subsectors or the entirety of the Latino community. In 2006, we appear to have become a people who are now beginning to lose their collective identity and sense of common direction—perhaps we are now a fragmented Latino collective unraveling into greater degrees of disarray. As we observe this fragmentation increase, we also see the Latino community’s ability to enact change or catalyze movement in new directions recede almost entirely. As a result, we find ourselves caught in the midst of a social crisis wherein the leadership capacity to influence and manage change from within the Latino community is being eroded and lost. Consequently, a pressing but unnoticed community crisis has emerged that is directly tied to the current capacities of the Latino leadership base to conceptualize or address the multifaceted social forces that are influencing Latinos in America.

The crisis is a condition that we may have particular difficulties admitting, since it is evident that the Latino community of today is more rudderless than ever before. Beyond all the hoopla of having awakened the so-called “Sleeping Giant”

as it has occasionally stirred in response to salient community issues, we as Latinos are allowing our community to drift without a destination. Clearly we lack the leadership capacities to take charge of our own directions or contribute to the greater good of the larger society. Continuing to lose grip of this capacity, in my view, is the greatest single threat facing our community as a new era of demographic transition begins. Only by taking the right steps to refurbish the critically thin and fragmented layer of leadership that currently exists can we expect to develop the methods and means for alleviating the internal distress that is stemming from the collision of these multiple social forces.

The Fulcrum for Change

The change agents that will reconfigure the Latino leadership base can only be created through the activation, cultivation, and integration of a critical mass of Latino intelligentsia. However, achieving the primary goal of an endeavor of this nature would require an inversion of thinking. We have to move away from being a community that understands only the general symptomology of its rapidly metastasizing challenges, and become a community that (1) recognizes the current effectiveness of its collective organizational capacities to enact change in the overarching community, and (2) determines how to create a critical mass of intelligentsia as the primary method for addressing the totality of its internal distresses.

Understanding the Current Leadership Condition

The current leadership crisis condition we are facing can be attributed to several factors that have taken a number of years to unfold. The “brain drain” of upwardly mobile, more educated Latino families over the last several decades who moved out of their former locales for more attractive and luring mainstream settings has certainly been a factor in the decline of organized civic engagement. This type of engagement once demanded accountability from elected leaders in the creation of public policy and improving services to formerly ignored and neglected neighborhoods. In being dispersed throughout the larger mass of middle-class Americans, however, the activist voices of more-educated Latinos have encountered their own set of unique problems. Despite the gains of living in larger, more comfortable homes and enjoying the accoutrements of more affluent lifestyles, all too many of these former Latino residents are finding themselves culturally isolated from their previous surroundings. Their voices are quieted, no longer as able to network with other Latinos who previously shared similar values of community engagement and enjoyed the rush of having an identity and community role in influencing the lives of others. In today’s world, they spend their time mostly consumed with strengthening their networking capacities mainly within their professional domains, becoming involved in efforts primarily directed at bolstering their career and business interests, and blending into the environments of their suburban lifestyles, where engagement in the life of the community through neighborhood associations has become more symbolic of their declining social roles in the larger Latino community rather than the expression of their leadership abilities.

This loss in critical human resources and skills has given rise to other related problems. A disconnect is becoming increasingly apparent between the more

skilled and educated sectors of the Latino community and their less prepared and educated counterparts. This separation, however, has the makings of a more endemic problem. Distance and time may no longer be the reasons for the separation. It may be that a “social class divide” has crept into the equation where one may not have been as apparent before. The spiraling increase of a social and economic Latino underclass and the unprecedented growth of nameless immigrants who now populate barrios previously comprised of American-born Latinos have fostered the formation of “stranger communities” that live isolated existences, no longer familiar or attractive to the families who once lived there. These developments form the conditions for an increasingly fractured community headed toward social balkanization. And further aiding this process are other social conditions that are too many in number and complexity to explore in depth, but certainly worthy of brief attention.

Community leaders who came from the civil rights era of the 1960s and 1970s, for instance, are not only beginning to dwindle in numbers, but also starting to show both the wear and tear of aging and the price that invariably comes from years of exhaustive community service. Problems facing the current Latino community are also as different in context and meaning from previous eras as night and day. Civil rights, social advocacy, and reform are undoubtedly important concerns for today’s modern-day leaders to support. They are not, however, the concerns occupying center stage. In the 1960s, Latinos represented a relatively small sector in comparison to a larger dominant culture. Racial inequality was clear to everyone involved and the removal of those barriers was the primary effort of all civil rights activity. The organizations and individuals calling for change were the few able to move out and up, those relatively easy to accommodate by the larger society. In the world of today and tomorrow, a Latino community of greater than forty million represents a challenge that will not be easily accommodated, assimilated, or managed. To address this modern-day phenomenon, a different concept and understanding of community advancement is needed. Rather than training community leaders, as in previous eras, who clamored for change and demanded intervention by governmental entities to correct the human inequities of the times, an entirely new leadership philosophy is needed in order to create the reservoir of talent needed to sustain the formation of a new Latino leadership base. Today, community equity building must become the principle basis for attracting involvement via initiatives that heighten the bar of expectations in the quality of life people prefer to live, engaging parents in pursuing new forms of socializing and educating their children beyond what public education is able to provide, and creating the environments that broaden and sustain the structures needed to significantly increase participation across all sectors of Latino community life.

The problem is that we face not only a shortage of leaders to carry out these new initiatives, but also the means to begin training them at an early age. Recognized author Malcolm Gladwell (2000, 178–179) presents a theory based upon the research of anthropologist Robin Dunbar that suggests that social organizations managing beyond 150 relationships can create a “significant additional social and intellectual burden.” In other words, for every 150 community members, at least

one leader is needed to organize and manage the needs of the group. In 2005, this meant that at a minimum the leadership base of the Latino community should have contained 284,666 men and women who are capable of conceptualizing and fulfilling the needs of the community members they serve. By 2010, the minimum number will be 318,373 Latino leaders for the estimated Latino population that year. By 2050, as the overall Latino population doubles from its 2010 value, so shall the minimum leadership requirement, which would be 683,733 by that point in time (see Table 1).

The National Hispanic Institute (NHI) is committed to addressing this challenge. We recognize, however, that in working with only five thousand high-school-age youths a year, we are barely scratching the surface. Young Latinos with the potential to eventually serve in those leadership training capacities are being hurriedly channeled by our public schools to colleges and universities with only one objective in mind: they help supply the critical shortages for professional contributors who serve the strategic economic interests of our nation's businesses and industries. They also meet the diversity goals of our nation's colleges and universities and are the most likely to become caught in the trappings of upward mobility and the lure of more lucrative opportunities for better pay and more stable careers (though requiring as many as twelve to sixteen hours in a workday) after graduating from college. Leadership and participation in the life of the Latino community, for this sector of young people, carries the danger of becoming an afterthought, a luxury not normally associated with careers and daily living. And unless challenged to think differently and broaden their social perspectives early in their development, the likelihood of them embracing a broader view, one that includes engagement in the Latino community as being both compelling and attractive to their futures, becomes altogether diminished.

A Crisis Becoming Multiple Catastrophes

Continuing to leave these developments unchallenged spells larger problems for a U.S. Latino community already suffering the debilitating impact of an anemic leadership base brought on by opportunities for social mobility, the unabated growth of an underclass, the balkanization of communities according to socioeconomic class divisions, and the channeling of more talented youth away from their communities. Increased social instability, an erosion of community identity, and a loss of community cohesion and common direction are outcomes already looming on the surface. Once-strong community churches that provided moral and ethical direction to their respective congregations are now suffering the consequences of smaller, less stable memberships. The limited participation by Latino parents in the affairs of their local schools and entire districts is also destabilizing large-scale educational initiatives since it offsets the likelihood of successfully implementing and achieving the goals of multiple initiatives within and across districts. This expanding pattern of the invisibility of Latino parents of all age sectors negatively impacts the performance of principals and district administrators since there is not a collaborative infrastructure that has been created by parents to balance school initiatives as well as promote active family learning in the household to bolster success within the classroom. Furthermore, civic organizations that provided the

public forums for community dialogue and engagement are being reduced to the loyal few, with some ceasing to function altogether and others being replaced by self-interest groups with downtown offices.

With a continuing downswing in voter participation by Latinos, political leaders are also beginning to show signs of entrenchment, no longer concerned about accountability to the larger Latino community, except to use their positions to further their tenures, respond to the demands of special interests who underwrite their campaigns for reelection, and benefit their inner circle of friends. The most important consequence of this development is that an important social precedent is being set that will become increasingly difficult to alter. A formerly proud Latino community that once was galvanized into a strong and cohesive voice in the 1960s is being allowed to slowly dismantle itself into a collection of unrelated subpopulations with no common agenda to follow. Like a family that experiences the fracturing impact of divorce, the Latino community is starting to become more imagined than real, viewed as nothing less than the servant classes of American society, those given less pay for their efforts, a consumer population easily swayed by marketing firms that are able to reap huge profits for their stockholders by holding up Latino pop artists as community heroes and icons during Cinco de Mayo celebrations.

Solutions

Solutions to these perplexing challenges will not come easily, yet the fundamental need to formulate answers certainly can no longer be ignored. Such ignorance ensures the exacerbation of issues already recognized as representing significant harm to the future health and well-being of the U.S. Latino community. Immigration, high dropout rates, crime and incarceration, increasing divorce rates, the spread of drugs and drug use, community and family violence, illiteracy, joblessness, and other similar social concerns are indeed important indicators and symptoms of deeper, more complex systemic causes. Therefore, the Institute recommends a retooling of community thinking to move away from inefficient approaches for addressing endemic community problems. Simply stated, the multiple challenges faced by Latinos should no longer be addressed individually or in the order in which they have been prioritized historically. Instead, as a community we should work to resolve our internal leadership crisis and build from within a critical mass of Latino intelligentsia that can operate effectively in multiple sectors of the community to resolve various interior distresses.

A continuing lack of concern for social equity in the manner salaries are distributed at the lower echelons of our nation's labor force is undoubtedly in need of critical review and modification. With today's rising consumer prices, parents and other working adults who are kept at the bottom of the income ladder are simply not able to make ends meet with the paychecks they take home. The same can be said about employers who refuse to underwrite health insurance coverage available for their employees. The impact of these two issues alone continue to have a significant debilitating impact on the quality of family life at multiple levels, not to mention creating a major drain on our nation's public resources.

The Transition of the Current Leadership Base

A decaying leadership base, however, is also another critical consideration in the equation that deserves immediate attention. If left unattended, it will silently continue to do its work like the divorced dad who becomes absent in the life of his children and fails to contribute his fair share of the costs needed to support them or the mother who blatantly ignores providing her children with well-balanced meals and order in their social development. In the end, everyone pays a larger price. And the same thing can be said about communities without leaders who are needed to help form vision, who take a lead role in crafting the structures that promote community dialogue and involvement, and who are able to maintain strong community engagement in the search for solutions to complex human challenges. We all know what happens at the end because we all see what is happening now.

Even before the NHI was formally established, these trends were noticeable as far back as the early 1970s. The disconnect of young Latinos from their cultural community, the dispersal of more educated and skilled Latino families out of previously Latino dominant neighborhoods, and the lessening of civic and community involvement were becoming increasingly evident. The institute was established in 1979 to begin researching these issues in search of better answers. The lack of recognition by public and private funding sources for leadership as a community problem, however, became an immediate stumbling block in locating resources. Curbing the dropout problem, the reduction of illiteracy, and similar community issues were much more popular and certainly more accepted public reasons that made funding easier to locate. The conventional wisdom back then, as it remains in many circles today, was that the high-potential students did not necessarily represent any potential danger to the larger society and, therefore, were not deserving of special funding attention, outside of providing support for particular sectors such as first-generation students who might need special attention to become eligible and ready for college. Young Latinos doing well in high school were not seen as potential candidates for future community leadership roles. Getting them into college and ready for the professional workforce was the primary concern. The majority view was that leadership roles for these young men and women would automatically come later, after they graduated from college and became successful professionals. However, the NHI held an altogether different view. It not only understood the short- and long-term challenges and problems associated with a Latino community losing its leadership base and capacities to influence change, but also realized the benefits that could be derived by cultivating bright young people into a new and fresh supply of highly trained future community leaders.

In the view of the NHI, high-potential Latino youth offer the Latino community its best options to correct its current trajectory and entertain new possibilities in its future development. Engaging this sector of young people, however, is not an easy task to achieve. The prospect of attending name-brand institutions of higher learning and eventually landing promising careers in our nation's mainstream society often appears to be a far more attractive option than becoming involved with a community that is often perceived as backward, uneducated, and behind the times.

Looking Toward the Future of Latino Leadership

NHI high school leadership programs are designed to change these perceptions and make involvement much more compelling and attractive. Through different NHI leadership programs specially designed for various age groups, previously held social perspectives are critically analyzed and frequently reconfigured by participants. A new nomenclature is used that makes being Latino part of a global culture, not a “minority” or “person of color.” Students develop a special appreciation for sharing in the histories and traditions of twenty-one Spanish-speaking countries. They further their skills in communications and advance their insight into the dynamics of mobilizing and managing constituencies. And while the work being conducted slowly transforms the attitudes of the participants to see the Latino community in a better light, they are also assisted in their needs to access our nation’s top colleges and universities through networks and special services that often exceed the capacities of high school counseling offices.

NHI has served over sixty-five thousand youth and their families since its inception in 1979. Furthermore, NHI alumni collectively represent a massive sector of the U.S. Latino community’s growing intellectual spheres—over 98 percent have enrolled in college with 90 percent graduating in a four- to five-year period, and an additional 65 percent pursuing graduate studies. Though still relatively young in age, with its oldest participants only recently reaching their fortieth birthdays, NHI is already witnessing the emergence of former participants being elected to public office, managing nonprofit entities or serving on their boards, and being visibly involved in community roles as volunteers in a variety of local, state, and national capacities. In comparison to only 14 percent of adult Latinos who actively engage in community civic life nationwide—the lowest level of participation reported since World War II—NHI alumni far exceed this percentage with many even creating new opportunities for volunteer participation in larger community structures. These advances, though significant, represent only a small beginning in replenishing the leadership supply in comparison to the demand.

To what extent an already exhausted reservoir of Latino leadership will be replenished with a new supply of trained leaders will rely on the support that the NHI and other like-minded organizations receive from government, the private sector, and individuals who recognize the dimensions of the leadership crisis that the Latino community currently faces. Leaving this crisis unattended will undoubtedly produce the worst possible results with all sectors of American life having to bear the consequences and correlated catastrophes of inaction. Change demands voices in the community that are trained to inspire and lead. The Latino community has access to a massive amount of these voices through its more-developed youth, but only if attention is directed at activating, cultivating, and integrating their talents through training that promotes their evolution into effective change agents that can navigate multiple cultural realities as well as build a sophisticated infrastructure of economies, organizations, and new philosophies. Otherwise, a community already starting to show the impact of a depleted leadership base will have little chance of recovery in the years ahead.

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Endnote

¹ This figure is based on all Latino students enrolled in public K–8 (5,618,900) and 9–12 (2,231,508) grade levels according to states' non-Latino, and Latino student population totals in CCD (a,b). The entire foreign-born Latino student population within this sector is estimated to comprise approximately 3,430,628, or 43.7 percent of all Latino students, in public K–12 classrooms, of which 2,135,311 noncitizen foreign-born (i.e., 4.5 percent of all students enrolled in public schools or 27.2 percent of all Latino students). Both estimates are based on CCD data as well as Census Bureau 2004b.

Latino Leadership Base in Proportion to the Projected Growth in the U.S. Latino Community

Year	Leaders Required by U.S. Latino Community
2005	284,666
2010	318,373
2020	398,373
2030	487,033
2040	583,900
2050	683,733

Projected population growth numbers are from the 2000 census (Census Bureau 2004a, 2006).

Restoring Growth in Puerto Rico: The Economic and Policy Challenges

*Miguel A. Soto-Class
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Soto-Class was a past appointee by the governor of Puerto Rico to the board of directors of the Corporation for National Service in Puerto Rico and to the advisory board of the Department of the Family. He has also been appointed by the president of the University of Puerto Rico to serve on the board of directors for the University Press. He is a member of the board of directors of the Baldwin School of Puerto Rico and of the advisory boards of the Latino Welfare Project of the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund in New York and of the Conservation Trust of Puerto Rico. He is also a member of the growing wealth working group of the Corporation for Enterprise Development in Washington, DC.

In 1999, Soto-Class founded the Center for the New Economy (CNE), Puerto Rico's first think tank. CNE is an independent, not-for-profit research and policy development organization dedicated to promoting innovative economic development strategies for the new economy, financial services, strategic philanthropy, and entrepreneurship. In 1999, CNE became a grantee of the Ford Foundation. In 2003 the center received the prestigious Zenith Award for Best Nonprofit from the Puerto Rico Chamber of Commerce.

The Economy of Puerto Rico: Restoring Growth, co-edited by Soto-Class, was published by the Brookings Institution in 2006.

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Lamba-Nieves is a Truman Scholar (Puerto Rico '98), and works closely with the Harry S. Truman Scholarship Foundation in the selection of prospective scholars. He has written numerous articles for various Puerto Rican media and academic outlets, led research and thesis seminars at the School of Architecture of the Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico and taught planning and geography courses at the Social Sciences College of the University

of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus, where he graduated *summa cum laude* in 1998 with a B.A. in economics.

Puerto Rico's economy has been the subject of numerous surveys and serious inquiries since the Spanish set foot on its coasts in the late fifteenth century. The list of curious minds is extensive and includes an interesting mix of individuals and institutions with varied interests, vantage points, and prescriptions. In most cases, the reports have drawn attention to the island's needs and provided proposals for future advancement. As Emilio Pantojas (1999, 13) has noted, "Every critical moment of this century has produced studies and reports that attempt to diagnose the macroeconomic problems of the country and formulate policies for its solution."¹ Such was the case in the depression era when a team of social scientists sponsored by the recently founded Brookings Institution drafted *Porto Rico and Its Problems*, a landmark text that informed economic policy and offered a detailed look into a very poor economy in need of reform. In its introductory pages, the authors provide a description of the then-present conditions that provided a context for their study:

Porto Rico presents two problems to her own people and to the Federal government. The first is economic—how to raise the incomes and standards of living of her people to something approaching a parity with those prevailing in continental United States. The second is political—how to establish mutually satisfactory public relations between the Island and the mainland (Clark 1930, xvii).

More than seventy-five years after the report was published, the concerns expressed by the Brookings team still resonate. Today, Puerto Rico boasts many economic achievements but also some misfortunes. In light of these conditions, the Center for the New Economy (CNE), Puerto Rico's first independent think tank, labored together with scholars from the Brookings Institution to design an in-depth study that attempts, as was the spirit of the first Brookings team, to answer two key issues: why did the impressive economic growth registered in the island during the fifties and sixties stop and what can be done to get back on track. The result is the publication of *The Economy of Puerto Rico: Restoring Growth*, a book-length volume that incorporates the work of thirty-two renowned scholars from the mainland and the island, and analyzes various key economic development issues such as education, the macroeconomic sphere, entrepreneurship, labor supply and labor force participation, the fiscal system, and the financial dimensions of growth.² As will be argued in the following pages, one of the main causes of the island's economic slowdown has been the low labor force participation rate of the population. This trend has been fueled by a combination of factors such as the benefits structure of public transfers, the adoption of an industrial development policy that disproportionately favors capital-intensive efforts, and a vibrant informal sector. Reversing this negative tendency through innovative policy and political will should be the top priority at all levels.

Over a period of two years, authors and chapter commentators collaborated to produce a text that provides a comprehensive diagnosis of the economy and offers specific policy responses to the problems identified. In each chapter, experts on Puerto Rico's economy are paired with key scholars to ensure that the writings are thoroughly informed and to foster a transfer of knowledge between academic communities. Our hope is that these interactions pave the way for new ventures and an increased interest in Puerto Rican affairs.

The following sections will outline key findings from the volume.

Puerto Rico: A Glass Half Full

In the concluding chapter, Susan Collins and Barry Bosworth (2006, 566) note that "in terms of providing an environment conducive to growth, Puerto Rico can be characterized as a glass that is only half full." During the decades that followed World War II, Puerto Rican living standards were quickly converging to U.S. levels and the economy was registering impressive growth rates. Yet this pattern did not continue from the mid-seventies onward, and the current situation is more somber and troubling. The figures cited provide a clearer picture:

While income per capita doubled from just over 20 percent of the U.S. average in 1950 to roughly 40 percent in the early 1970's, it has drifted back down to only about 30 percent more recently. Living standards in Puerto Rico are farther from the U.S. average today than they were in 1970, and per capita income is only about half of the poorest state (Collins, Bosworth, and Soto-Class 2006, 2).

Despite these trends, the authors contend that the island's economy possesses certain strengths that economists equate with economic growth. First, it operates within the U.S. monetary and financial system; thus, there are no currency revaluations when dealing with the mainland economy. Second, it is one of the most open economies in the world, with free mobility of capital, labor, services, and goods to the U.S. market. Third, it shares key legal and regulatory institutions with the mainland. Lastly, its workforce is highly educated, comparable to that of member countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and mostly bilingual. This complex scenario has made the island an interesting case study that has puzzled and attracted development economists.

Their inquiry revealed numerous pressing issues that will need to be seriously addressed to raise incomes in Puerto Rico. Bosworth and Collins (2006, 573) sum these into five major policy areas.

- Raising the employment rate of adult Puerto Ricans
- Promoting a more dynamic private sector that would create additional job opportunities
- Improving the skills of the workforce
- Investing greater resources in economic infrastructure
- Reforming government with a more efficient tax system and targeted expenditure programs

Given the profound impact that the low employment rates have on the income differences between the island and the mainland, our description of the authors' prescriptions will focus on this point.

Raising Employment: Public Transfers and a Rich Uncle (Sam)

Puerto Rico's labor force participation rate is notoriously low and constitutes a serious economic obstacle. In their chapter examining the low participation of males in the workforce, María Enchautegui and Richard Freeman (2006, 152) note:

In 2000 only 31 percent of the overall population was employed, giving the island the lowest employment-to-population ratio in the Americas and the Caribbean, if not the world. By way of comparison, in the same year 44 percent of the population in the Dominican Republic, 40 percent of the Mexican population, and 50 percent of the U.S. population was employed.

These disturbing statistics underscore the severity of the problem and explain why the editors deemed it necessary to incorporate two chapters on the topic. Although each team of authors tackled the issue from distinct perspectives, their conclusions concur with and echo what numerous labor economists have previously noted regarding government transfer payments and labor detachment.

According to Gary Burtless and Orlando Sotomayor (2006, 94), the share of transfers as a percentage of personal income almost doubled between 1973 and 2003. Today, government transfers represent more than 25 percent of personal income for island residents. Although a portion of these benefits are paid by payroll taxes, "an overwhelming proportion . . . especially after 1975 [when food stamps were introduced] derived from federal programs" (Burtless and Sotomayor 2006, 97). Both groups of authors provide sufficient data to support the claims that the way benefit programs were introduced and are administered in Puerto Rico are conducive to depressed labor force participation rates. The strongest piece of evidence is presented in the third chapter, where Burtless and Sotomayor construct a hypothetical scenario that analyzes the labor supply decision faced by a household composed of two children and a single mother who earns the minimum wage. Taking into account all applicable taxes and government benefits that the household is eligible to receive their analysis demonstrates that

A single mother who has no earned income and qualifies for all the transfers would receive the monthly equivalent of \$1,276 in cash and services. If she were to work part-time (twenty hours a week), her net income would *fall* by \$15 a month. Working a forty-hour week would bring a slightly higher net income than not working at all, but the gain would be only \$37 a month. The single mother would face very high implicit marginal tax rates as she increased her weekly hours of work (Burtless and Sotomayor 2006, 117).

This exercise reveals that for a considerable subset of the population, there are large (dis)incentives at play that ultimately contribute to the decades-old labor supply problem. Thus, the decision not to enter the labor force should not be judged on moral grounds, as is often the case, since there are clear economic effects that

ultimately shape individual behavior. Enchautegui and Freeman (2006, 181), although focused on studying the experience of men, identify similar problems and offer larger lessons:

Our analysis shows that a variety of factors contributed to the low employment rate of Puerto Rican men: the pattern of economic growth, with GNP increasing much less rapidly than GDP, and GDP heavily weighted to capital-intensive manufacturing; the emigration of men with potentially high attachment to the workforce to the United States; the attractiveness of disability insurance and NAP [Nutritional Assistance Program] transfers funded in large part by the federal government; relatively high wages in otherwise low-wage occupations; and opportunity to work in the informal sector.

The unifying thread within these facts is what they term the rich-uncle hypothesis: “the close tie between the island and the mainland has been a double-edged sword, offering Puerto Ricans many benefits of living in a highly advanced economy but also contributing to the employment problem” (Enchautegui and Freeman 2006, 181).

The effect that the low employment situation has on the economic well-being of Puerto Ricans is alarming. As some of the other economists in the volume argue, island residents have been accumulating work experience at only 55 to 65 percent of the rate in the United States; this “negative legacy” will “depress the earnings potential of Puerto Ricans for years to come” (Davis and Rivera-Batiz 2006, 258). Furthermore, overcoming these trends will require a major effort from various sectors since, over a twenty-five-year horizon, employment will need to grow at an average of 1.7 percent a year (or 3 percent a year in a fifteen-year timeframe) to lower the unemployment rate to single digits and raise the labor force participation rates to current mainland levels (Collins and Bosworth 2006, 574).

Consensus on the main causes of low employment rates led to similar policy recommendations. Among these, two stand out: (1) Puerto Rico needs to reform its social benefits programs to promote and support those individuals who participate in the formal labor market, and (2) an earnings subsidy that encourages work, like the mainland Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), should be designed and implemented.

There is a clear message that access to the social safety net must be tied to work efforts. Nevertheless, as other authors in the volume argue, these requirements must be coupled with the implementation of comprehensive programs to promote the creation of island-based businesses that can provide much-needed job opportunities.

Translating Proposals Into Action

During the past year CNE has been working with local government officials at the legislative and agency levels to translate specific proposals into concrete efforts and already progress has been made. In July 2006, the governor signed a tax reform law (Law No. 117) that provides for the creation of a worker’s credit to reward work, alleviate poverty, and correct the regressive nature of the proposed sales and use tax. As per the authors’ suggestions, the credit is modeled after the

mainland EITC. Like any new proposal of this kind, adjustments based on expert advice need to be made to make sure that the policy objectives are met. Efforts are currently underway to improve the credit and optimize its positive social effects. We are also in the process of signing a collaborative agreement with the Department of the Family (the main agency in charge of social benefits programs in the island) to aid them in the revision of existing program rules for the NAP and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) programs, especially those that penalize asset accumulation and work efforts.

In the years to come, the volume will serve as a roadmap in CNE's research, policy, and advocacy endeavors. CNE has placed the burden of action and results on itself with the hopes that other groups interested in improving Puerto Rico's economic growth prospects, at all levels, will follow suit.

Conclusion

Since the volume was presented to the public in the summer months of 2006, it has been showcased or cited in the Puerto Rican press more than 140 times. Articles and op-eds related to some of the findings have also appeared in global publications like the *New York Times* and *The Economist*. In addition, several forums have been organized to discuss its findings and recommendations. Not surprisingly, it has been the subject of various critiques and commentaries from different sides of the ideological and political spectrum. Some of the findings have stirred controversies, especially those that touch upon the low employment figures, industrial policy, and the corporations that took advantage of Section 936 of the Internal Revenue code. This sort of response is what CNE hoped for and welcomed. In the coming year, CNE will be discussing the text in diverse social circles, from civic and business groups to public housing projects. A series of follow-up papers will also be published.

CNE firmly believes that expanding academic dialogues and informed debates on Puerto Rico's economy will generate new ideas on how to re-ignite growth, decrease inequities, and increase the standard of living in the island.

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¹ Authors' translation.

² Given that the volume's contents span over 600 pages, a monograph that summarizes the main findings and recommendations titled *Restoring Growth in Puerto Rico: Overview and Policy Options* was published as well.

Los Ausentes Siempre Presentes

Robert Courtney Smith's Mexican New York: Transnational Lives of New Immigrants (University of California Press 2006)

Reviewed by Michael D. Kerlin

Michael D. Kerlin is a management consultant with McKinsey & Company and former project manager at Nuestra Comunidad Development Corporation. He serves on the advisory boards of Nuestra Culinary Ventures and Friends of Petite Anse, Haiti, and has written on immigration and multiculturalism for several publications in the United States and abroad.

According to the Barnard Campus News Web site, Robert Courtney Smith originally planned to title his book *Los Ausentes Siempre Presentes*, or *The Absent Ones Always Present*. Such a title would have captured the central thesis of Smith's transnational ethnography of Mexican immigrants in New York and their home village in Mexico. To Smith, Mexican immigrants and their descendents in the United States not only remain connected to Mexico, but they have the chance to become more "present" in the United States the deeper their connections to Mexico.

Smith develops this broad theory over roughly fifteen years of ethnographic research with New York-based immigrants from a small Mexican county that he calls Ticuani, as well as with the immigrants' children and local residents of Ticuani.¹ Smith observes the effect of transnational connections on civic engagement, gender development, and the assimilation process of second-generation adolescents. Since transnational connections so closely shape social processes, Smith argues that socially motivated policies should target the transnational life of immigrants and their children.

Mexican New York begins not with ideal policies but with real policies that have already affected transnational connections between the United States and Mexico. In 1986, the *Immigration Reform and Control Act* (IRCA) allowed certain undocumented immigrants to apply for temporary residence and then to become eligible for permanent resident status (22). In combination with existing family reunification laws, the IRCA allowed newly legal immigrants to bring family members to the United States. New undocumented immigrants also crossed the U.S./Mexican border in huge numbers to take advantage of the coming "amnesty." As a result of

these two forces, nearly half of Ticuani's residents were either elderly or between the ages of one and fourteen by 1993 (46).

Smith concerns himself less with the effects of the IRCA on migration and more on how the IRCA altered immigrants' relations with Mexico. Now that many more Mexican immigrants had legal status in the United States, they could afford to travel back to Mexico more often. Gone for many were the risks of getting caught trying to re-enter the United States and the costs of paying *coyotes*, immigrant smugglers, to minimize those risks. *Ticuanenses* responded to this new freedom by engaging with their hometown. Not only did the immigrants travel home more often, but they also formed institutions to assist Ticuani and brought their children back on trips. In doing so, they began transforming not only Ticuani but also their experience of assimilation in New York. As Smith shows, transnational life has had many positive effects on life in Ticuani and the United States but has not been without its downsides.

First, Smith enters *Ticuanense* transnational life through an exploration of civic participation in both countries. He begins with the Ticuani Solidarity Committee of New York (the Committee). The Committee was born in a Brooklyn basement in 1968 and had completed eleven public works projects in Ticuani by 2000. Smith brings the Committee to life through a detailed narrative of the opening ceremonies for a \$150,000 potable water system, funded primarily by migrant donations.

What emerges from the celebration is not a simple story of grateful local residents and benevolent migrants. Rather, leaders on each side—municipal officials along with the local *cacique*, or political and economic boss, on one hand, and the Committee leaders on the other—want to claim more credit for the success of the project and impose their own vision on the new water system's operations. The New York-based Committee members' desire for recognition flows less from their relationship with Ticuani, however, than from their relationship with New York. In New York, the Committee members are marginalized minorities, working primarily in low-skill service industries. By "giving back" to Ticuani, they actually build their own sense of confidence and significance (53–75).

Smith finds the same opportunities and tensions in the area of political participation. In 1999, migrants successfully backed a school teacher to victory over the *cacique's* favored candidate in the election for municipal president. Again, Smith argues that *Ticuanenses* in New York were pleased less with the new candidate and more with their ability finally to exercise political power. Smith predicts increased demand for political participation in the United States as a result of this experience (76–93).

Next, Smith turns to the impact of transnational life on gender definitions. As follows from the analysis of civic participation, transnational life can restore pride to immigrant men. One *Ticuanense* informant describes the humiliation of putting on an apron at work in New York, and yet the same informant's daughter boasts of how her father's Committee service "made me proud" (109). Good Committee service also offers *Ticuanense* immigrant men an exemption from activities like drinking that, without the transnational activity, might be unequivocally mandated by machismo's peer pressure (112). Likewise, a women's prayer group, dedicated

to Ticuani's patron saint, builds solidarity among immigrant women in New York (116–120).

Finally, Smith dedicates much of his ethnography to the effects of transnational life on adolescents, primarily through their trips back for Ticuani's annual religious festival. Trips to Ticuani allow the second-generation adolescents to build their own identity, to mature, and to redefine their peer groups. First, *Ticuanense* adolescents use their trips to redefine being Mexican from a racial to an ethnic identity, filled with hometown religious and secular rituals (148). Second, Ticuani has traditionally offered *Ticuanense* adolescents sufficient public and private space, both literally and metaphorically, to mature. Third, adolescents see Ticuani as a place to find the right kind of friends after potentially having fallen in with the "wrong crowd" in New York (169). All of these processes facilitate second-generation assimilation in the United States.

It is the emergence of transnational "wrong crowds," or gangs, that most concerns Smith, however, as he closes his analysis. He observes New York-based gangs developing local membership bases in Ticuani (207). As a result, second-generation adolescents are beginning to view Ticuani's streets as nervously as they view New York's streets. If the safe haven of Ticuani disappears for New York-based adolescents, so too may many of the transnational coming-of-age processes that aid their assimilation process in the United States (246). This risk stands in stark contrast to Smith's promising narrative of third-generation *Ticuanenses* beginning to accompany their grandparents on trips home (196).

That Smith is able to follow transnational processes all the way from first-generation civic engagement to adolescent attachment with the hometown to transnational gang life and the third generation is perhaps his greatest contribution to the study of immigrant transnationalism. Readers benefit not only from Smith's decade and a half with the *Ticuanenses* but also from his selection of a mature migrant community. Unlike Mexicans from many other counties, *Ticuanenses* have been migrating for years and their migration has finally slowed. This allows readers to peer into a possible future for other Mexican immigrant communities.

Ironically, Smith's selection of a mature migrant community may be the ethnography's greatest complication. Though no case study can be fully generalized, Smith's focus on Ticuani's later years may give insufficient attention to the types of transnational processes, such as private remittance sending, that are more prevalent in less mature immigrant communities and more relevant to today's policy makers.

Still, Smith's detailed depiction of *Ticuanenses* in New York and in Mexico brings to life an immigrant community so vividly that readers cannot help but see the opportunities that transnational life brings. United States policy makers should take Smith's advice and find ways to support Mexican immigrants' connections with their homeland. They may then see how helping Mexican immigrants to feel more Mexican may, ironically, help those immigrants to feel more at home in America.

¹ Ticuani lies in the state of Puebla in the Mixteca region of Mexico and has a population of roughly two thousand. Seventy percent of migrants from the Mixteca region go to New York and two thirds of Mexicans in New York come from the Mixteca (15).

Navigating Unequal Educational Opportunities

**Jeanett Castellanos, Alberta M. Gloria,
and Mark Kamimura's
The Latina/o Pathway to the
Ph.D.: Abriendo Caminos
(Stylus Publishing 2006)**

Reviewed by Daniela Pineda

Daniela Pineda received her B.A. degree in sociology and Russian from Pomona College in Claremont, CA. After graduating from Pomona College she worked as a postbaccalaureate fellow with the CHOICES Project: Access, Equity and Diversity in Higher Education, based at the Institute for Social Science Research at the University of California, Los Angeles. Pineda received her M.A. in sociology from the University of Michigan, where she is currently a doctoral precandidate in the joint program for sociology and public policy. Pineda's research areas within higher education policy include financial aid, federal state appropriations to higher education, K–16 partnerships, transition to college, transfer policies from two-year to four-year institutions, college access interventions, college student retention initiatives, and minority student achievement at selective and nonselective post-secondary institutions.

The problem of Latino underrepresentation in doctoral programs continues to be an important issue for the Latino community. *The Latina/o Pathway to the Ph.D.: Abriendo Caminos*, edited by Jeanett Castellanos, Alberta M. Gloria, and Mark Kamimura, discusses the current situation of Latinos in the educational system in a collection of essays about the social, psychological, and cultural challenges faced by Latino students who pursue a doctoral degree. As a whole, the essays argue that structural barriers interact with cultural differences to obstruct the Latino path to a doctorate. The challenges to completing a Ph.D. begin early and persist. This timely volume makes an important contribution to the Latino community because it puts forth a comprehensive assessment of the state of Latino educational attainment and it proposes multiple types of interventions aimed at increasing the number of Latino Ph.D. recipients.

The volume is divided into three main sections that cohesively lay out the main premise of the book—that factors affecting Latino doctoral completion can be traced back to the earliest educational experiences in kindergarten to eighth grade. The first section offers a detailed introduction to the status and trends of Latino

educational attainment at various junctures of the educational journey (i.e., K–8, high school, community college, four-year colleges, etc.), laying the foundation for understanding the underrepresentation of Latinos in doctoral programs.

While other edited volumes and books (e.g., Olivas 1986; Darder, Torres, and Gutiérrez 1997) have focused on Latino students and graduate students in particular (e.g., Nettles and Millett 2006), this volume is the first to focus exclusive attention on Latino doctoral students. Together, the editors bring forth a range of perspectives from doctoral students, higher education administrators, and faculty members. In addition, the book presents theoretical arguments, pieces that offer adaptive strategies for graduate students, and factual essays that describe particular challenges for Latino attainment at various points of the educational system. Thus, the book is well positioned to target an audience that includes academics, students, practitioners, and policy makers.

Within each chapter, the contributors offer suggestions for practice, targeting different stakeholders. Some of the recommendations seem quite broad to the policy-oriented reader who may be imagining how to craft concrete policies keeping these challenges in mind. For instance, the chapter by Quijada and Alvarez on the K–8 level suggests that teachers should “eliminate the application of a cultural-deficit approach when engaging with Latina/o students” (12). While this is surely an important part of improving the educational experiences of Latino students, this type of broad recommendation requires clarification for practical implementation. Generally, the concluding recommendations summarize important problems and encourage the reader to rethink the role and scope of educational interventions relevant to the experiences of Latino students.

Catellanos, Gloria, and Kamimura show how the U.S. educational system is systematically placing Latinos at risk for academic failure. Using the metaphor of an educational pathway, they argue that Latino students encounter cumulative disadvantages throughout their educational journeys that ultimately limit the number of students who are eligible to pursue a doctoral degree. The volume documents how Latino students begin to lag behind their peers early on, so that by the time they are nine years old, they are academically two years behind their White peers (8). Quijada and Alvarez attribute Latino academic difficulties to a lack of basic skills, linking these achievement gaps to the “conditions of schooling and discrepancies across school settings” (7). They claim Latino students are disproportionately educated in inadequate schools with less qualified teachers and scarce funding. Quijada and Alvarez also show that Latino students are overrepresented among children under eighteen years of age who are living below the poverty line, making them more likely to attend poorly funded schools (5). Fuentes claims that by the time Latinos reach high-school age, many drop out. Compiling and analyzing data from the U.S. Census Bureau, the National Center for Education Statistics, and the National Assessment of Education Progress, authors throughout the book claim that a host of causes seem to be at play here: poor academic preparation, lack of resources at school, little contact with qualified teachers, and unchallenging coursework. These combine to discourage students from further postsecondary educational opportunities (25).

Alongside issues of academic preparation and inadequate resources in kindergarten through twelfth grade, undergraduate retention emerges as another critical area that affects the representation of Latino doctoral students. Students who enroll in college seem to have a hard time completing the baccalaureate degree since at this level the challenges multiply. Given these circumstances, it is not surprising that few Latinos are qualified to pursue advanced degrees. Whether at a community college or a four-year institution, when compared to their peers, Latinos tend to be more worried about financing their education, to work while in college, and to assume significant family responsibilities (58, 73). Several chapters also point to a clash of cultural values that some Latinos face in academia. Catellanos, Gloria, and Kamimura argue that some Latino cultural values—such as interdependence, an interactional style of collaboration, personalism, and connection—can make for a rocky road in college and graduate school.

The chapter focusing on Latinos at four-year institutions is an excellent overview of the scholarly research in this area. Nora, Barlow, and Crisp manage to synthesize the major topics concerning minority student undergraduate retention. They argue that studies of Latino students have broadly identified eight areas of interest: “minority student’s educational aspiration, finances and financial aid, academic and social campus experiences, institutional commitment, academic ability, precollege psychological factors, undergraduate academic performance, and student persistence” (58). The chapter delivers a concise appraisal of the main barriers faced by Latino undergraduates: the discontinuity between higher education and the social reality outside of academia, lack of nurturing on campus, lack of presence, and resources (61).

The second part of this chapter, which details trends based on an analysis of first-time-in-college Latino students attending a large, research Hispanic-serving institution (HSI) is one of the most interesting parts of the volume. In this section Nora, Barlow, and Crisp present provocative preliminary empirical evidence about Latinos who attend an HSI. These preliminary analyses suggest that being enrolled in developmental courses, completing fewer courses during an academic term, attending part time, and/or paying higher out-of-state tuition fees are all associated with an increase likelihood of dropping out of college. Nora, Barlow, and Crisp used Latino students’ SAT scores as a measure of precollege academic performance to investigate its link to degree completion. They find that Latino students who reenrolled and those who dropped out had remarkably similar SAT scores (68). In other words it appears that SAT scores are not good indicators of college persistence since they do not help to predict college persistence. While these factors support previous findings, they also found that White students at this HSI had higher attrition rates than Latino students. This finding is particularly interesting since it contradicts recent findings about the attrition rates for White students at four-year institutions. It is also theoretically interesting since scholars know little about the largely assumed positive effects of attending an HSI for Latino students.

Nora and colleagues also raise an important issue regarding future research and practical interventions. They argue that since the institution-specific context has been increasingly validated as an important part of student persistence, college administrators should invest resources and support policies that advocate for col-

lecting institutional-specific longitudinal data. The authors acknowledge the importance of being able to analyze national trends using datasets from multiple institutions. However, they argue that understanding the context in which Latino students attend college is crucial for the development of successful institutional interventions. Privileging an institutional-level approach has important implications for the type of national policy interventions that can be implemented. Differences across types of colleges and universities can make localized policies more costly and difficult to implement than statewide interventions or interventions at a national scale. If this is a direction that the federal and state governments would like to pursue, then policy makers also have to consider the lessons that can be drawn from localized policies on a national scale.

Throughout the second section of the volume, Ph.D. retention is analyzed in relation to specific theoretical frameworks to current research on Latino doctoral students. In this section Castellanos, Gloria, and Kamimura introduce the conceptual framework guiding the volume—what they refer to as the psychosociocultural (PSC) approach. This is a holistic framework that considers psychological, social, and cultural factors that affect Latinos' doctoral experiences. In chapter ten, the editors describe the PSC conceptual framework as it may be used by faculty members interacting with Latino doctoral students. The PSC framework was developed in practice by university counseling staff who worked with Latina undergraduates. Castellanos and colleagues argue that faculty members are uniquely positioned to implement the PSC framework because they are often responsible for guiding many aspects of the students' academic careers. They provide "student-efficacy opportunities (e.g. research and teaching)" along with advice on how to interact with the departmental climate and professional development feedback (178). The editors illustrate how this framework can be implemented by detailing student vignettes.

Even though one of the early stated purposes of the volume is to use the PSC approach to provide a more holistic understanding of the complexities facing Latinos in higher education the PSC framework is introduced rather late, thus making it easier to lose sight of the its potential for informing contextualized interventions.

The third section of the volume brings forth the voices of Latino doctoral students. The captivating stories of hardship and incredible determination to succeed help the reader to understand how various concepts (e.g., marginalization, lack of information, unequal resources) affect individual educational trajectories. This section is followed by a final chapter in which the authors review the overarching themes that emerge from the student narratives. The student narratives illustrate how students are coping with the roadblocks and persisting in their programs. Undergraduates often have to deal with racially hostile campus environments, tokenism on the part of their peers, staff, and faculty, and homesickness (126–129, 140, 286). Regardless of the type of program, the students report feeling culturally isolated. Lacking key information about departmental politics—as they are tied to funding and different professional opportunities—and learning how to preserve family ties and community connections outside of school seem to be dominant concerns for Latinos. The added stress of feeling like "cultural ambassadors" in

their programs and the sheer lack of racial/ethnic representation in doctoral programs also seems to affect the students' ethnic identity (284–285). To adapt to the challenges, students responded by expanding their definition of family and actively creating nurturing social support networks. Often these communities reached beyond the walls of the university via e-mail, conferences, networking, etc. While many students were the first in their families to pursue a doctorate, the role of family moral support was a recurrent theme. Students were continuously motivated to persist in their program with the moral encouragement of family members.

The Latina/o Pathway to the Ph.D.: Abriendo Caminos challenges readers to imagine possibilities for positive change that would remove some of the roadblocks for those Latinos pursuing a Ph.D. The editors set out to expose the many social, psychological, and cultural layers that complicate this endeavor. They successfully accomplish this goal by weaving a story of accumulated structural disadvantages and amazing personal perseverance. This book offers ways to open new pathways to the doctorate by including a set of broad policy recommendations for policy makers and doctoral students. These include increasing K–12 funding to ensure equity in previous opportunity to prepare, restructuring teacher preparation to enhance cultural competencies, and continuing to fund early outreach and after-school programs to increase the likelihood of graduating from high school and college. The authors also emphasize that evaluation of such policies should be an important part of assessing the success of these interventions, this is specially necessary at the undergraduate level where evaluations of interventions are not common. Policy makers are also urged to consider that addressing Latino academic success requires multiple types of interventions since each Latino subpopulation has different sets of needs that come to play in the road to the Ph.D. Doctoral students are also advised to practice adaptive strategies like seeking mentors early on within and beyond their programs, creating national networks of peers with similar interests and backgrounds, and finding stress outlets. All these strategies can help to balance the tension between the academic environment, ethnic and cultural identity, and commitments to family faced by some Latino students.

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Balancing on the Brink of Change: Reevaluating Hispanicity in the United States

Marta Tienda and Faith Mitchell's Multiple Origins, Uncertain Destinies: Hispanics and the American Future: Panel on Hispanics in the United States (National Academies Press 2006)

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In *Multiple Origins, Uncertain Destinies*, editors Marta Tienda and Faith Mitchell present a comprehensive report on a variety of important social, economic, cultural, and policy issues facing the Hispanic population in the United States.¹ Tienda and Mitchell frame this inquiry by tracing the historical basis and evolution of the term *Hispanic*, and its relationship to the relevant populations' racial and ethnic self-identities. In examining the constantly shifting demographics of Hispanics, specifically by means of multigenerational data acquired since the late twentieth century, Tienda and Mitchell highlight the realms of integration and their respective challenges. The United States, they explain, currently stands on the threshold of a significant demographic dividend due to the sheer quantities of a primarily youthful Hispanic population and the aging population of non-Hispanics. Tienda and Mitchell conclude that the Hispanic "age bulge will offer a unique opportunity to improve the common good by attenuating the social and economic costs of an aging majority population while enhancing national productivity and global competitiveness" (126).

In writing their thorough report, Tienda and Mitchell use historical narrative and a wide-ranging base of policy and census data in order to address the complexities regarding Hispanic demographic information. Quantification is difficult, they explain, given the highly diverse nature of the population, which they limit to

twenty Spanish-speaking nationalities, in addition to the initial settlements of the United States.² The authors frequently point out, however, that the Spanish language is perhaps the only common denominating factor among Hispanics: there is no monolithic Hispanic population that self-identifies with the term within its own countries of origin (38). The term *Hispanic* only became official government terminology in the mid-1970s and was frequently interchanged with *Latino*; the historical applications of these terms are also quite mixed.

Second- and third-generation Hispanics, nevertheless, are more likely than their parents to self-identify with the terms as a racial marker rather than as an ethnic classification. Moreover, Tienda and Mitchell point out, when asked on the 2000 census to self-identify a race, “close to half of all Hispanics self-identified as ‘some other race,’” reflecting a growing acknowledgement of “four centuries of *mestizaje*, or racial miscegenation, as well as differing conceptions of race” (41). The shifting official terminology, as well as the evolving self-perceptions of the Hispanic populations, Tienda and Mitchell argue, demonstrates the highly arbitrary nature of racial constructs; specifically, how “Hispanicity” is both “imagined and real” (45). Hispanicity is, in other words, a constantly shifting signifier that has taken on various manifestations throughout history as a result of attempts to define the population.

In their section discussing the numerous challenges of Hispanic integration in the United States, Tienda and Mitchell explore how the principal barrier is English-language acquisition. The linguistic difficulties faced by the Hispanic population are compounded by the fact that there exists no consensus on bilingual education for youth, and adults tend not to pursue their studies past the age of twenty-five. Nevertheless, as the report’s statistics demonstrate, linguistic preferences become inversed into the third generation. First-generation parents who speak only Spanish later have grandchildren that are English-dominant (47–48). Tienda and Mitchell discuss how government and mass-marketing bilingual strategies toward Spanish speakers do not take into account how second- and third-generation Hispanics, similar to the children of other immigrant groups at the turn of the twentieth century, lose both Spanish-language dominance and racial self-identification with the demographic. Those immigrants who fail to master English, however, face a dismal future with respect to high school graduation, job prospects competitive with those of Whites, and therefore salaries as well.

Regardless of their ultimate integration, Hispanics, the authors continue, with the exception of Cubans, still lack a strong voice in community and national politics. Tienda and Mitchell again warn that it would be an error, however, to classify Hispanics as a single-voting bloc or a homogenous mass-market, given their diversity and “ambivalence about panethnic identity”(69). Were they to capitalize on their youthful numbers, Hispanics would stand on the brink of potentially filling the need for significant productivity increases due to the aging majority. Social investments in U.S.-born Hispanics as a productive workforce, the authors assert, would help offset the costs incurred by an aging population in addition to making Hispanics more competitive with the currently educated sectors of the work force (63). This potential for economic improvement hereafter depends on educational

gains by Hispanics and in particular, the acquirement of the necessary English-language skills.

Successful integration by Hispanics in the United States, however, does not entirely depend on the above listed factors; as Tienda and Mitchell note, there still exists a pervasive hostility toward Hispanic immigrants and toward migrants in new suburban destinations.

Examples include:

vigilant activity along the U.S. border, proposed federal legislation to prohibit states from issuing driver's licenses to undocumented immigrants, and the targeted deportation of undocumented Hispanic workers in the name of fighting terrorism . . . The geographic dispersal of the Hispanic population also challenges health care delivery systems and providers unaccustomed to caring for diverse groups of patients, especially as language barriers undermine providers' ability to deliver culturally competent care to the foreign born (120).

The educational gap is also present among Hispanic youth due to teacher biases in the primary and middle school years (84). Lack of knowledge of Hispanics' cultural backgrounds compounds such biases throughout these formative educational years. Hispanics, the authors note, may share civil rights and educational priorities, but their weak political infrastructure undermines the potential for political unity on such issues (69).

Hispanics also face certain cultural costs due to assimilation. Familism, Tienda and Mitchell observe, declines across generations due to a higher risk of divorce, and health worsens in Hispanic children and adolescents, with rising obesity-related illnesses being particularly worrisome for the future (122). Many Hispanics, they continue, have inadequate health care and a rising number are uninsured. English acquisition may alleviate some of these ills, especially in areas not accustomed to foreign-born migrants.

Tienda and Mitchell stress the potential of a diverse Hispanic population to reap the economic rewards of future integration. Most importantly, should the non-Hispanic population invest in the future of Hispanics, the country at large stands to capitalize on the momentarily unique demographic dividend not available to other industrialized nations with an aging workforce (115–116). This dividend, they argue, “will only be realized, however, if the high school and college graduation gaps between Hispanics and other groups are eliminated or at least significantly narrowed” (116). Education inequities, the authors continue, can frequently be addressed by means of policy instruments in order to ameliorate subsequent productivity differences due to these gaps (125). In order to close these gaps in Hispanics' education, the authors recommend “placing students in high-quality scholastic programs, reinforced by early intervention initiatives, strong drop-out prevention efforts, and strategies that promote college attendance and graduation”(123).

Complicating this discussion of Hispanics and the authors' vision of an American future is the government's history of placing classifications on Hispanics and ignoring their respective self-identifications. In this respect the

authors' historical comparisons are powerful as they trace the multifarious and—at times—controversial nature of the Hispanic presence in the United States. Specifically, nearly half of all Hispanics self-identified as “some other race” in the 2000 census, thereby rejecting Office of Management and Budget racial classifications (41). This rejection raises a series of questions that problematize the assumptions behind racial and ethnic categorization—after all, what does it mean when a group defies the very attempts to categorize them as a group?

The authors' acknowledge that the increasing self-identification by Hispanics on the 2000 census as being “some other race” is never fully explored in the study. Indeed, the phrase “typical White woman” is employed, contrasting it with the “typical Hispanic,” confusing the data in terms of those Hispanics that racially identify as White. Blacks are frequently contrasted to Hispanics, sidelining the Caribbean Hispanics who consider themselves Black. That is particularly troublesome with regards to the sections dealing with the continuing discrimination against Blacks and the potential that Hispanic immigrants have to close that gap. If this is indeed the case, then which Hispanic immigrants, given their future proficiency in English, will be able to break through the barrier of racism?

Tienda and Mitchell stress the need for improved census data due to the growing limitations of existing survey tools. Any new survey, they argue, should provide information about parental birthplace in order to track intergenerational mobility (51). Furthermore, larger sample sizes are needed with the purpose of studying national origin groups by generation; also offering Spanish-language versions of survey tools would allow non-English speakers to fully participate (51). Once applied, these recommendations will help seal currently porous delineations and better improve the future prospects for Hispanics.

Endnotes

¹ The report is the outcome of a study by a panel of experts convened by the National Academies.

² The twenty nationalities represent Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Peru, Ecuador, Puerto Rico, Honduras, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Panama, Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay, Venezuela, and Spain. Excluded are Latin Americans from non-Spanish-speaking countries, such as English- and French-speaking Guyanese, Dutch-speaking Surinamese, and Portuguese-speaking Brazilians (19–20).

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American Civil Liberties Union of Michigan

<http://www.aclumich.org/>

Founded in 1920 as a civil liberties advocacy group. The Michigan chapter promotes public education campaigns and civil liberties litigation.

Art by Latina Artists

<http://artbylatinaartists.com/>

An independent forum for Latinas to showcase their art.

California Community Foundation

<http://www.calfund.org/>

Founded in 1915 in Los Angeles. Focuses on grant writing and managing charitable funds in order to strengthen Los Angeles communities.

Center for the New Economy

<http://www.grupocne.org/>

A private, nonpartisan corporation that promotes economic development in Puerto Rico.

Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute

<http://www.chci.org/>

Founded in 1978 as a nonpartisan and not-for-profit organization that aims to increase the role of Hispanics in policy making.

The David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies

<http://www.drclas.fas.harvard.edu/>

An affiliate of Harvard University that seeks to increase understanding of Latin American cultures, economies, histories, and contemporary affairs.

The Foundation Center

<http://foundationcenter.org/>

Founded in 1956 to connect grant writers and not-for-profit organizations with each other and other philanthropic resources.

GovTrack

<http://www.govtrack.us/>

Founded in 2004. Provides a means to discover and track pending legislation.

Hispanic Association on Corporate Responsibility

<http://www.hacr.org/>

Has promoted the inclusion of Hispanics in corporate America for the past twenty years.

Hispanic Scholarship Fund Institute

<http://www.hsf.org/>

Has funded and supported Latinos seeking higher education for the past thirty years.

Latino Art Museum

<http://www.lamoa.net/>

A not-for-profit organization that supports and promotes the work of contemporary Latino artists

living in the United States.

The Latino Coalition

<http://www.thelatinocoalition.com/>

Monitors and reports on policies affecting the Latino community.

Latino Issues Forum

<http://www.lif.org/>

A not-for-profit advocacy group founded in 1987 to promote education, health care, civic participation, and innovation in the Latino community.

Latin Vision

<http://www.latinvision.com/>

A Hispanic business and media network.

MANA, A National Latina Organization

<http://www.hermana.org/>

Created in 1974. A national advocacy organization that supports programs that work to empower Latinas through leadership development, community service, and advocacy.

The Mexican American Legal Defense Fund

<http://www.maldef.org/>

Founded in 1968 in Texas to support policies and litigation that protect the civil liberties of Latinos. Presently the nation's foremost not-for-profit organization devoted to Latino litigation and advocacy.

National Hispanic Cultural Center of New Mexico

<http://www.nhccnm.org/>

Opened in 2000 in Albuquerque, NM, as a showcase and education center for Hispanic arts, humanities, and culture, including culinary arts.

National Hispanic Institute

<http://www.nhi-net.org/>

Organizes and supports programs that promote excellence in Latino students and encourages Latino community cohesion and pride.

On the Issues

<http://www.issues2000.org/>

A not-for-profit organization that provides nonpartisan information on presidential candidates and other political figures.

Pew Hispanic Center

<http://www.pewhispanic.org/>

Founded in 2001 as a nonpartisan research organization dedicated to improving understanding of the role of the Hispanic population in the United States today.

Tomas Rivera Policy Institute

<http://www.trpi.org/>

Has issued policy briefs that examine the important issues of education, health care, and economic access in minority communities for twenty years.

The William C. Velasquez Institute

<http://www.wcvi.org/>

Founded in 1985 as a nonpartisan, not-for-profit organization that researches the political and economic participation of Latinos in the United States.



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