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A special thanks to the following former editors of the *Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy* whose legacy continues to be a source of inspiration for Latino students at the John F. Kennedy School of Government.

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EDITOR'S REMARKS

What a long winter it has been, particularly for our nation's capitol. Early 2010 produced massive winter storms, burying Washington, D.C., in snow and causing an avalanche of administrative and financial challenges. For this editor, the image of our capitol gripped by frosty paralysis is an irresistible metaphor to describe the ongoing economic crisis. Like a long winter that never seems to end, the past two years have been a chilling trek through the worst economic disaster since the Great Depression. Hopefully spring 2010 brings with it a thawing of sidewalks and capital markets alike. But, with government resources and attention focused on improving our economic situation over the past two years, Volume 22 of the *Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy (HJHP)* ponders two questions: What has the Great Recession cost us, not only in terms of financial losses but also opportunities lost? And, what comes next?

These questions are particularly salient from the perspective of Latino communities. Indeed, 2009-2010 presented a flurry of public policy challenges oft overshadowed by the economy, including health care reform, continuing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, still-unresolved immigration policies, and an eroding security situation on the U.S.-Mexican border. Volume 22 seeks to understand the nature of these challenges and their myriad impact on Latinos in the United States. We also seek to reveal how, and why, public policy often fails to incorporate Latino perspectives.

Volume 22's featured articles dig deep into systemic disconnects between Latinos and policy making. First, amidst the volatility and uncertainty of the current economic and political climate there arises a call for clarity: the 2010 census. With implications for the allocation of federal funds and political representation, the 2010 census is a watershed moment for the Hispanic population in the United States. Yet, as Ramón Solórzano Jr. and Sondra Ahlén argue, current U.S. Census Bureau procedures are out of date and out of sync with Latino self-perceptions of race, ethnicity, and language. Without change of course, the U.S. census may inadvertently perpetuate misunderstandings of Latino populations. Second, the Congressional Hispanic Staff Association (CHSA) reveals that Latinos are drastically underrepresented on Capitol Hill and argues that this diversity crisis perpetuates a lack of Latino voice in federal policy making. We hope CHSA's recommendations for improving diversity among congressional offices do not go unheeded.

The first two commentaries in Volume 22 step outside of the continental forty-eight to address transnational Latino

issues. First, Roger Pardo-Maurer cautions U.S. policy makers against neglecting our relationship with Mexico and ponders the impact of the legalization of medical marijuana on cross-border illicit trafficking. Next, John F. Kennedy School of Government Professor Christine Letts guides us through a photo commentary describing the tension between development and social equity in Puerto Rico's San Juan waterways. Finally, Rebecca Medina shows in her commentary on cervical cancer in Latinas that health care cannot exist in a scientific vacuum; rather, issues of culture, tradition, and acculturation should also inform medical treatment, education, and policy.

Continuing the theme of U.S.-Mexican relations, the *HJHP* is proud to present an interview with Senator Gustavo Madero Muñoz, president of the Mexican Senate. He offers views on Mexico's relationship with the United States from a unique perspective and, like Roger Pardo-Maurer, insists that better bilateral cooperation is needed. In our second interview, we sit down with Manny Diaz, former mayor of the city of Miami, to discuss financial reform, "green" urban development, and Florida's Cuban-American population.

This year, we offer a new type of feature as part of our Special Content section: four moving and insightful anecdotes of Latino experiences from the Great Depression, ranging in geography from Puerto Rico to Chicago to Colorado to New Mexico. The *HJHP* hopes that these experiences—both tragic and endearing—serve as testament to the resilience and ingenuity of Latinos in the United States, especially in times of crisis.

Rounding out this year's journal are reviews of two seminal works in the study of Hispanic public policy. Kenneth C. Burt provides an overview of Henry G. Cisneros's *Latinos and the Nation's Future*, a collection of essays on how America's growing Latino population will help shape a multitude of socioeconomic and political issues in the twenty-first century. Then, the tables are turned as Henry A.J. Ramos reviews Kenneth Burt's *The Search for a Civic Voice: California Latino Politics*, a comprehensive review of the evolution of Latino politics in the Golden State.

On an administrative note, regular readers of the *Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy* may already recognize that the *HJHP* has a fresh new look for Volume 22. We hope our makeover provides a more pleasant experience to the reader and better reflects the dynamic content provided by our contributing authors. I also encourage *HJHP* readers to log on to our new Web site (www.hks.harvard.edu/hjhp). The new site features a regularly updated stream of content related to public policy

issues affecting Latinos, and it is intended to serve as an interactive, engaging complement to our printed work.

Finally, a slew of acknowledgments are in order. I would like to express gratitude to our publisher, Martha Foley, and faculty advisor, Richard Parker, for their extraordinary dedication to the *HJHP*. As always, I wish to acknowledge the *HJHP* Executive Advisory Board, which has proved once again to be an invaluable source of guidance, creativity, and wisdom. Similarly, I thank the journal staff, without whom there would be no Volume 22. Finally, acknowledgment is due to last year's *HJHP* staff, particularly Editors-in-Chief Emerita F. Torres and Gabriela M. Ventura. Their commitment to the journal has been—and continues to be—a source of inspiration.

Wishing you happy reading, a pleasant spring, and sunnier horizons,

Adam J. Gonzales
Editor-in-Chief
Cambridge, Massachusetts
March 2010

HARVARD JOURNAL OF HISPANIC POLICY

Call for Papers

ARTICLES COMMENTARIES BOOK REVIEWS

Deadline: 1 December 2010

The *Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy (HJHP)* is currently seeking submissions for its 23rd Volume. The HJHP is a nonpartisan scholarly review published annually at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

Articles and commentaries should explore policy making as it relates to the political, social, and economic environment affecting Latinos in the United States. Book reviews should critically assess a book of importance to the Latino community. All submissions meeting these criteria are welcome.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Articles must be:

- Original and unpublished
- 15-25 double-spaced pages
- All figures, tables, and charts must be submitted as entirely separate files.

Commentaries must be:

- 5-10 double-spaced pages

Book reviews must be:

- 3-10 double-spaced pages

In addition, all authors must observe the following:

- 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 must submit a cover letter with the author's name, address, e-mail address, daytime phone number, and a brief biography; one hard copy of the submission.
- **Authors must submit an electronic copy of the submission on CD or by e-mail to hjhp@ksg.harvard.edu by the 1 December deadline.**
- If submitting an article, include a 100-word abstract.
- Authors are required to cooperate with editing and fact checking.

HJHP is also accepting content to be published on its Web site. Submissions may include any work of academic or creative merit. Examples of Web content include op-eds, short stories, and photo essays. Please specify that the submission is for Web content.

The U.S.-Mexican Working Relationship: A View from the Mexican Border

An Interview with Gustavo Enrique Madero Muñoz

Interviewed by Lauren Murphy and Angélica Salazar



Gustavo Enrique Madero Muñoz currently serves as president of the Mexican Senate and as a senator for the state of Chihuahua. A member of Mexican President Felipe Calderón's National Action Party (PAN), he was elected to the Senate in the 2006 Mexican federal election. He chaired the Senate Treasury and Public Credit Committee and also served on the Trade

and Industrial Development, Energy, and Foreign Relations (Asia Pacific) Committees. He has been the leader of the PAN delegation in the Senate since 10 June 2008.

Senator Madero has built a distinguished career in both the private and public sector. He holds a bachelor's degree in communication science from the Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Occidente (ITESO) and pursued many business interests before becoming a political figure. Madero began his political career by serving as director general of planning and evaluation under Governor of Chihuahua Francisco Barrio Terrazas. In 2003 he was elected to the federal Chamber of Deputies for the Sixth Federal Electoral District of Chihuahua. As a deputy during the following 59th Congress, he chaired the Chamber's Treasury and Public Credit Committee, where he worked tirelessly to have value-added tax applied to medicines and foodstuffs.

Senator Madero has been an active spokesperson calling for initiatives to decrease violence at the Mexican-U.S. border and has recently held meetings to spur regional economic integration.

Lauren Murphy, *Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy (HJHP)* staff member, interviewed Senator Madero via live teleconference on 26 February 2010 at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. She was assisted by Angelica Salazar, *HJHP* staff member.

Murphy is senior editor for interviews for *HJHP* and a 2010 master in public policy candidate at the Kennedy School of Government. Before coming to the Kennedy School, Murphy served as a Rotary International ambassadorial scholar in Ecuador and taught in the Florida public school system. Originally from Palm Harbor, Florida, she is a 2006 graduate of the University of Florida and is pursuing her interests in political and economic

development and technological innovation in microfinance in Latin America.

Salazar is a managing editor for *HJHP* and a 2010 master in public policy candidate at the Kennedy School of Government. Prior to coming to the Kennedy School, she was a 2005 Teach for America Corps Member and taught middle school in East Los Angeles, California. Originally from California, Salazar is a graduate of the University of Southern California, where she received her bachelor's degree in international relations and a master's in elementary education from Loyola Marymount University. She is interested in the intersection of education and juvenile justice reform policies.

HJHP

Since 10 June 2008, you have been the leader of PAN in the Mexican Senate. In your position, what is your opinion on the current relationship between Mexico and the United States?

MADERO

First, the signals that [President Obama] is sending are very good because he is the first president of the United States to approach [the situation] with more responsibility between the two governments in the border region that we have in common. Not only is [the violence] a Mexican problem; the United States also has a part to do with the problem and with its solution. The other thing is the Mérida Initiative, not only with the specific amount of dollars we invest with security at the border, but also with [U.S.] assistance [dealing with] money laundering, arms traffic, and control in the infrastructure of the border. I feel more enforcement and signals are needed in this direction. We are starting in a good direction, but we still have a lot of work to do to get results in the short term.

HJHP

There was a recent decision to move Chihuahua's government to operate from a new capitol in Ciudad Juárez. How supportive are you of this shift, and do you think this shift will lead to less violent crime in Ciudad Juárez?

MADERO

We are in the middle of an election process in Chihuahua and fifteen states. I think that the way the governor announced this step was elitist because he didn't consult with the other parties. If [the Chihuahua state governor] really wanted to make a move in the direction of better government, he would have made this move in another way, [for example], by talking with the other party and making a dialogue. But he instead announced it first in the newspaper, knowing that this is a movement to get political support because Ciudad Juárez represents 40 percent of the votes in our state. And this is the main problem we are having. We as the second-largest political party in the state of Chihuahua approved to work in Ciudad Juárez, and the congress is now having sessions, but we did not vote to move the head of the capitol to the border. This is a very different decision. What Ciudad Juárez needs is more effective decisions, not political signals, to clean the police, the corruption. I don't know how moving the capitol to the border is going to help in this direction. We need to separate these two things, and we want to maintain the discussion of the security and the drug cartels separate from the electoral process. Otherwise, we are going to fail in this war.

HJHP

We're talking about your state, Chihuahua, the border, and how sensitive the violence issue has been. We also understand that

there is a growing concern in Mexico that the violence, particularly that which has been inflamed in Ciudad Juárez, has been increased by how easy it is to smuggle arms between the United States and Mexico. What policy steps or tools do you think that the United States should put in place to stem the flow of guns to your country?

the world because of this kind of rapid decision that was not included with the plans at the beginning of the NAFTA project. I am very sorry about this, because other regions in the world like Europe and Asia are winning this debate with a more aggressive integration. The United States and Mexico have very

❖ [The United States] is building a fence all along the border, and this is the opposite of what the modern world is doing.

MADERO

Very easy. In the United States you are allowed to have arms, but not the assault arms, the larger arms that are used in war and in the organized crime. But I think that [the United States] must have [better] control of the selling of this kind of arms, even though you cannot [legally] sell it. This is very important because we in the border have thousands of selling points of arms. It's a very lucrative business in the States. But, the States can help us with the control of how and where and to whom these arms are selling.

HJHP

Conversely, there are concerns that Mexican trucks on the Mexican side of the border are having quite a lot of difficulty entering the United States. And therefore, there's been growing concern that NAFTA is not being enforced as it should be. Do you have any specific thoughts on this issue?

MADERO

I think that NAFTA is losing the opportunity to step ahead in integration, and our region is losing competitive business in

complementary economies and societies, but I think that the United States has sent contradictory signals to Mexico on this issue.

It's the lack of trust with some other divisions in the commercial area and in the immigration area as well. All parties must work on this issue, but we have not been able to solve this integration problem in the proper way. [Mexico] just hosted a meeting of all the Latin American countries. All the Latin American countries need to integrate, to build a more solid region, but not all the countries are seen as partners. The United States and Canada need to make proper decisions that can build confidence [and develop] a strong region like the European Union.

HJHP

How can we build that confidence? You mentioned there is a loss of trust or confidence between Latin American countries, the United States, and Canada.

What's the first thing you would do to spur those growing ties?

MADERO

Perhaps a stronger decision related to immigration reform needs to be made. I know that this is a very difficult one, but perhaps it's the strongest one. But [the United States] is building a fence all along the border, and this is the opposite of what the modern world is doing. I know that we, Mexico, have a severe security problem, but the better way to solve it is to solve it together, with more confidence. But the governments and the country are not building [confidence], but rather a kind of division that sends a very worrying message to other parts of the world.

HJHP

Immigration is a key linkage between Mexico and the United States, and there's been a growing body of literature about the phenomenon of reverse remittances—the idea that family members who are employed in Mexico are sending money to their family members who are unemployed in the United States, ostensibly because of the economic crisis in the United States. Even though this is a very hard phenomenon to measure, do you think it's a growing trend in Mexico?

MADERO

No, I think the trend is that we have a growing community of Mexicans working [in the United States] that are still sending money to their families in Mexico. It was helping very much to the families because we are talking about the poorest families in our country. So, these dollars are helping directly to improve the health of those families, about five million in our country. We read this week that these remittances were 50 percent less than one year ago and are decreasing

very dramatically. But I think this is only a temporary phenomenon. This money represents half of the economy in Guatemala or other Central America countries, but in our case, it's only 2 percent. The money is still important because it reaches the poorest people of our country. So, I think that this is an example of what can be achieved if we solve immigration reform. The United States can take advantage of our labor force—and you need it because you don't have the growing population that you will need in the future. I think this is one thing that you need to solve in the near future.

HJHP

If families are receiving 50 percent less than they used to in remittances how is that affecting social programs implemented by the federal government, which is heavily reliant on a 15 percent sales tax?

MADERO

In Mexico, we have 15 percent of our population living in poverty. So, we need to have strong social programs to help these five and a half million families, like direct transfers of money to the women of these families. The mothers are the ones to get this support from the federal government. But, the dollars that are sent from the United States represent an extra supply that helps these families. However, with the increase of the prices of goods in Mexico, more people are falling into the poorest levels of Mexico. So we need to get more budget for social programs to help these families. Otherwise, there will be very dramatic situations, economically, during 2010. In this year, President Calderón seeks fiscal reform to get these resources on the budget. But we have a lower price of oil, which represents 40 percent of the federal income. And the

drop in the production of our oil exports represents a severe constraint to our budget. President Calderón is working with the social programs as a priority, even though we don't have the margins that we had in the past because in the past the price of oil was high [almost \$140], and the production of oil is also decreasing. So we are facing this problem which we are trying to solve with fiscal reform.

HJHP

A recent survey done by OCC Mundial in Mexico found that 80 percent of respondents had faced some kind of job discrimination, mainly because of age, gender, or socioeconomic condition. What have you done to help reduce this stigma and to increase employment? What are your most pressing concerns now that fewer Mexicans, on average, are immigrating to the United States due to our weakening economy?

MADERO

We're in a transition; we are in a democratic transition. You have to see this in the long perspective. We were permitted seventy years, repeat that, seventy years, seven decades, in our political system with only one party. Now emerging are the contradictions, the problems, that were not solved in the long time of our political system that was sustained in our country. And since 2000, we have had another party in the government, but we have not reached the changes that our society demands, with the velocity and profundity that we need, because we don't have also a majority in Congress. Mexico is a plural democracy; no one party has a majority in the chamber, the lower chamber, the upper chamber. So, this is very difficult for us. But, I am very optimistic that we'll reach this in the short term. One can be disappointed

because we need more changes more rapidly, but, if you compare our accomplishments with other democracies like Chile, like Spain, you have to be optimistic about what we have achieved in just this decade.

But, we need to discuss a political form. We are in the middle of a political discussion that could change the rules in our country, the way the system works. I am sure that we can reach consensus in this period that ends in April because we need to have some results. But in Mexico, we have several Mexicos. I am from the border. The border is more economically developed, but we have a south Mexico where the people are more traditional, indigenous. They don't speak Spanish even. So, we have a very large differential of development in our country. We need to solve this disparity.

HJHP

In 2010, Mexico celebrates 200 years of independence. What is your vision for Mexico in the next twenty to fifty years, and how do you see the relationship changing with the United States and with the Latin American and Caribbean region on the whole?

MADERO

I will give two scenarios, the optimistic one and the not optimistic. I am the optimistic type. I think this is the basic scenario. Mexico has a strong potential. We are a distinct economy, in the top fifteen countries in terms of population and territory, but we sit in fiftieth place in terms of development, in competitiveness, in human life. So we have stronger signs of our economy contrasted against our social development. If we can solve our political problems in Mexico in the short term, the potential can be enormous. And in twenty-five years, Mexico

can be one of the five largest economies of the world. This is one scenario. The other one is that we maintain the status quo and we postpone our decisions, our “potential making,” meaning we grow at a slow pace of 2 percent per year and miss the train of the future. This is the other scenario that’s in our hands to solve and to process.

In the relation with the U.S., I am not optimistic. I am very worried because I think the United States pays attention to other regions of the world that are very far [away], but they don’t think of the closest neighbor. And that’s why if you see the papers in the United States, the news from Mexico is not the reality; it is only the bad news, which is true, but not the entire truth. That tells me that the interests of the United States are actually somewhere else.

HJHP

Given that you are not optimistic about the U.S.-Mexican relationship and the news media that we receive, in these next two years of your term, until 2012, what are the projected steps that you’re taking in your party and in the Senate to better the relationship between the United States and Mexico?

MADERO

I’m from Chihuahua, and this is a border state. So, we have deep roots that relate our people to the United States people of the southern states. We feel very close. We understand each other very well. But, I think that we have to change our government, and [we also need] the United States to be more committed with its partners south of the border. Let me illustrate this with Germany. Germany in 1989 took a profound decision to drop the Berlin Wall, the division between East and West Germany. There was a lot of

polarity between the two parts, but in the end they became one.

I think that we need to learn more about that experience in the case of Mexico and the United States. We can be very complementary in our societies. We have problems that we cannot solve alone, even though the United States is the largest economy with the greatest military potential in the world. With things like security, drug cartels . . . [the United States] needs to be helped with the collaboration of other countries. And Mexico needs the help of the United States to offer opportunities to grow employment here in Mexico. We have all the materials to work together. Mexico has the population, and it can be a strong driver for our economy if we can only invest in Mexico and give opportunities to these families to have employment and buy things, have a house, have a car, have an education. We have that potential, but we need help, and there’s a lot that we have to do here in Mexico. We are working on that. But the United States must understand the moment we are having: if we make the right decision in the next election in 2012, we can consolidate the democratic ways of solving our differences. But, this is not guaranteed 100 percent. So we’ll have to work on that. In our party [the PAN, the party of President Calderón], we are promoting the reforms that Mexico needs in the energy area, labor area, and politics, but it’s a large agenda, and we need help with this collaboration of other parties and other partners of the United States.

From Havana to Harvard: An Interview with Manny Diaz

Interviewed by Lauren Murphy



Manny Diaz was first elected city of Miami mayor in 2001, having never before held elective office. He was reelected to a second term in 2005, serving until 2009. He was chosen to lead the United States Conference of Mayors as its president in 2008. Diaz has developed a vision for Miami as an international city that embodies diversity, economic opportunity, effective customer service, and a highly rated quality of life. To achieve this goal, Diaz reengineered Miami government from top to bottom. During his two-term tenure, Diaz was recognized for completely transforming the city of Miami and for many nationally recognized innovative programs in the areas of urban design, sustainability and green initiatives, education, affordable housing,

law enforcement, poverty and homelessness, and arts and culture.

Diaz was named one of America's Best Leaders by *U.S. News & World Report* and the Center for Public Leadership at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and has received the following honors: Urban Innovator of the Year from the Manhattan Institute; Americans for the Arts National Award for Local Arts Leadership; American Architectural Foundation Keystone Award; Miami-Dade Chamber of Commerce Power Leader of the Year and Green Visionary Awards; Government Award from *Hispanic* magazine; and Business Leader of the Year Award from *South Florida CEO* magazine. He was also named an Outstanding American by Choice by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service. Diaz serves on the advisory board for the Manhattan Institute's Center for Civic Innovation, the University of Pennsylvania's Institute for Urban Research, and the Mayors' Institute on City Design. He was also chosen as a judge for the Rudy Bruner Award for excellence in urban design.

Born in Havana, Cuba, Diaz immigrated to the United States with his mother, Elisa, in 1961. Growing up in Miami's Little Havana neighborhood, Diaz attended Belen Jesuit Prep School, Miami-Dade College, Florida International University, and the University of Miami's School of Law. Mayor Diaz is spending the spring 2010 semester serving as a fellow at the Institute of Politics at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

Lauren Murphy, senior editor for interviews for the *Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy* and a 2010 master in public policy candidate at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, interviewed Manny Diaz on 17 February 2010 at the Kennedy School. Before coming to the Kennedy School, Murphy served as a Rotary

International ambassadorial scholar in Ecuador and taught in the Florida public school system. Originally from Palm Harbor, Florida, she is a 2006 graduate of the University of Florida and is pursuing her interests in political and economic development and technological innovation in microfinance in Latin America.

HJHP

Mayor Diaz, you had a distinguished term as mayor of Miami. Yet, when you first took office in 2001, Miami city government was in financial crisis as municipal debt was junk status, and the city was under a financial oversight board. How did you improve financial stability, lower taxes, and improve Miami's bond rating?

DIAZ

I think it's important to know that I came from the private sector. I spent all my life in the private sector. I had never run for office. And I did it because I love the city. It's the city I grew up in. It's the city where my parents sacrificed so that I could achieve the American dream, and I was concerned about the image that we were portraying to the rest of the world. And so I went in with a mission, and I was interested in results, not in reelection.

The culture of government is terrible because, unfortunately, you have people that have been there for a long time. Government is so political that people's creative juices disappear, and, in part, they don't care anymore. They get a guaranteed paycheck every two weeks. But also, and even more importantly, I think politicians don't like people that challenge them. That's the culture. And it's also a culture that believes that, well, if you're going to be here for four years, eight years, I'm going to be here for twenty.

You have to lay out a vision for where you want the city to go. You have to then

make people in that culture understand how they fit into the vision. You, in essence, pull people out of complacency, and you say, "Look, you're the head of this department." This is what I wanted for sanitation, for example . . . not a sexy issue, but one that mayors must address. I'm a stickler for order and cleanliness, and you can tell a lot about a city [by its sanitation]. And, in fact, every time I travel to cities, that's one of the things that I first look at—is it clean? Does it look orderly? Because if it does, someone is in charge, and someone cares.

So in sanitation, for example, I said, okay, "I want to make Miami the cleanest large city in the United States." And we're going to take Miami from a place that I considered to be a pretty dirty city—a pretty filthy city—into the cleanest large city. Well, long story short, we achieved it. Forbes did a ranking a couple of years ago that had us as the cleanest large city in America.

It's not just the guys on a garbage truck that are going to make it happen. It becomes everybody's mission. It's really a citywide vision, not just one department. I then also created something called a litter buster team and a graffiti buster team. Gangs and others that actually are doing the graffiti understand that we don't tolerate that. And if you paint something, it's not going to last. It's not going to be up there that long, so go somewhere else.

HJHP

In 2004, the Manhattan Institute awarded you with the Urban Innovator of the Year Award. Who were some of the great leaders and/or what were some of the great ideas that inspired your thinking and project development? And, in hindsight, what do

you wish you could have achieved as mayor but didn't have time to accomplish?

DIAZ

I love to read. When I was running, before I became mayor, I read books about cities. I would read the Chicago Web page and look at the initiatives that Mayor Richard Daley was involved in. We're not bashful about saying that we plagiarize! We love copying and stealing ideas from each other. Until the day I left office, for sure, I would be looking at what other mayors were doing through my involvement in the U.S. Conference of Mayors. You never really ever copy a hundred percent of it because every city is different. People are different. And I can make it work in Miami if I tweak this and do this to it. I learned from every mayor. I mean, there are people, obviously, that stand out, like Daley. I was heavily influenced by Mayor Joe Riley from Charleston in terms of city design. My growth from day one to the last day, in terms of city design, was remarkable. It was probably the one area where as a person I grew the most.

The '90s saw revival in cities. And that's also what I read a lot about, how New York, Chicago, Boston, and other major cities had begun to turn things around. And in Miami, we had actually had declining population. The move to suburbia and suburban sprawl was a huge problem for us. At the same time, suburban sprawl had created congestion, so I thought that it was the right opportunity to talk to those people and say, "Why do you want to spend three hours of your waking hours in a car every day when you can live in the city?" Either you choose to live in a neighborhood or in a single-family house in the city or in a condo to be built. And so you have to convince them about the fact that it's clean, that it is safe, that there are good schools. You're

spending time investing in parks. You're dealing with flooding issues. I mean, you're dealing with all the quality-of-life issues that will lead a family or a single person to say, "Wow, I can live there. It's a nice place to live. And, by the way, it takes me ten minutes to get to the office; or if I'm downtown, I get on a Metro Mover and do not even have to drive my car, and I can ride my bicycle to work."

It starts creating this sense of urbanism. The key is to get people there. Once you get people there, then everybody else follows. Retail follows. So, now, all of a sudden, you're creating . . . a neighborhood. You're creating a new life in an area that used to shut down at five in the afternoon.

HJHP

Was there any particular idea that you learned from these leaders that you thought, "there's no way that this could succeed in Miami," but you tried it anyway, and it did?

DIAZ

I would say that environmental and green issues would have to be it. Miami, for a whole host of reasons, was not exactly at the forefront of green. When I started talking about green in Miami, everybody thought I wanted to paint houses green or paint the driveways green. Now Miami has adopted a land use plan whose principles are based on smart growth and urbanism. Mayor Mike Bloomberg adopted his Plan NYC, which we then turned around and drafted something called "Mi Plan"—My Plan—which is our environmental protection/climate protection agreement. A lot of cities started copying us. We started to serve as a model in a whole slew of policy areas.

HJHP

During your term as mayor in Miami, the population grew by 30 percent in large part because the quality of life had increased and improved so much. People were coming back to Miami. And during that time, the crime rate actually decreased by 30 percent. And you had hired a different police chief. Would you say that that was the key to the success?

DIAZ

It was extremely controversial. The union was still fighting me until the day I left office. [Getting former Chief John Timoney] was my biggest challenge. I got lucky that I was able to bring Timoney.

HJHP

What gave you the conviction to hire him?

DIAZ

Because it's my name. The buck stops with me. And so I have to do things and push forward on what I think is in the best interest of the city. I did have struggles with people who wanted to hire within. Some thought it should be a Cuban American to replace a Cuban American chief. All I said was, "Don't we want the best? Let's hire the best and forget about the color of their skin or where they were born or what language they speak. Let's just hire the best," and we did. And, so, yeah, that was a controversial issue. Yes, it helped tremendously, but it's one element.

HJHP

Speaking of that community, as a mayor of Miami, which has a huge Cuban American population, you've remained very active in the dialogue surrounding the future of Cuba. What were some of the biggest challenges you faced as mayor from 2001 to 2009 with regard to the U.S.-Cuban

political and economic relationship, and what are your hopes for the changes that Cuba and the U.S.-Cuban relationship might see in the next five to ten years?

DIAZ

You know, running for office in Miami always had to do with the fact that "I hate Fidel more than you do and so you should elect me." I never talked about Fidel. I never talked about Cuba. I was elected to be the mayor of the city of Miami, and that's the mayor for everybody who lives in the city, and that doesn't only include Cuban Americans, it includes other Hispanic groups, and it includes the African American community—everybody. I brought the Latin Grammys to Miami, for example, and I did that early on. I took on some issues like human rights and sexual orientation, and a number of people said, "That is not what a Cuban American mayor does, and you'll be killed."

I was pleased that the community had reached a point where Los Van Van [a Cuban band] could play in Miami without incident. Years ago, there was a mini riot because I think they played on the beach or were planning to play on the beach. They just played in Miami—in the heart of Miami. Not even on the beach, in the heart of downtown. Came in, played, left. To me, that was important. My biggest concern was the image of the city—the image of Cuban Americans in particular—and if we appear to be a certain way, then that's the image that all of us will have, whether we're at Harvard or we're in Hialeah.

HJHP

Miami has been referred to as the capital of Latin America, not only for Cuban Americans, but also for Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, and Haitians; particularly

of interest now is the Haitian community. How has Miami been affected by the tragic earthquake that just took place in Haiti?

DIAZ

We're involved with Haiti on an ongoing basis because we do have the largest Haitian population in the country. Look, in Miami, we learn about stuff in Haiti and Argentina and Paraguay and Cuba and Mexico practically before anybody else does because of our population. Sixty percent of our residents are foreign-born. Washington tends to call us first.

In '08 I started something called Operation Hope for Haiti, which brought together everybody in Miami to raise money, and we worked through World Vision, which has a huge presence in Haiti, and we did a whole series of things to help post-hurricane. We were in the process of other projects when the earthquake hit, so we converted Operation Hope for Haiti to post-earthquake relief. Before I left, our group had been responsible for raising about half a million dollars.

HJHP

You brought a very business-style leadership and private-sector-oriented approach to governing Miami in the early years of your time as mayor. Now, however, you find yourself at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, and you're spending spring 2010 at Harvard as an Institute of Politics fellow. What are the primary things you

hope to learn to bring back to your community in Miami?

DIAZ

More than anything else, I want to learn from the students. I have real concerns about what America is going to be like for you and for your children and grandchildren. I want to share those thoughts, and I really want to hear back from students today as to whether they agree with me, don't agree with me, what they think about what I have to say in terms of the future.

At a personal level the exposure that you have to policy makers, historians, and poets . . . you name it, it's amazing. Miami is the greatest city in the country. And Miami today is, in this century, what New York was in the last century. It is the entry point into the United States, the first step on the way to the American dream of this generation. We have the ability to build something very special, something very unique. This is a resource that is very important in building the kind of city and the kind of area that I'd love to leave for generations who succeed me.

❖❖❖ *Miami today is, in this century, what New York was in the last century. It is the entry point into the United States, the first step on the way to the American dream of this generation.*

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Latino Questions on Race, Ethnicity, and Language at the Advent of the 2010 Census

by Ramón Solórzano Jr. and
Sondra Ahlén



Ramón Solórzano Jr. received his doctorate in anthropology from the University of Massachusetts in 2009. His dissertation, entitled “From ‘Spanish Choices’ to Latina/o Voices: Interrogating Technologies of Language, Race and Identity in a

Self-Serving American Moment,” traverses the worlds of high tech and the inner city. The dissertation provides an account of a multi-sited ethnographic study examining the impact of new, automated, Spanish-language technologies on ethno-racial and linguistic diversity and rights post-September 11. He received his bachelor’s degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology where he earned a dual degree in mechanical engineering and the study of science, technology, and society. Before undertaking his graduate studies in the anthropology of science and technology, he spent several years working in the computer software industry as a technical communications professional in Silicon Valley and on the East Coast. He is currently an independent editor, writer, and scholar focusing on technology and cultural/linguistic differences.

Sondra Ahlén is the principal consultant and owner of SAVIC, an independent voice user interface (VUI) consulting firm in California’s Sierra Foothills. She holds a master’s degree in linguistics from the University of Pittsburgh, a bachelor’s in computer science from Sonoma State University, and an associate’s degree in Spanish from Napa Valley College. At Carnegie Mellon University’s Interactive Systems Laboratory, Ahlén managed the Data Collection Group for JANUS, a multilingual speech-to-speech machine translation system. With nineteen years of computational linguistics experience, she has designed, translated, tuned, and provided mentoring for automated speech telephone systems across a broad range of industry markets. Her research, publications, and work have specialized in improving the quality and effectiveness of automated telephone services in Spanish, English, and Portuguese. Prior to founding SAVIC, Ahlén was a senior VUI designer at industry leader Nuance Communications, Inc.

ABSTRACT

Beginning in the 1960s, U.S. Census Bureau data became central to achieving legislatively mandated social justice through nondiscriminatory elections and the fair allocation of federal funds. In recent years, the census has become increasingly politicized due in part to close elections and changing minority voter demographics. For Latinos, the 2010 census marks a watershed for assessing ethnic, racial, and linguistic self-perception, standing, and outlook. Even as the Census Bureau invests government funding at unprecedented levels to boost Latino participation in 2010, it remains out of sync and outdated when it comes to responsibly collecting data on ethnicity, race, and language for this population. Drawing from our background in ethnographic research and studies in human-language technologies, we examine the wording and structure of questions on the 2010 decennial census and the yearly American Community Survey (ACS). We focus specifically on those questions related to race, Hispanic/ethnic origin, and language use and proficiency. We then offer recommendations for census/ACS questionnaires and the administration of the census, with a focus on better serving Latinos and other ethnic/linguistic groups in the United States.

INTRODUCTION

Originally mandated by the U.S. Constitution to be the means by which population-based U.S. House of Representative seats could be determined, the census today holds a broader mission. Beyond simply counting individuals, the census acquired two additional legislative “social justice” charters in the 1960s: to provide the basis for nondiscriminatory elections and to substantiate fair federal

fund allocation (Prewitt 2000). The latter is easiest to measure. The 2010 census Web site notes that “the information the census collects helps to determine how more than \$400 billion dollars of federal funding is spent *each year* on infrastructure and services like: hospitals; job training centers; schools; senior centers; bridges, tunnels, and other public works projects; [and] emergency services” (U.S. Census Bureau n.d.b). Census numbers translate into raw political representation and enormous sums of money, impacting social programs, state budgets, local education, transportation, and medical services (Prewitt 2000; Siegel et al. 2001; U.S. Census Bureau n.d.a). Like the tools of few other organizations, census categories and impressive collections of tables and statistics are highly visible and influential, and their effects extend into the social realm well beyond the census’ ostensibly purely scientific function—to count. In theory, the census depends on the “best technical judgment” available and “never involves partisan considerations” (Prewitt 2000, 15). Nevertheless, its sophisticated statistical formulations certainly carry the “mystique” of statistical data (Urla 1993).

The census has become a subject of increasing controversy in the last four decades due to the combination of two factors. The first has to do with the existence during the last fifty years—at least—of consistent “differential undercounting,” that is, the fact that members of certain “racial” minority groups (first quantified for draft-age African Americans) are undercounted more than others, with clear implications for the application of data to social justice (Prewitt 2000; Brunell 2001). If such groups always voted evenly across party lines there would likely be no political

issue, but the tendency in recent decades has been that the largest minority groups (Latinos¹ and African Americans) have voted predominantly for only one of the two major parties (Democratic).² But over time and across regions, the situation could be reversed and politically charged in the opposite direction. The idea that census count could be skewed along partisan lines has magnified

The central role of statistics in our highly technological society has generated an abundant and often critical literature in the social sciences about the use and abuse of census data (Bowker and Star 1999). Yet, with a few notable exceptions (e.g., Zentella et al. 2007), that criticism has not often translated into specific policy recommendations for the administration and technical design of the census

❖ *Census numbers translate into raw political representation and enormous sums of money, impacting social programs, state budgets, local education, transportation, and medical services.*

scrutiny of the census.³ Since the 1980s, the political focus has come to engulf not only the use of census data but the administration of the census itself and, in particular, proposed methodologies to compensate for differential undercounting (Prewitt 2000).

Second, the role the census has played in illuminating the changing ethnic and racial demographic composition of the United States has both highlighted its importance and placed it at the center of controversy. The census is embedded in persistent national tensions over the “browning of America” (Mirabal and Laó-Montes 2007; Santa Ana 2002) and the “culture wars” (Jensen 1995). The use of “race” as a variable has made the census controversial when such data is applied in areas like medical research (Braun et al. 2007; Fullwiley 2008). Add to these factors several razor-close and highly contested national elections, and one gets a potent statistical recipe for controversy indeed.

itself. We might conjecture that the esoteric, statistically based technicalities present one barrier, buttressed by the patina of the scientific mystique and status already noted. Also, as if it were not hard enough to “fight city hall,” many may feel it is astronomically tougher to impact the bureaucratic realm of the U.S. Census Bureau—a tightly scrutinized division of the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Despite the obstacles, we feel that there is too much at stake here to ignore, and we bring together our expertise in the social and technical sciences to make recommendations. We take as a particular focus the potential impact of census design and outcomes to issues of racial and linguistic diversity, especially as they relate to U.S. Latinos.

CENTRAL ISSUES FOR LATINOS IN THE 2010 CENSUS AND BEYOND

Before considering the particulars of Census Bureau questionnaires, we discuss the key cultural, linguistic, and technological issues facing Latino communities with respect to the federal census.

Response Rates Have Been Lacking

There is almost universal agreement about the importance of improving the response rates among Latinos and other undercounted groups. Boosting public cooperation acts as a better method for improving the census than relying on controversial adjustments for undercounts. But stimulating greater cooperation, at least at first, can be costly. Media advertisement spots for the 2010 census aired during Super Bowl XLIV (Woodward 2010) as well as through many other media events and channels (U.S. Census Bureau 2010). Census media coverage will include ads in twenty-eight languages (Elliott 2010).

The Census Bureau is marketing the 2010 census as “one of the shortest and easiest to complete since the nation’s first census in 1790” with only ten questions (U.S. Census Bureau n.d.a). While the 2000 census provided a six-question short form for some people and a thirty-three-question long form for others, no form called the “long form” will be distributed for the 2010 census. The decennial long form has now been replaced by the relatively new annual American Community Survey (ACS).⁴ The decennial census form was simplified into a single ten-question survey, in part to encourage widespread participation, with a campaign slogan of “10 questions in 10 minutes” or “10 preguntas en 10 minutos” (U.S. Census Bureau 2009a; U.S. Census Bureau 2009b).

The Census Bureau is spending \$144 million of its more than \$300 million media budget on publicizing to Latinos, Blacks, Asians, and other ethno-racial minority groups across the United States (Wentz 2009; BBC 2010).⁵ Concerned with ratings, growth, and community service, Spanish-language broadcaster Telemundo launched an elaborate *Hazte Contar* (“Be Counted”) campaign on 1 April 2009 (Telemundo 2009a; Telemundo 2009b) in cooperation with the U.S. Census Bureau and in conjunction with community organizations such as the League of United Latin American Citizens (known as LULAC), MANA—A National Latina Organization, and the United States Hispanic Leadership Institute. Telemundo even agreed to promote participation in the census through a storyline in its top telenovela *Más Sabe el Diablo* (“The Devil Knows Best”) (Montgomery 2009; Stelter 2009).

Many Latino leaders have mobilized a drive to promote census participation by grassroots-level campaigns based in local community organizations, especially churches. While generally well received, there has been some resistance to the point of some groups and individuals calling for a census boycott. For example, the Rev. Miguel Rivera, president of the National Coalition of Latino Clergy and Christian Leaders, sees a contradiction in the fact that illegal immigrants may be counted yet do not receive the benefits of representation (Preston 2009).

Latinos Do Not Fit Well in the U.S. Black-White Racial Paradigm

U.S. Latinos exhibit a diverse set of national origins, cultural affiliations, racial *self*-identifications, and linguistic varieties. Cultural self-identification most often derives from one or more

of the following categories: Native American/indigenous, Anglo-European, or Black, though the range extends to a large assortment of cultures, subcategories, and alternative self-designations. The environment in which one lives also crucially impacts racial awareness. Latinos are born into or migrate into neighborhoods and social environments in which they are perceived through a national and regional racial lens.

But the census only tracks ethnic and racial self-identification via a set of standard categories. Self-identification of ethnicity and race⁶ is a datum reliant on folk conceptions, on personal levels of scientific literacy, and on a complex set of cultural and psychological, sociocultural, economic, and political factors. The categories used by the census to provide data regarding “race” raise significant dilemmas for the large number of Latinos who do not see themselves as fitting within these categories and for all who discount any reference to a term that they find unscientific, anachronistic, muddled, and/or distressing to invoke. The American Anthropological Association (AAA) makes it clear that the racial categories used in the census have no scientific basis in classifying human biological variation (American Anthropological Association 1997). Without giving any definition for race or ethnicity, current census instructions simply acknowledge that “race” is not a “scientific” category but a “social” one (U.S. Census Bureau 2009c). Granted, the “races” people identify with personally, and recognize in others, may be thought of as “cultural historical formations” that can “entail positive affirmations of social identity as acts of survival” (Visweswaran 1998) in the face of the devastating effects of racism. People may

speak of themselves as part of a “proud race” that can point to successful struggles to overcome a particular form of disadvantage. It is, perhaps, this sense of “race” that census data is intended to serve in its social justice application. Yet, the historical legacy of inequity and untold violence associated with the term “race” (Gregory and Sanjek 1994)—however popularly converted into a source of cultural pride—suggests it would be better to transition to using a different term for these cultural-historical formations. The ultimate decision regarding this important use of language is made in the negotiated court of sociocultural, linguistic, and political interaction. But all, including the Census Bureau, are obligated to weigh in responsibly. As the AAA urged back in 1997, further research is needed to determine the categories by which people are identified by others and those they use for themselves (American Anthropological Association 1997). In the absence of a clear understanding of these categories, by invoking the term “race” alone could the census inadvertently be complicit in perpetuating inaccurate and potentially racist conceptions? If, on the other hand, a still vibrant racism is being masked in “color-blind” terms (Bonilla-Silva 2003), care should be taken to refrain from census categories and language that would be complicit in such masking.

It is understandable why the Census Bureau might be reluctant to wipe race from the face of census questionnaires. One reason is inertia—a mountain of data already exists based on the term, so changing variables and recalibrating is sure to be a costly and difficult task from a practical point of view. And in any case, the process of enacting change must move through complex channels of

oversight (Prewitt 2000, 57). According to a U.S. Census Bureau Web site (n.d.c), the Census Bureau acknowledges that more research and testing is necessary on questions related to race, ethnicity, and ancestry, including various question formats. The Web site states:

The OMB [Office of Management and Budget] established an Interagency Committee for the Review of Racial and Ethnic Standards. Its members, drawn from more than 30 agencies, represent the many and diverse Federal needs for data on race and ethnicity, including needs arising from statutory requirements. (U.S. Census Bureau n.d.c)

Researchers have also attempted to apply census data effectively to investigate the relationship between racial self-identification and inequities for Hispanics and other underrepresented groups. Census data can be used, for example, to compare chosen racial identifications for different groups with their relative economic standing and the levels of residential racial integration. A study of the 2000 U.S. census led by John R. Logan found that about half (47 percent) of Hispanics chose given census racial categories, while half wrote in their own terms, such as “Latino,” “Hispanic,” and “Latin.” This has been a growing trend ever since the 1970s when race and Hispanic origin were first separated on the census form. These individuals, who apparently rejected “White” and other given categories on the census, are called “Hispanic Hispanics” by Logan (2003). Logan also found the following interesting relationships between the racial self-identifications of Hispanics:

Because of their numbers—now [year 2000] more than 16 million, and growing more rapidly than other Hispanic groups—it is even more important to be aware of the distinctiveness of Hispanics who identify neither as black nor as white. These are the newest Hispanics, in terms of the share who are foreign-born or speak Spanish in their homes. Hispanic Hispanics are intermediate between white and black Hispanics on several of the measures studied here [for example, income, unemployment, and residential segregation].

Using his tripartite division of White-identifying Hispanics, Black-identifying Hispanics, and Hispanic-Hispanics,⁷ Logan makes a particular contribution to the understanding of the distinctiveness of “Black” self-identified Hispanics. He notes interestingly that a quarter-million Mexicans in the United States identified in Census 2000 as Black Hispanic (a small proportion, 1.1 percent, of all U.S. Mexicans, but significant nonetheless). Cubans in Census 2000 identified as White Hispanic proportionately more than any other Hispanic group (85.4 percent White, 4.7 percent Black). And, of the various Hispanic groups, Dominicans and stateside Puerto Ricans⁸ were the most likely in Census 2000 to identify as Black Hispanic (at 12.7 percent and 8.2 percent, respectively, as compared to 24.3 percent and 49 percent identifying as White Hispanic, respectively). He also notes that Black self-identified Hispanics have a socioeconomic profile much more similar to non-Hispanic Blacks than to other Hispanics and are also more likely than other Hispanics to achieve their identification through intermarriage, that is, by having a Black non-Hispanic mother or father.

Dissatisfaction with census and racial categories is present in the many important contemporary debates about “mixed” racial/ethnic categories as well as regarding the approach to a “post-ethnic” or “post-racial” society. Opinions span the full spectrum of political persuasions and cultural backgrounds. For example, African American attorney Francis L. Holland, a coordinator of the Afrosphere Action Coalition, has proposed to merge the Hispanic and race questions (discussed below) and to expand the “Black” category on the census to include subcategories such as “Black/Brown/Coffee/Beige/Vanilla, but not Latino/Hispanic” to indicate that gradations in skin color affect the way the population is perceived racially (Holland 2009). Richard Rodriguez, author of *Brown: The Last Discovery of America* (2002), has considered the way the term “Brown” best fits with his own sense of identity and a diverse America that is now experiencing the multicultural lessons of Latinization. However, his characterization of an all-encompassing, post-racial American “Brownness” contrasts with the distinctive “Brownness” in the “Brown power” component of the emergent Chicano/La Raza movement in the United States in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Haney-López 2003; Mariscal 2005), as well as its contemporary legacies in the popular use of the term “Brown” (as in “Black-Brown relations”). Rodriguez’s Brownness also contrasts with the decidedly critical interpretation of “Browning” as a post-September 11 process by which threats to a White power structure are covertly expressed: that is, to be Brown is to be marked as a threat (Lugo-Lugo and Bloodsworth-Lugo 2008).

It remains a question for further research to determine the salience that the term “Brown” might have for people identifying as Hispanic and Latino. In the Afro-Latino Caribbean region, skin-color-based racial understandings and categories are employed and so could be transported to the mainland U.S. context. But this situation is complicated by the fact that other factors besides skin color (hair texture, eye color, profile) figure into folk descriptions of racial identity in often complex ways, although skin color seems to have a greater weight. For example, in Puerto Rico, where researchers have found more than a dozen folk racial categories—including blanco, indio, jabao, moreno, mulato, negro, prieto, and, the most common, trigueño⁹—the limited handful of U.S. Census categories confounds residents. Susan Berkowitz (2001, 14) quotes a participant in a census focus group conducted in Puerto Rico:

I also left this question blank because I could not identify myself with any of the answers they had there. They should have included the option of trigueña [“tan” or “wheat-colored”]. I called the Census office about this question and did not get an answer. . . . The Census people should have thought about us because I believe the race of trigueña exists and that is my race. I am not Black African even though I do have my hair African type. I am not White either.

Our specific proposals for the reconstruction of the questions related to race and ethnicity, below, are intended to present a choice that is more consistent with Latino self-identification and to aid in assessing “Brownness” and other self-identification questions as they develop and impact the manner in which racial inequity unfolds in our society.

Latino Linguistic Diversity

As with race, the gathering and application of data related to language presents a minefield of potential inaccuracies and bias. This is particularly true in a nation like the United States that maintains a monoglot, monolingual ideology (Silverstein 1996; Crawford 2000) at the same time that its educational system falters in conveying the nature and importance of linguistic diversity (Solórzano n.d.; Skutnabb-Kangas 2000). Fear that the nation is threatened by non-English proficiency comes through in the way official English efforts continue on the state and national level; campaigns challenging bilingual education also are common. Yet English was still the only language spoken by the vast majority of homes per the 2000 census (82 percent), and two-thirds of those who did speak a language other than English at home, primarily Spanish speakers, also were recorded as speaking English “well” or “very well” (Zentella et al. 2007).

Among many important considerations regarding language, our recommendations reflect our sense that language must be understood as a diverse, interactive phenomenon, highly dependent on sociocultural context and never acting in isolation (Urciuoli 1995; Zentella 2002). English and Spanish, like indigenous and other languages, come in a variety of dialects, and their features often combine in the dynamic interplay of language use and change. Arguably what matters most is communicative competence in a language, that is, how well goals are achieved via language, rather than standards of language proficiency that may be determined arbitrarily by elite standards. Yet, the mission of the census to aid in nondiscriminatory allocation of federal funds presents a pragmatic

mandate to measure population data as equitably as possible. It must be understood that the measure of proficiency by the census is at best a crude, self-assessed, ballpark value. This census mandate with respect to language would be clearer if there were a better delineation, and reflection in existing legislation, of fundamental linguistic rights and the ill effects of discrimination based on language. Nevertheless, it provides a compelling reason, however crudely, to measure proficiency in languages other than English and to measure language preference. This information would provide legislators and federal program administrators with essential data for gauging discriminatory policies and practices based on language.

Census Taking in the Age of Digital Delivery and Translation

It is worth noting the important role that technology will continue to play in the administration of the census and in the changing cultural and linguistic ecology of the nation it serves and measures. It seems quite possible that 2020 will be the first decennial census to be conducted primarily online. The possibility immediately raises issues related to technological access and net neutrality. Unfortunately, an historic legacy that has framed minorities as technological primitives (Trouillot 2003) has severely impacted these groups and also interfered with the study of minorities as technological actors with unique understandings, attitudes, and behaviors with respect to technology (Solórzano n.d.; Eglash 2004). In addition, new information and communication technologies are affecting the availability and dissemination of linguistic varieties around the world. We are most familiar with the important role that automated

human-language technologies and automated machine translation increasingly play in a global economy whose lingua franca is in flux (Cohen et al. 2004; Nass and Brave 2005; Warschauer 2003).

appropriate content is not specific to Spanish speakers or Latinos.

As of this writing, the Census Bureau was responding to an inappropriate translation as reported in a USA Today article by

❖❖❖ *Fear that the nation is threatened by non-English proficiency comes through in the way official English efforts continue on the state and national level.*

As an illustration of the issues of technological fairness, consider the following obstacle we discovered with the main Census Bureau Web site. The online offerings in Spanish that we reviewed¹⁰ presented a subset of information specifically tailored to Hispanic online users. It presumed less knowledge about the workings of the census and provided additional material of special interest to the Latino community. Selecting one link called “La Historia Completa” (“The Whole Story”) from the “en español” version¹¹ led to a screen with questions and answers designed to inform the public and justify census-related activity. It included questions such as “I’m concerned about sharing my information with anyone” and “I’m concerned that this will be the first time the census will count non-citizens” which might be of special interest to Latinos, among others. However, this information was provided in English, with no facility for obtaining translated content.¹² This “cultural bug” (Solórzano 2007) illustrates the growing importance and interconnection between language, technology, culture, and the democratic exercise of fundamental public services. And, of course, the issue of the technical presentation of culturally

Haya El Nasser (2010). In the Vietnamese-language version of the 2010 census form the word “census” was translated as “i u tra.” The article quotes Quyen Vuong, a member of two committees for census outreach in Santa Clara County, California, as saying, “It’s a very scary connotation in the sense that there is a crime and the government needs to investigate.” El Nasser writes, “The words the Census Bureau used to refer to its upcoming population count evoke chilling memories for Vietnamese immigrants who escaped a Communist regime.”¹³

The Census Bureau response was that it could change the language online to the more neutral “th ng ké” (“tally”), but it was “too late” to change it in the printed version of the 2010 Vietnamese-language census forms, a situation for which it offered an apology. Such disasters in translation can occur in any language or culture, including Spanish. The question remains, how can technology combine with linguistic expertise and multicultural knowledge to avoid such disasters and best serve multiple communities equitably?

Having outlined the central issues for Latinos in the 2010 census related to response rates, race, linguistic diversity, and technology, we turn our attention to the specific questions of Hispanic/ethnic origin, race, and language on the census and ACS forms in order to address some of these issues.

QUESTIONS RELATED TO RACE AND ETHNIC ORIGIN

Hispanic Ethnicity and Race Questions

In 1977, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued Statistical Policy Directive 15 (OMB15) entitled “Race and Ethnic Standards for Federal Statistics and Administrative Reporting” (U.S. Census Bureau n.d.e). The 1980 census was modified to recognize two ethnicity categories (either “Spanish/Hispanic origin or descent” or not) and four race categories (American Indian or Alaskan Native; Asian or Pacific Islander; Black; and White), along with the ability to fill in an “other” race designation. A small number of subcategories (such as “Mexican” or “Negro”) were grouped into the primary categories for statistical purposes. For the 2000 census, the racial categories were altered to: White; Black or African American; American Indian or Alaskan Native; Asian; Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander; and “Some other race.” Respondents for the first time were allowed to choose more than one racial category. Those who indicated a Hispanic background chose “Some other race” in large numbers (Logan 2003).¹⁴

Starting in 2000, and repeated in 2010, federal census forms and the annual ACS placed the Hispanic ethnicity question¹⁵ before the question about race (del Pinal et al. 2001; del Pinal et al. 2007) partly to

reduce nonresponse to the Hispanic ethnicity question (del Pinal et al. 2001).¹⁶

On the 2000 and 2010 census forms (U.S. Census Bureau n.d.h; U.S. Census Bureau 2009c) respondents are asked to reply to both the ethnicity and race questions, maintaining an explicit separation of ethnicity from race for Hispanics. The 2010 census form indicates that “For this census, Hispanic origins are not races.” The 2010 Hispanic origin question is shown in Figure 1.¹⁷

The next question on the same form asks for race as shown in Figure 2.

Questioning a Race Category for Latinos/Hispanics

As discussed above, Latinos often do not identify with any of the conventional race categories, and may, at best, think of themselves as a combination of these categories (typically some combination of White and/or Native American and/or Black). Although some people of Hispanic/Latino origin genuinely self-identify under one of the standard categories (White; Black/African American/Negro; American Indian, etc.) alone, there are still many for whom answering the race question can be a conundrum—at once confusing, redundant, and lacking their sense of being a person of color distinct from Black and White and that is not Japanese, Chinese, American Indian, and so on (Berkowitz 2001; Hirschman et al. 2000).

It is a problem that respondents may be forced to choose from among categories with which they do not actually identify. Jorge del Pinal et al. (2007) found that the 2000 format, which asked for Hispanic origin first and allowed the marking of multiple boxes in the “race” question, showed a 10 percent increase in Hispanics

other category, we contend that the addition of a category to which they might actually identify would help to more accurately characterize the diversity of the Hispanic/Latino population.²⁰

We recognize the fact that people often self-identify with a range of ethno-racial categories frequently articulated in terms of gradations of skin color, or levels of “Brownness,” if you will. While we are not suggesting that there is a universal set of categories, we do see the utility of respecting this phenomenon and representing it on the census form via a general designation like “person of color” in a society that is neither free of racism, nor color-blind (Bonilla-Silva 2003; Page 1999; Haney-López 2005).

Use of the Term “Race”

In 1997, the AAA proposed removing the term “race” from the census form by 2010 (American Anthropological Association 1997) and replacing it with “ethnic group,” claiming that the term “ethnic group” is clearer to people than “ethnic origin.” According to the online informational copy of the Census 2010 form, this step has not taken place as of this decennial census. It is not clear whether “ethnic group” alone is actually preferable to “ethnic origin,” as some people may have a strong sense of their ethnic roots and yet not feel like they are part of a local “ethnic group” of persons with the same ancestry. “Ethnic group or origin” may be better.²¹ Nevertheless, we recommend that the U.S. Census Bureau explore ways to remove the term “race” from future census forms and instructions while still making whatever ethnic distinctions are required to meet governmental policy needs. We are in agreement with the AAA that it may be appropriate to eliminate the term “race” from the census questionnaire at some point, but

feel that it is not appropriate to do so at this time.

Merging the Race, Hispanic Origin, and Ethnic Origin Questions

The AAA also recommends merging the ethnic origin and race concepts into one question. The organization looks forward to the day when racial discrimination is not an issue that needs to be addressed by government policy, and yet acknowledges the need for anti-discrimination social programs for the foreseeable future. It proposes a merger of the race and ethnicity questions as a step in the right direction and presents a set of justifications for doing so.

We support the AAA’s 1997 recommendation for combining the ethnicity and race questions. But we also suggest some alterations to the format of the question that would help it to be both better in line with how Latinos should be counted, as well as a potential mechanism for assessing the salience of racial thinking in the nation. The combining of race and ethnicity into one question recognizes that the two concepts are distinct but overlapping in the social world and in the minds of individual respondents.

We propose a mechanism for potentially tracking the salience of racial thinking in the social fabric with the addition of the term “No race.” This selection could represent a choice that would in effect, within the limitations of a single question, change the meanings of the “ethno-racial” categories selected above from “ethno-racial” or “racial” categories (i.e., categories infused with the effects of racism) to strictly “ethnic” (or cultural, if you will) categories. While providing essential census data, it would simultaneously take the pulse of the nation’s sense of itself in overcoming racism.

Figure 3 — Question #13 (Ancestry or Ethnic Origin Question) 2010 ACS
 (Note: Two blank lines are provided as shown for respondents to enter their responses.)

Question #13 (from the 2010 ACS):
 What is this person's ancestry or ethnic origin?

(For example, Italian, Jamaican, African Am., Cambodian, Cape Verdean, Norwegian, Dominican, French Canadian, Haitian, Korean, Lebanese, Polish, Nigerian, Mexican, Taiwanese, Ukrainian, and so on.)

Additional discrepancies arise due to the current structure of the Hispanic/ethnic origin versus race questions. The short form (as exemplified in Census 2010 Questions #8 and #9 in Figures 1 and 2) maintains a single ethnic distinction, either Hispanic or non-Hispanic. Specific ethnic origin information is asked only of Hispanics (and not, for instance, of Germans, Irish, Poles, etc.) in the short forms (2000 short form and 2010 census form). This practice (1) suggests a double standard where only Hispanic ethnicity need be marked; (2) ignores individuals, especially recent immigrants, who identify ethnically with a particular non-Hispanic group, including groups from Europe; and (3) lends credence to the idea that the singularly mentioned White and Black categories are monolithic but other categories are diverse. On the other hand, on the longer forms (2000 long form and the relatively new ACS), Hispanic/Latino/Spanish respondents are asked not only (1) their specific Hispanic/Latino/Spanish origin and (2) the confusing race question, but also for (3) a redundant “ancestry or ethnic origin” question that is asked of all persons, including Hispanics (already asked in the Hispanic/non-Hispanic question), Asians

(already covered by the race question), plus Germans, Irish, and so on, who are being asked their ethnic origin for the first time.²²

To illustrate, the 2010 ACS includes not only the content of the 2010 census Questions #8 and #9 in Figures 1 and 2 (which are numbered as Questions #5 and #6, respectively, on ACS 2010), but also ACS Question #13, whose wording is shown in Figure 3.

Figure 5 – Question #14 (Home Language and English Proficiency Questions) 2010 ACS

Question #14:

- a. Does this person speak a language other than English at home?
 - Yes
 - No → SKIP to question 15a

- b. What is this language?

For example, Korean, Italian, Spanish, Vietnamese.

- c. How well does this person speak English?
 - Very well
 - Well
 - Not well
 - Not at all

This one-question approach provides a great deal of flexibility, cuts the number of questions from two or three down to one, and still allows the identification of Hispanic versus non-Hispanic persons. If a person checks the high-level “Hispanic/Latino/Spanish” box, any of the specific Hispanic/Latino/Spanish boxes (e.g., “Mexican/Mexican Am./Chicano”), or a combination of the high-level box and one or more specific Hispanic ethnicities, the person could be counted for census purposes as “Hispanic/Latino/Spanish.”

Some difficulties with this approach include that some respondents may be confused by the inclusion of primary categories such as “White” or “Asian” plus specific subcategories within the same question. To illustrate this issue, we can discuss the similar situation in automated speech applications. Two different designs that are intended to capture the same information can often give significantly different results in terms of response rates to spoken questions and the caller’s ability to accomplish his or her goals in the phone call.²⁴ Similarly with a graphical/written survey questionnaire format, the

difference between a two- or a three-question approach versus a combined question format may significantly alter census counts for the populations that are being counted.²⁵ Clearly testing of any design changes is of utmost importance. We provide this as an illustrative suggestion for how such a combined question might be formulated and recommend that this and other similar formats be fully tested before incorporation into future census and ACS questionnaires.²⁶

QUESTIONS RELATED TO LANGUAGE DIVERSITY

Census Language Questions and the Concept of Linguistic Isolation

While questions related to language are not found in the Census 2010 form, the 2010 ACS asks the home-language and English-proficiency questions shown in Figure 5.

These questions are used as a means of gathering information about levels of English proficiency for those who speak languages other than English in the United States.

The language questions on the ACS are not only designed to help the U.S. government determine levels of *individual* English proficiency; the government also uses the language questions to determine the percentages of *households* that may have some level of difficulty communicating in English because they do not have any members of the household of a certain age who speak English proficiently. In 1990 the U.S. Census Bureau began categorizing households (and, by extension, individuals and families in them) as “linguistically isolated” if a household “is one in which no member 14 years old and over either speaks only English, or speaks a non-English language and speaks English ‘very well’” (U.S. Census Bureau n.d.g).

As discussed in Paul Siegel et al. (2001), the concept of linguistic isolation is used by the government for meeting legislative regulations in the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Bilingual Education Act, and the Voting Rights Act. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services proposed changes in 1998 to rules for determining how populations are underserved for medical services to include the concept of linguistic isolation as a factor that limits access to medical care. And the U.S. Census Bureau uses data for linguistically isolated households to determine what languages need to be available for census materials and to consider ways to target linguistically isolated households and communities.

Before raising further issue with the language questions themselves, we delve into some problems with the labeling of households as “linguistically isolated.” To be clear, the *intent* of identifying households as linguistically isolated (regardless of the term used) is to identify populations in the United States that would benefit from the availability of language materials in their own language (other than English) in order to provide support to those households and thereby improve response rates and data validity. Thus, the bar is set high so that if a household has no person of a certain age who speaks English “very well” and there is a significant number of such households, the government is required (Siegel et al. 2001) to provide voting materials in that language, offer social programs, and so on, and the Census Bureau uses this information to determine which languages to translate questionnaires and instructions into, where to hire interpreters, and more.

Changing “Linguistic Isolation” to “English-Learning”

Objections have been raised, however, by the American Anthropological Association (2008) and Ana Celia Zentella et al. (2007) regarding identifying households as “linguistically isolated.” We agree with Zentella and the AAA that the term “linguistically isolated” is a misnomer. Such households are not “isolated” from a language perspective, and in fact, in order to speak English even

Figure 6 — Reading Proficiency Question, Proposed

- How well can you read and understand important documents in English?
- Very well
 - Well
 - Not well
 - Not at all

“well” they likely interact with English speakers on a regular basis.

Instead of the term “linguistically isolated,” we feel the term “not fully English proficient” might be more accurate, yet too technical and verbose. “English-learning” would be more accurate *and* less susceptible to abuse. This terminology politely and correctly presumes that an interest in learning English exists (Crawford 2000; Solórzano 2009).

Zentella et al. (2007) also wonder why the Census Bureau could not group together those who speak English “well” with those who speak English “very well,” thereby calculating a more fair assessment equivalent to “reasonably well.” We agree with Zentella et al. that for some purposes the threshold of “speaking English well” may, and should be, sufficient. We also agree with Siegel et al. (2001) that the “well” but not “very well” distinction is still useful for assessing when additional language support might be offered to households and communities. We therefore recommend for those situations in which speaking well may be “good enough,” that the government consider creating another categorization that calculates those households that contain at least one person who speaks English “well” in order to better reflect the fact that there are many in the United States who interact and function on a regular basis in English even if they are not fully proficient in English.

We also propose the addition of a question on the ACS in the format seen in Figure 6.

This question would add important data that could be used to better assess literacy levels (as compared to speaking skills) and to determine what “reasonable

literacy” might entail for official and everyday communication.

Language Proficiency and Language Preference Questions

Determining that Spanish is spoken at home and that no member of a household speaks English proficiently may not provide sufficient detail to adequately determine appropriate translation and dissemination strategies for the Spanish questionnaires, given not only dialectal variation, but also differences in language use and attitudes across the U.S. Spanish-speaking community.

Results of a usability study (Ahlén 2009) for an automated customer service line for a major telephone company showed that all of the Spanish participants had claimed Spanish as their primary language and spoke Spanish at home regularly. However, several Spanish-speaking participants had problems with “standard-Spanish” vocabulary in the phone system messaging and either did not respond to the questions, got lost in the conversation, or gave irrelevant or ineffective responses. When interviewed by the bilingual moderator, some seemed more comfortable speaking in English and indicated they would typically speak to a live agent or an automated telephone system in English for various reasons. Educated bilingual speakers have often indicated that they would choose an English system over a Spanish one because they have had experience with poorly translated Spanish in some systems.

An anthropological study of Spanish speakers in Holyoke, Massachusetts (Solórzano 2009), also found bilingual Spanish-dominant speakers choosing the English option in automated telephone customer service interactions

offering a Spanish option, even though they generally prefer to speak Spanish and were found to be Spanish-dominant speakers. Their motivation for this choice was due to a combination of frustration with poor Spanish translations used in the technology combined with a desire to employ the automated systems as opportunities to learn and practice English.

Major vocabulary problems fall into two categories: (1) words and concepts that are hard to translate clearly into Spanish due to differences between English and Spanish, and (2) usage and attitude differences between “standard Spanish” as spoken outside of the United States versus forms of so-called “Spanglish,” that is, the interaction between English and Spanish in the typical day-to-day Spanish as spoken in the United States (García et al. 2001; Penfield and Ornstein-Galicia 1985; Zentella 2002).

Several participants in the Sondra Ahlén (2009) study had never heard some of the standard Spanish terms, so they had no idea what they meant. On the other hand, highly educated recent immigrants from other Spanish-speaking countries often not only prefer the standard Spanish words, but also may consider the use of Spanglish and English borrowings to be unpleasant or even “horrible.” Although Spanglish is more and more accepted, even in educated daily speech, differences in language attitudes and language use could have significant impacts not only on response rates and data validity for Spanish questionnaires, but also on language choice (which language the person chooses for filling out the questionnaire response form).

Zentella et al. (2007) suggest that the census forms should ask not only English

proficiency for those who speak some other language at home, but also language proficiency in the home language. The existing practice of providing communications, including the census itself, in languages other than English makes it imperative to include a question about home-language proficiency for the non-English language specified. This information is also critical for assessing how bilingualism relates to English proficiency or competence in general.

It is important to avoid the assumption that the language a person ends up using for a service necessarily matches his or her preferred language choice or the language in which the individual is most proficient for a particular situation. These distinctions were found to hold in the investigation of automated bilingual customer service applications (Ahlén 2008; Ahlén 2009).²⁷ The census, for example, might presume that regions and households that were labeled as “linguistically isolated” should be sent materials in Spanish, yet some of those households might actually prefer to receive them in English and fill them out more effectively in this language. The inverse is also possible, such that a small number of households in a predominantly English-speaking region might prefer Spanish materials and not receive them. We recommend the census ask respondents (at least on the ACS and possibly on the census itself) what language they would prefer for questionnaires, instructions, and verbal communication with the Census Bureau in order to track how well language choice matches language preference and to assess how well the Census Bureau is meeting the language and cultural needs of the Hispanic/Latino community in the United States.²⁸

Furthermore, asking additional language-use, language-attitude, and language-proficiency questions may help the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. government to better serve individuals and communities across a wide array of linguistic diversity and needs and to better encourage bilingualism and multilingualism in this nation.

The depth and breadth of linguistic variety and the effects of self-evaluation make self-assessment of language proficiency highly problematic. Although Siegel et al. (2001) argue that the existing questions related to home-language use and English proficiency were sufficient for meeting governmental needs at the time that study was written, they acknowledge the need for further research and the fact that the relevant metrics may need to change over time. We suggest that further research be done to determine whether additional questions may be appropriate for inclusion in future census or ACS questionnaires. Examples may include questions related to the ability to fill out forms and the frequency of use of English versus Spanish (or another language) in various settings, such as at home, at work, at school, with friends, listening to radio, watching television, reading the newspaper, speaking to customer service representatives, and interacting with automated speech telephone systems. These questions are beyond the scope of the current article, but become more and more relevant as the Census Bureau and governmental programs strive to meet the needs of a nation with a high degree of linguistic diversity.²⁹

PROCEDURES RELATED TO CENSUS ADMINISTRATION

As the Census Bureau continues to offer materials and assistance in more languages and cultures, the importance of the design and testing of those materials cannot be overemphasized. We offer the suggestions below with regard to the administration of the census in multiple languages. While the census has taken some actions in this area in the past (Siegel et al. 2001; Kissam et al. 1993), we offer these suggestions with no foreknowledge regarding the extent to which they already are being followed.

Procedures for Training, Translating, and Testing for Multilingual Offerings

Part of the translation process must include not only the review of translations by native speakers, but should also include usability testing for each *set* of translated questionnaires and instructions *for each language* to avoid issues such as those reported by Edward Kissam et al. (1993) and Haya El Nasser (2010). The Census Bureau may also wish to consider creating different versions of the same questionnaire for multiple dialects. Census recruiters and assistants need to be fluent in the languages and cultures for the communities they assist. Automated telephone systems and Web site coverage must also be tested *for each language* to avoid errors such as providing culturally inappropriate content, playing the wrong messages, or having incorrect wording, missing links, and unexpected transitions from one language to another.

Disseminating Multilingual/Multicultural Materials

Lastly, ongoing research is suggested for determining how best to disseminate multilingual and multicultural materials to the appropriate households. A

combination of regional mailing plus online downloadable forms and instructions for all languages may prove successful over time. Regional community organizations may also be able to assist in testing and disseminating multilingual and multicultural materials,³⁰ especially if the government funding and/or donations are available to provide budgetary assistance for such efforts. The addition of a language preference question on the ACS and possibly the decennial census forms may help the Census Bureau target appropriate language materials to specific households.

Summary and Conclusion

From an overview of the Latino sociopolitical issues in the pre-2010 census setting to a review and discussion of the wording and structure of the federal census and ACS questionnaires, we have highlighted some of the key questions regarding the 2010 U.S. census and beyond. As a result of our analysis, we have presented the following recommendations:

1. **Merge the Hispanic** origin, race, and ethnic origin questions into one question on the census and ACS forms.
2. **Add more explicit** check boxes beyond just Mexican, Puerto Rican, and Cuban for Hispanic origin, including Dominican and possibly others.

3. **Add a “person of color”** category to the race question.
4. **Explore ways to** remove the term “race” from future census forms.
5. **Change the term** “linguistically isolated” to “English-learning” for individuals and households.
6. **Add a question** to the ACS to determine proficiency in the language the person reported that he or she speaks at home.
7. **Add a question** to the ACS to determine reading proficiency in English and the language that he or she speaks at home.
8. **Add a question** to the ACS (and possibly the decennial census) to determine the language the respondent would prefer for questionnaires, instructions, and communications with the U.S. Census Bureau.

We have discussed the central issues and questions for Latinos in the 2010 census and beyond, recommended changes to the wording and questions for future census and ACS forms, and offered suggestions for the future administration of multicultural and multilingual offerings by the U.S. Census Bureau. For Latinos, the 2010 census marks a watershed for making their voice heard and for assessing ethnic, racial, and linguistic self-perception, standing,

❖❖❖ *For Latinos, the 2010 census marks a watershed for making their voice heard and for assessing ethnic, racial, and linguistic self-perception, standing, and outlook. The nation as a whole likewise encounters an opportunity to be counted in terms that more closely reflect the dynamism and diversity of our evolving democracy.*

and outlook. The nation as a whole likewise encounters an opportunity to be counted in terms that more closely reflect the dynamism and diversity of our evolving democracy.

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ENDNOTES

¹ use the term Latino (aka Latina/o) to refer to Caribbean, Central American, Latin American, and Mexican populations in the United States. Often used interchangeably with Hispanic, we will make it clear in this article when we are specifically referring to the way the census has defined and used the term “Hispanic or Latino,” that is, a person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.

² As of this writing, concern is already being raised about Republican-aligned fund-raising mailings alleged to be masquerading as official census documents, siphoning off potential Democratic and/or Hispanic participants (Dunham 2010).

³ A related issue that is beyond the scope of this article is gerrymandering. Redistricting can have significant political and social impact on the Latinos in a community.

⁴ The first year the ACS form was officially used was 2005. See the Census Bureau’s ACS history Web site for more details (www.census.gov/history/www/programs/demographic/american_community_survey.html).

According to a Census Bureau representative at the ACS help line (1-800-923-8282, 17 March 2010), the ACS is mailed out to a new computer-selected weighted sample of 250,000 households in the United States and its territories each month, and the results are tabulated and reported yearly. Thus a small percentage of households will be required to fill out not only the ten-question form but also the longer ACS form in the same year and an even smaller percentage in the same month. See the ACS informational Web site for more details on households receiving both forms (www.census.gov/acs/www).

⁵ The Census Bureau is also dedicating resources to study and improve its own practices. For example, the bureau is employing the research method of ethnography (aka participant observation) to monitor census administration, as indicated in the online job posting to the National Association for the Practice of Anthropology Web site, entitled “Short term ethnographic consultancies for the U.S. Census” (<http://practicinanthropology.org/newsannouncements/2010/ethnographic-consultancies>).

⁶ Race has been defined as “the framework of ranked categories segmenting the human population that was developed by Western Europeans following their global expansion beginning in the 1400s” (Gregory and Sanjek 1994). Racism can be defined as “a fundamental characteristic of social projects which create or reproduce structures of domination based on essentialist categories of race” (Omi and Winant 1994). It is important to differentiate the symbolic, situational, and often voluntary associations of *ethnic* identification (ethnicity) from the more repressive social exclusions associated with African American, Latino, Native American, and other identities and social locations (Mullings 1979). Racial identities have arisen from a legacy of racism and struggles against racial oppression.

⁷In Logan's three-part classification: (1) Hispanic Hispanics are "persons who identified as 'other race'" (most often writing in "Hispanic" or a similar term) alone or in combination with another specific race on the census; (2) Black Hispanics are "persons who identified as 'black' alone or in combination with another race" (Logan notes that there is an overlap in categories such that a fraction of Hispanic Hispanic-identifying persons also identified as Black Hispanic); and (3) White Hispanics are "persons who identified neither as 'other race' nor as 'Black.'" A more complete label for this group would be "White, Asian, or Native American" Hispanics, although 96 percent in this category identified only as "White."

⁸In Census 2000, Puerto Ricans counted on the island of Puerto Rico self-identified as follows: White, 80.5 percent; Black, 8 percent; Some other race, 6.8 percent; two or more races, 4.2 percent (U.S. Census Bureau n.d.f).

⁹For a useful overview, see Clarence Gravlee (2005).

¹⁰See the Web site at: <http://2010.census.gov/2010census/language/spanishla.php>.

¹¹This was accessible either through an "en español" link at the top of the page or by choosing the "Español/Spanish" selection from a drop-down list containing dozens of supported languages. The result was the same. The translated page contained an "English site" link at the top to return to the English-language page.

¹²At the time of publication this error was still present. The authors have attempted to inform the U.S. Census Bureau of this issue so that it may be corrected.

¹³It is worth noting that the North Vietnamese government instituted the first national census in 1960, as evidenced in the translated document entitled "Census in North Vietnam," which was prepared by the United States Joint Publications Research Service and was "Approved for public release: Distribution unlimited" (www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA333740&Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf).

¹⁴According to John Logan (2003), "In 1970, only 700,000 Hispanics identified themselves as 'Some other race.' Since then, however, this group that we call Hispanic Hispanics has risen to about a third in 1980, 44% in 1990 and 47% in 2000." Interestingly, however, an experiment performed in 2000 on a sampling of households and reported by Jorge del Pinal et al. (2007) shows only 39 percent of Hispanics selecting "Some other race" on the 2000-style questionnaire compared to 51.5 percent of Hispanics selecting "Some other race" on the 1990-style questionnaire. Hispanics made up virtually all respondents specifying an "other" race designation (to the tune of about 97 percent) since 1990. These results question the idea that "other" was a dispersed "catchall" racial category when instead "other" may have been a repository for one or more substantial racial categories associated with a given population, that is, Latinos. According to Ian Haney-López (2005, 45), "since 1980, 'other' has become a Latino phenomenon. Virtually all persons choosing 'other' are Hispanic, and this group now constitutes 6 percent of the nation's population. More than one in twenty Americans is a Latino who describes him or herself as racially 'other' on the census."

¹⁵The wording of the question regarding Hispanic ethnicity differed in Census 2000 from what it was for Census 1990. Where in 1990 (as in 1980) the census short form inquired about "Spanish/Hispanic origin or descent," in Census 2000 the question changed to "Is this person Spanish/Hispanic/Latino?" (Passel 2010).

¹⁶According to Jorge del Pinal et al. (2001), 10 percent of respondents did not complete the Hispanic question at all in 1990. On a related note (del Pinal et al. 2001; Suro 2002), the number of Hispanic/Latino/Spanish respondents who indicated specific national origins significantly dropped for 2000 compared to 1990. The 2000 census form did not include specific examples for the "Other Hispanic/Latino/Spanish" origin fill-in-the-blank, whereas the 1990 form provided several

examples (similar to those shown in Figure 1 for the 2010 census form).

¹⁷ We recognize that the presence of terms such as “Chicano” and “Negro” on the census forms are worthy of discussion, but this is beyond the scope of this work.

¹⁸ See Susan Berkowitz (2001) for further discussion on the Puerto Rican response to the lack of appropriate mixed-race categories on the census and related issues. See the article by folklorist Ana María Tekina-eirú Maynard (2010) for a discussion of indigenous heritage for Caribbean Latinos. Similarly, see Jennifer Kay (2010) for commentary on the inclusion of indigenous categories such as Maya, Nahua, and Mixtec by indigenous immigrants from Mexico and Central America. And see the guest commentary posting to the NiLP Network by Desi Sánchez (2010) for further discussion on the “necessity of a ‘mixed race’ option.”

¹⁹ The use of a “White” race category as a means of unfairly ranking Anglo-European populations as superior to others (Gregory and Sanjek 1994; Omi and Winant 1994; Page 1999) should enter into any future discussions regarding the meaning, function, adoption, and persistence of a “White” census category (Haney-López 2005).

²⁰ Jorge del Pinal et al. (2007) point out another issue with how the 2000 census race statistics were calculated, namely that those who marked “Some other race” plus at least one of the “standard” race categories such as “White,” “Black,” or “American Indian/Alaska Native” were counted for statistical purposes only under the standard categories. For instance, someone who marked “White” plus “Some other race” was counted only as being “White.” The implications of this issue are significant, yet beyond the scope of this article. Nevertheless, this issue definitely needs to be taken into account as the treatment of mixed-race categories for the census evolves.

²¹ We suggest future research investigating the important distinctions respondents (and particularly immigrants) might make regarding terms such as “origin,” “group,”

“ancestry,” or other possible terms we have considered, such as “heritage.”

²² It is worthy of note that the situation is even worse for the small percentage of households that receive both the ten-question census form plus the ACS in the same year (and possibly the same month) since the Hispanic/Latino/Spanish ethnicity question and the race question both appear on each of the forms. Therefore, households receiving both forms have to respond to five overlapping ethnicity/race questions, two of which are exact duplicates except for minor formatting differences.

²³ See also the Associated Press article by Jennifer Kay (2010) on suggestions by some Caribbean American leaders to instruct persons of Caribbean descent how to fill out the census forms and on attempts to lobby the U.S. Congress to add more categories beyond “Black/African American/Negro” to the census forms for Caribbean and Mexican Americans including those of Haitian and/or indigenous descent.

²⁴ See, for instance: Witt and Williams 2003; Williams et al. 2003; Williams and Witt 2004; Kaiser and Ahlén 2005; and Witt-Ehsani 2007. The topic of comparative design results for automated telephone applications is also discussed at an annual “VUI Showdown” panel session at the SpeechTEK conference in New York, such as the 2009 “VUI Showdown: Data for Menu Design” with panelists Jenni McKenzie and Silke Witt-Ehsani and moderator Peter Leppik. A brief description of that panel session can be found at: www.speechtek.com/2009/program.aspx?SessionID=2429.

²⁵ See Jorge del Pinal et al. (2007) for additional examples of how census questionnaire design can affect response data. See also the University of Michigan’s Population Studies Center Web site entitled “Coding of Race in 2000” for a discussion of the complexity of calculating race statistics given the possible category combinations for the Census 2000 race question (www.psc.isr.umich.edu/dis/census/subject/race.html). Changes to the format and structure of the ethnicity and race questions into a single question would

require a new assessment of how to calculate the relevant race and ethnicity population statistics.

²⁶ One example of an interesting and possibly fruitful variation to test would be to include several check boxes under the “person of color” main category for specific race/ethnicity/mixed terms, such as “mixed race,” “Brown,” “trigüeno,” and so on and then provide a fill-in-the-blank for any other “person of color” terms. In theory it would be possible to create a list of such check boxes *a priori* based on terms that have been requested in various studies and discussions. However, we recommend trying at least one version of the form first without such specific subcategories to see what terms people naturally fill in the blank space under “person of color” when *not* presented with an explicit list and to see how often that main category is used even if there are not explicit check boxes associated with it.

²⁷ Examples include (1) a bilingual caller saying “español” to ask for Spanish and the system not hearing this and the rest of the call continuing in English, or (2) the caller defaulting to ask for Spanish because that is their home language but due to dialectal differences the caller would have performed better with the English automated system.

²⁸ S. Lee and T. Yan (2004) hypothesize that the language a person chooses for responding to a survey may significantly impact response behaviors due to ideological differences between the cultures associated with the different languages. Although such differences are beyond the scope of this article, the topic of whether bilingual Hispanics provide statistically significantly different response patterns depending on whether they fill out the English or Spanish census forms is a topic deserving of further research.

²⁹ Some organizations have conducted regional and smaller-scale surveys that include a variety of language-use and attitude questions for education planning, marketing, and other purposes. Examples include: (1) UCLA’s Heritage Language Learner Survey (www.international.ucla.edu/languages/nhlrc/

surveyreport/index.asp); (2) Conexión Marketing’s study of “Hispanic Consumers in the Puget Sound Region” (www.conexion-marketing.com/study_07.htm); and (3) the federally mandated “Home Language Survey” forms under the *No Child Left Behind* legislation to determine English proficiency for children who speak another language at home (see, for example, www.state.me.us/education/esl/home_language_survey_parents.htm or perform an Internet search on the terms “home language survey” and “home language surveys” for sample questionnaires by state and/or school district).

³⁰ See, for example, the U.S. Census Bureau’s “Partner With Us” Web site (<http://2010.census.gov/partners/>; click on “Partners” and “In-Language Materials”).

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Unrepresented: A Blueprint for Solving the Diversity Crisis on Capitol Hill

*Prepared by the Congressional
Hispanic Staff Association*



The Congressional Hispanic Staff Association is an official, nonpartisan, congressional organization that is dedicated to advancing the interests of its members and the Hispanic community at large. Membership includes congressional staffers in the U.S. Senate, U.S. House of Representatives, and Library of Congress.

ABSTRACT

Congressional staffers advise our elected officials on issues affecting all Americans. From negotiating with constituencies to drafting legislative language, staff members play a vital role in the operations, oversight, appropriations, and policy decisions of the legislative branch. According to existing data, the Latino community is largely underrepresented among congressional staff. While Latinos currently make up more than 15 percent of the population in the United States, it is estimated that only 2 percent to 3 percent of senior legislative staff members are Latino. This article outlines possibilities for resolving the lack of adequate representation, especially among higher-level staffers. The article also acknowledges that diversity concerns go beyond just the Latino population and that other minority groups face a similar situation.

INTRODUCTION

Congressional staffers advise our elected officials on issues affecting all Americans. From negotiating with constituencies to drafting legislative language, staff members play a vital role in the operations, oversight, appropriations, and policy decisions of the legislative branch. Because the duties of the legislative branch are so important to our nation, it is crucial that a properly functioning democracy have all of its communities represented so that each has a voice in the process. Unfortunately, the Latino community is not currently represented in a meaningful way among congressional staff. Latinos are almost completely left out of key staff positions and are drastically underrepresented at all staff levels.

This is a crisis that can and should be addressed. Staff turnover on Capitol Hill

tends to be high, and opportunities exist to solve the diversity crisis relatively quickly if leaders recognize this problem and take action. We find it reasonable to set a goal that, by 2020, Latino Capitol Hill staff representation reaches 75 percent of the Latino proportion of the country as a whole. According to an estimate from the U.S. Census Bureau, Latinos were projected to make up 15.5 percent of the population in 2010 (U.S. Census Bureau 2006); therefore, our target by 2020 would be to have at least 11.5 percent of congressional staff be of Latino descent. However, it should be noted that this is a moving target as Latinos are expected to make up an increasingly larger percentage of our population in the future. Therefore, these target numbers will likely increase by 2020 when it is projected that Latinos will comprise 17.8 percent of the U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau 2006).

Our 2020 goal also focuses on senior-level positions. It is important that Latinos are not limited to junior, support, Hispanic outreach, or Spanish-language positions. Therefore, our goal is also to achieve the same 75 percent benchmark (as defined above) in executive-level positions, which are senior positions with a large influence on policy and budget decisions. Many senior-level staffers begin their careers in entry- and junior-level positions. Thus, more Latinos in entry- and junior-level positions today, if offered opportunities to prove themselves and advance, could result in more Latinos in senior-level positions in the future.

Historically, Latinos have been better represented among congressional members' in-district staff. While district staff plays an important role in helping constituents and navigating local politics, policy decisions are usually the domain of

Washington, D.C., staff. Therefore, faced with limited time and resources, this article solely focuses on Washington, D.C., staff. (Note: the terms Latino and Hispanic are used interchangeably throughout this article.)

STATE OF DIVERSITY IN CONGRESS

There is a lack of comprehensive data to assess diversity on the Hill. While Congress requires this data from federal agencies and government contractors, congressional offices are not required to collect or submit such information. However, there is still a wide variety of data available to provide an understanding of the current diversity crisis. For example, in 2007 the *National Journal* conducted a demographic analysis of key aides defined as "Capitol Hill staffers" of U.S. House of Representative and U.S. Senate leaders, congressional committees, key caucuses, and other coalitions (National Journal 2007). Table 1 tracks the Latino representation of these key staff members listed in 2003 and 2007. This data clearly shows Latinos are not at the table when key decisions are being made. In 2007, out of 184 aides interviewed for the analysis only three Latinos were listed among key staff, and one of those was the executive director of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC)—a position one would reasonably expect a Latino to hold. Furthermore, there was absolutely no gain in the representation by Latinos over the four-year period; rather, overall, Latinos actually lost ground.

Roll Call also highlights leading Democratic and Republican staff (Roll Call 2008a; Roll Call 2008b; Roll Call 2009a; Roll Call 2009b; Roll Call 2010). Its list, the Roll Call Fabulous 50, selects staff based on four criteria: (1) mastery,

Table 1 — National Journal Key Congressional Staff

	2003	2007
Total key staff listed by ethnicity	94	184
Latino staff if proportionately represented*	13	28
Actual number of Latino staff	2	3
Percentage of key staff of Latino descent	2.1%	1.6%

Source: National Journal 2007.

*The number of Latino staff if proportionately represented is based on the percentage Latinos make of the total population based on U.S. Census Bureau estimates for 1 July of the appropriate year (U.S. Census Bureau 2006).

Table 2 — Roll Call Fabulous 50 Staff List

	January 2008	September 2008	January 2009	September 2009	January 2010
Total key staff listed	50	50	50	50	50
Latino staff if proportionately represented	8	8	8	8	8
Actual number of Latino staff	0	1	0	0	0

Sources: Roll Call 2008a; Roll Call 2008b; Roll Call 2009a; Roll Call 2009b; Roll Call 2010. With Latino staff calculations by the Congressional Hispanic Staff Association.

for policy and procedural experts; (2) influence, for individuals who drive the agenda, cut the deals, craft legislation, and sway members; (3) spin, for the best communicators who help set the tone and frame the debate; and (4) access, for those in the room when decisions are made. Table 2 demonstrates that few Latinos have ever been featured on *Roll Call's* lists. The latest Roll Call Fabulous 50 was released on 25 January 2010; it didn't include a single Latino (Roll Call 2010). One must go back to 2008 before finding a Latino listed (Roll Call 2008a; Roll Call 2008b).

STATE OF DIVERSITY IN THE SENATE

According to a 2006 *DiversityInc* investigation, only about 6 percent of the 4,100 U.S. Senate employees were people of color, which includes African American,

Asian, and Latino staff (Brown and Lowery 2006, 170). These communities combined represent more than 30 percent of all Americans. This disparity was even more dramatic among senior-level staff, where only 7.6 percent of the approximately 1,000 senior-level staff positions in the Senate were held by people of color. Of that 7.6 percent, only 1.9 percent was held by Latinos (Brown and Lowery 2006, 172). The analysis defined "Senate aides" as "critical decision makers" that are "equivalents of the direct reports to the CEOs of major corporations" (Brown and Lowery 2006, 170). This suggests that an approximately 900 percent increase in Latino senior Senate staff is needed to get to 100 percent equitable levels by 2020.

An independent investigation by the Congressional Hispanic Staff Association (CHSA) found similar results to those of

DiversityInc. Out of the 100 Senate offices we surveyed, one retained a Latino chief of staff and one retained a Latino legislative director. Chief of staff and legislative director are typically two of the three highest staff positions in a Senate office. We were unable to identify a single Latino deputy chief of staff, which typically would be the second-highest staff position, depending on the office structure. Similarly, there was only one Latino committee staff director to be found among the forty such positions leading Senate committees. Table 3 highlights the dismal state of senior-level diversity in the Senate.

STATE OF DIVERSITY IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Table 4 utilizes data from the 2009 House Compensation Study to show the current state of diversity in the House of Representatives (ICF International 2009). The House Compensation Study is a study conducted for the chief administrative officer of the U.S. House of Representatives on compensation, employment, organizational structure, benefits, and other office practices of House member personal offices. The Web-based survey received voluntary responses from 441 House of Representative offices between June 2009 and July 2009 (ICF International 2009, I-1).

The study revealed the highest level of Latino representation was in the scheduler position (9 percent). While scheduler positions are integrally important to a functioning office, these positions are generally not considered to be instrumental to policy formulation, nor are they generally considered to be positions from which to advance to more senior-level positions. The second-highest concentra-

tion of Latinos was in the staff assistant position (7.6 percent). While staff assistants also do important work and are necessary to an office, this is an entry-level position and is the lowest paid, according to the survey data.

The data suggests that the few Latinos on the Hill disproportionately hold junior-level positions and are not reaching higher-level positions with significant policy input. However, the concentration of Latinos in staff assistant positions can give hope for the future. While entry level, these positions are generally the first step for staff to advance up the career ladder to more senior-level positions. The high staff turnover rate and the potential for relatively quick advancement on the Hill are two reasons why our 2020 goal to reach a 75 percent of Latino representation among executive-level positions proportional to the U.S. Latino share of the population is achievable. In addition, the 2009 House Compensation Study reports that less than 6 percent of staff assistants have been in their position for more than three years (ICF International 2009, II-27). The next House Compensation Study should provide us with a better glimpse of the advancement opportunities for Latinos. With more than 83 percent of chiefs of staff expected to be new hires by 2020, there is a distinct opportunity for Latinos to achieve equality by 2020 if efforts are made to facilitate equal opportunity for hiring and advancement.

Is Diversity in the House Improving?

There have been attempts to downplay the disparity and the need for action by claiming diversity is improving and that Latinos are better represented in the House of Representatives now than ever before (Wilson 2009). Our analysis of the

Table 3 — Top Senate Staff Positions for 2009

	Estimated Total Positions	Latino Staff If Proportionately Represented	Actual Number of Latino Staff	Percentage Latino
Chief of staff	100	15	1	1%
Deputy chief of staff	40	6	0	0%
Legislative director	100	15	1	0%
Committee staff director	40	6	1	2.5%
Total	280	42	3	1.1%

Source: Congressional Hispanic Staff Association findings and calculations based on the Latino Leadership Directory 2010 (Latino Leaders Network 2010).

Table 4 — State of Staff Diversity in the House of Representatives for 2009

	Estimated Total Number of Positions	Latino Staff If Proportionately Represented	Actual Number of Latino Staff	Percentage Latino	New Latino Hires Needed for 100% Equality
Chief of staff	440	67	12	2.7%	55
Legislative director	440	67	9	2.1%	58
Press secretary	440	67	31	7.1%	36
Priority legislative assistant	440	67	29	6.7%	38
General legislative assistant	440	67	30	6.8%	37
Scheduler	440	67	39	9.0%	28
Office manager/executive assistant	440	67	19	4.3%	48
Legislative correspondent	440	67	16	3.7%	51
Staff assistant	440	67	33	7.6%	34
Total	3960	603	218	5.6%	385

Source: ICF International 2009, with data extrapolations and calculations by Congressional Hispanic Staff Association based on the Latino Leadership Directory 2010 (Latino Leaders Network 2010), which identified seventeen Latino chiefs of staff, eleven Latino legislative directors, and fourteen communication directors/press secretaries.

House Compensation Study data in Table 5 shows any such improvement to be at a glacial pace (ICF International 2009). For example, if the current pace of growth in Latino chiefs of staff continues, it will take more than 212 years to reach 100 percent equity. And that assumes the Latino population remains at the projected 15.5 percent indefinitely, clearly

a false assumption for our lifetimes (though this article makes no predictions on U.S. demographics for the year 2222).

Furthermore, considering that the U.S. Census Bureau (2007) reports that the percentage of the Latino population rose from 2004 numbers, when Latinos only made up 14.2 percent of the American population (see Table 6), Latinos actually

Table 5 — House Diversity Changes 2004-2009 and Future Implications

	2004	2009	Percentage Point Change	Years Required to Achieve 100% Equality at Current Pace*
Chief of staff	2.4%	2.7%	0.3	212
Legislative director	1.5%	2.1%	0.6	111
Press secretary	5.2%	7.1%	1.9	22
Priority legislative assistant	3.8%	6.7%	2.9	15
General legislative assistant	5.2%	6.8%	1.6	27
Scheduler	3.2%	9.0%	5.8	6
Office manager/executive assistant	4.6%	4.3%	-0.3	—
Legislative correspondent	8.5%	3.7%	-4.8	—
Staff assistant	4.8%	7.6%	2.8	14
Average	4.4%	5.6%	1.2	41

Source: ICF International 2009; Congressional Management Foundation 2004. *Assumes Latinos remain at 15.5 percent of the total U.S. population.

Table 6 — U.S. Latino Population

Year	Percentage of U.S. Population Latino
2004	14.2%
2010 (expected)	15.5%
2020 (expected)	17.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2006; U.S. Census Bureau 2007.

lost ground proportionately in the top-level positions of chief of staff and legislative director. The recent headline of a *Roll Call* article, “House Diversity Changes Little in Six Years,” is in fact accurate by all reasonable standards (Yehle 2010b). The U.S. Census Bureau (2006) estimates that Latinos will grow to 17.8 percent of the American population by 2020. The facts clearly demonstrate that the crisis will not be solved on its own.

CHSA’S BRINGING AMERICA TO THE HILL INITIATIVE

In response to the lack of diversity on Capitol Hill, CHSA launched “Bringing America to the Hill: A Diversity Initiative and Action Plan to Encourage the Hiring of Latino Staff in Congress” in March 2008. This action plan focused on several internal action steps as well as a recommendation for House leaders to create a House diversity office. Some of the results of this initiative include:

- **An online communications strategy**, which includes outreach to Latinos not on the Hill, an e-mail bulletin of available Hill jobs, and an online resume bank accessible to potential congressional office employers. Additionally, CHSA created lists of job e-mail bulletins and articles about job hunting for Latinos aspiring to work on the Hill.

- **A call for House leadership to follow Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid's lead in hiring a human resources diversity adviser** (the Senate leader's efforts are discussed in more detail below). Unfortunately, while conversations are currently under way, no formal action has been taken yet. CHSA continues to advance this recommendation.

- **A CHSA Placement Committee to help potential Latino staffers navigate the hiring process.** This committee was officially formed in January 2009 and has since helped dozens of aspiring Hill staffers by providing resume and cover letter advice, introducing them to key hiring staff, and getting their resume into the hands of the hiring personnel. On 28 May 2009, this committee held an event entitled "Advancing on the Hill: Getting in the Door and Landing that Job," in which three chiefs of staff with more than twenty-five years of combined experience shared their insight on the hiring processes, followed by a chance for aspiring Hill staffers to get their resumes reviewed one-on-one by senior Hill staff. The placement committee has also assembled a robust resume bank of qualified Latinos available for members' use when hiring.

NEW MEMBER HIRING PRACTICES

New members of Congress were identified as primary targets for our efforts to increase diversity, as new members must hire their entire office staff, from the most

junior to the most senior positions. The CHSA Placement Committee was not yet in place as the freshmen class was sworn into office in January 2009, however, the committee was able to target each of the incoming House members who won their seats in special elections in the 111th Congress. Working with House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's staff, CHSA ensured that numerous resumes of qualified Latino candidates from the appropriate state were available. Because they had qualified Latino candidates, and because of their unique situation in hiring for every position in the office, we believe these offices make good indicators of progress.

Table 7 outlines the hiring decisions of several new members. Our intent is not to suggest that any single individual office needs to hire the exact number of staff members that is representative of Latinos in their district. On the contrary, CHSA believes that qualified Latinos should be considered by members even if their district contains very few Latinos or even if their office already has other Latino staff. We would hope that offices hiring Latino staff above their district demographics balance out those hiring less. Table 7 is intended to demonstrate that, in the aggregate, Latinos are not being hired in the numbers they should be, no matter the composition of any particular district.

CHSA applauds Speaker Pelosi's efforts to ensure that the resumes referred by the CHSA Placement Committee are passed on to incoming member offices, and the CHSA Placement Committee will continue to provide these incoming offices with resumes of qualified Latino applicants from the appropriate state. However, the hiring results strongly suggest that additional efforts are needed. While the 10 percent Latino hiring rate is

Table 7 — New Member Hiring

	Latino Percentage of District	D.C. Latino Hires There Should Be Based on District Percentages	Latinos Hired for D.C. Office	Executive-Level Positions Available	Latinos Hired for Executive-Level Positions
Member 1	2.7%	0	0	3	0
Member 2	27.6%	2	1	3	0
Member 3	63.7%	5	2	3	0
Member 4	19.6%	2	1	3	0
Member 5	2.3%	0	0	3	0
Total	23.2%	9	4	15	0

Source and notes: Latino district percentage is from the National Journal’s Almanac of American Politics. Latino hires were based on a CHSA investigation and were confirmed by January phone calls from the Latino Leadership Directory. Executive-level positions are defined by the Congressional Management Foundation. An eight-person Washington, D.C., office is assumed for calculations on how many D.C. Latino hires there should be based on district percentages.

much higher than for Congress as a whole, there was still less than half the number of Latinos hired as merited by their district composition and not a single Latino hired for an executive-level position.

With special elections occurring in spring 2010 in Florida’s 19th district (17.1 percent Latino) and Hawaii’s 1st district (5.6 percent Latino), CHSA continues to collect quality resumes of Latinos from these states and will target these new incoming members in an effort to increase Capitol Hill diversity. Additionally, the state of Massachusetts (8 percent Latino) has a new senator from a January 2010 special election who is currently in the process of fully hiring staff. Because it is such a new office at the time of the writing of this article, that office’s hiring decisions are not included in our data.

CONGRESSIONAL EFFORTS TO INCREASE DIVERSITY

The Congressional Hispanic Caucus officially endorsed CHSA’s internally focused “Bringing America to the Hill” plan in 2008. The CHC has long sought to make Capitol Hill more equitable. In December 2006, the CHC sent a letter to the speaker-elect and committee chair-elects asking for diversity in hiring with a particular focus on getting Latinos into committee-level positions at the start of the new Congress. This correspondence was followed by Speaker-Elect Pelosi sending a similar letter to all the committee chairs. Committee staffing is of particular importance because of the key role that staffers play in the legislative process. Unfortunately, we are unaware of any follow-up actions in regard to the results of these efforts, and we lack the resources to collect the data and fully analyze committee diversity at this time. A further examination on committee diversity is likely to be a focus for the 2011 State of Diversity on the Hill Address to be given by minority staff organizations.

The efforts of the TriCaucus, which is made up of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, Congressional Black Caucus, and Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, were instrumental in getting questions about diversity added to the 2009 House Compensation Survey. Congress has also taken a look at legislative branch agencies, such as the Library of Congress, the Congressional Budget Office, the Capitol Police, and the Architect of the Capitol's office. The Capitol police recently hired its first ever diversity officer (Yehle 2010a).

The TriCaucus has also made an important effort to ensure there is a pipeline of minority candidates with Hill experience by working with nonprofit institutes. Most Latino members of Congress support the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute (CHCI) in efforts to develop a pool of young Latinos from both parties with the experience for congressional jobs. CHCI has an internship and fellowship program that selects promising young Latinos and exposes them to Capitol Hill. Additionally, in 2003, several Republican House Latinos formed and continue to support the Congressional Hispanic Leadership Institute, which also offers Latinos internship and fellowship opportunities.

As alluded to earlier, Senate Majority Leader Reid has taken decisive steps to address this crisis. First, he publicly recognized the lack of diversity outlined statistically in this article. Senator Reid recognized a problem during the Supreme Court nomination hearings of Justice Samuel Alito in 2006 in that the Judiciary Committee staff was completely lacking the diversity that makes America great. After recognizing the lack of diversity, Senator Reid created the Senate Democratic Diversity Initiative to help

recruit and provide qualified minority candidates for positions and took steps to make sure this office was effective by hiring qualified and experienced individuals to run the office and by publicly promoting it. In June 2007, Reid hosted a Democratic caucus policy lunch specifically to emphasize that racial diversity in staffing should become a priority and to ensure that Senators and their offices knew they could use the Senate Democratic Diversity Initiative to obtain resumes of talented minority candidates. Based on conversations with various Senate staff, the Senate Democratic diversity office is utilized by Democratic Senate offices, and employers are using it to fill more senior-level positions. The Senate has a longer turnover time for its senior positions than the House, meaning Latinos at entry-level positions will take longer to obtain the experience and qualifications to move into more senior positions. To compensate for this, Senator Reid also started an internship program specifically designed to get more minorities into Senate jobs.

Democrats in the House of Representatives have held discussions about creating a similar diversity office to help its members. CHSA was invited to participate in one such discussion at the beginning of 2010. However, at the time of this writing there is no confirmed public information to report on the creation of such an office other than that some initial conversations are under way. Hopefully, these discussions will continue and result in actions similar to the efforts by Senate Democrats.

RECOMMENDATIONS

While we applaud the aforementioned efforts, the current absence of diversity among key congressional staff calls for continued efforts to address this crisis. CHSA has the following recommendations for congressional leaders.

- **Create offices for diversity.** Senate Democrats, under Senator Reid, have already taken this step. In 2008, the “Bringing America to the Hill” plan urged the speaker of the House to do likewise. Unfortunately, no such action has yet resulted from this recommendation, despite pressure from several outside advocacy organizations, lobbyists, and members of Congress (Palmer 2006; Wilson 2009; Yachnin 2007). It is our understanding that discussions on this continue, and it is our hope that this article and the inaugural State of Diversity on the Hill address by minority staff organizations will help spur the House to action. Additionally, we believe equality and fairness should be a bipartisan affair and encourage Senate and House Republicans to also adopt such efforts.

- **Include data on ethnicity in all future Senate and House Compensation Studies.** The office of the secretary of the Senate should include ethnic data during its next compensation survey. The last Senate compensation survey released in 2006 did not include data by race or ethnicity. Having this data available by position for the Senate side would be useful in highlighting the progress made in increasing diversity. The survey could include committees and leadership offices. The House Compensation Study has included this data in most of its surveys in the 1990s and early 2000s, including the 2004 House Employment Staff Survey, but stopped in 2006. It was

only through pressure by the TriCaucus that this data was included in the 2009 survey (ICF International 2009). CHSA believes that such efforts should not be necessary and that the chief administrative officer should automatically include such important questions in all future surveys. The House should also consider expanding its future surveys to include committees and leadership offices. Congress requires this data for nearly all of the agencies and federal contracting it oversees (Yehle and Yachnin 2007). Many organizations outside of Congress have an interest in staff diversity. Hill publications like the *National Journal* include demographic information in their profile of top staffers. The Ibarra Strategy Group, a firm headed by the former director of Intergovernmental Affairs under President Bill Clinton, Mickey Ibarra, has a Latino Leadership Directory and routinely calls offices and utilizes its networks to identify Latinos working on the hill (Latino Leaders Network 2010). Additionally, researchers at the University of Texas at San Antonio, led by Walter Wilson, are working on their own analysis of staff diversity in Congress. Their results will be presented in late April 2010 at a meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association in Chicago.

- **Consider the “Rooney Rule” for top-level job vacancies.** Like Capitol Hill today, in 2002 the National Football League (NFL) suffered from a diversity crisis in its coaching positions. Similar to Capitol Hill, hiring in the NFL is controlled by the thirty-two teams individually, each with fierce competitive interests. In Congress, hiring decisions are made individually by nearly 600 different members, committees, and leadership offices. In both the NFL of 2002 and in Congress, an individual team or member

should not be questioned or criticized for any individual hire. But, a clear crisis exists when looking at the 2002 NFL or Congress as a whole. However, unlike on

Latino candidates will be similarly successful on Capitol Hill, if provided the opportunity.

❖❖❖ *Unfortunately, the Latino community is not currently represented in a meaningful way among congressional staff. Latinos are almost completely left out of key staff positions and are drastically underrepresented at all staff levels.*

Capitol Hill, the NFL took decisive action to address its diversity crisis, instituting what is known as the Rooney Rule (Proxmire 2009). The Rooney Rule simply made it mandatory for teams to interview at a least one minority among their numerous candidates for head coaching opportunities. Even though no team has ever publicly stated that the Rooney Rule contributed to the hiring of a minority, the rule had an immediate positive impact in increasing the number of minority coaches. In June 2009, the NFL expanded the rule to include all general manager jobs and equivalent front-office positions. In a released statement about the expansion of the rule, the NFL said it “recognizes that this process has worked well in the context of head coaches, and that clubs have deservedly received considerable positive recognition for their efforts in this respect.” Finally, it should be noted that minority coaches hired in the past decade have been remarkably successful. Scoreboards and league standings offer clear measures of performance, and there has been no drop-off in performance with teams hiring minority coaches. In fact, a minority coach took his team to the Super Bowl in 2010 in his first year of coaching. CHSA believes that qualified

CONCLUSION

The lack of diversity on Capitol Hill is a crisis that demands immediate action. Latinos make up more than one in every six Americans yet are largely absent in senior-level positions on Capitol Hill. This is an injustice that should cause concern for people of all colors and creeds. However, it is a situation that can be addressed and solved over the coming decade by following the steps outlined in this article. It will not be easy, but by following this blueprint, Capitol Hill can better reflect America by 2020.

To achieve this goal, CHSA will strengthen and expand its internal efforts, in part by forming partnerships with other staff associations and relevant organizations. But this will not be enough. Congressional leaders must recognize the crisis and take steps, as Majority Leader Reid has done, to address the crisis. First, other congressional leaders should emulate Reid in creating a diversity office to help congressional offices access a pool of qualified candidates—and they must also give this office their full support to make it work effectively. Second, congressional leaders need to make sure that ethnic data is included on all future congressional

compensation surveys. Finally, congressional leaders should look at the NFL as a potential model and consider implementing a variation of the Rooney Rule for executive-level positions.

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Medical Marijuana Won't Ease the Pain: Mexico's Seven Deadly Questions

by Roger Pardo-Maurer



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The U.S. strategic nightmare in the Western Hemisphere would be the rise of a regime with the desperation of Haiti, the hostility of Cuba, the cash of Venezuela, the capabilities of Brazil, and the proximity of Mexico—and in the future that country could actually be Mexico. Such a sea change would not happen overnight. After all, one out of ten Mexicans now lives in the United States; the personal and cultural bonds of our countries are stronger and more sympathetic than ever before; and much willful ignorance on both sides of the border has been dispelled. But it is time for Americans to start worrying that during the last decade Mexico's political culture and governing institutions have become ossified and paralytic and may be getting too sclerotic even to identify the country's long-term challenges, let alone build a consensus to address them.

Mexico's 2006 presidential elections were a harbinger of just how close we are to the tipping point for an alternative future for North America. In a three-way race, the leftist-populist Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) candidate Andrés Manuel López Obrador lost by a razor-thin 0.5% to President Felipe Calderón of the center-right National Action Party (PAN). López Obrador's post-election antics—declaring himself the “legitimate president” and deliberately attempting to make the country ungovernable—confirmed the belief of many of the two-thirds of Mexicans who did not vote for him that, had he been elected, he would have governed in the style of disastrous, authoritarian populism championed by Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez.

Mexico's 2009 midterm elections produced big gains for the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) at the expense

of both PAN and PRD. Despite garnering 49 percent of seats in the lower house, the fact that the victorious PRI won less than 37 percent of the popular vote shows how fractured Mexico's political landscape really is. Even though the Mexican electorate brought López Obrador back to earth, the frustration, anxiety, and resentment of the poor and middle classes remain. It is far from clear that the PRI will provide an outlet for their needs.

A COMPLEX NATION

No U.S. administration can afford to “ignore” Mexico or does in actuality; it is really our media that ignores the region. The danger with such blinkered attention is that it fixates on the latest spectacular crisis at the expense of all else. Mexico is not just a border: it is a multidimensional nation, with breadth and depth and a tough southern border of its own. We must not let our relationship with Mexico get mired in a reductionist narrative about drugs, as it got mired in reductionist narratives about terrorism and illegal immigration after September 11.

U.S. policy discussions about Mexico have been colored by media coverage, congressional hearings, and reports from various U.S. agencies (including an influential long-range study from the U.S. Joint Forces Command, coupled with a disturbing report by former U.S. drug czar Gen. Barry McCaffrey), which frame the issue of whether the onslaught of the cartels might make Mexico a “failed state” within the next decade.

Such warnings are not to be taken lightly. Mexico has a tough fight ahead, and it may well take a decade to turn the country around. But there is no lack of brave and honorable Mexicans to do the job. The odds are that Mexico will not become a “failed state” on account of narcoterrorists. However, in a country

with intractable geography such as Mexico's, an unreliable police force, and as many as 500,000 people involved in the drug trade, a meagerly equipped army of 200,000 is simply not enough. The Calderón administration's strategy, echoing that of Colombia under President Alvaro Uribe Velez, is to expand and upgrade the security forces while dismembering the four or five largest cartels into fifty or so weak and isolated units. There is much the United States can and should do to help. The proposed initial U.S. contribution of \$1.4 billion contemplated for the Merida Initiative, a counter-drug program for Mexico and Central America, is not enough (for Mexico, let alone the region) and should be seen as a down payment. But, it will go far toward making the security forces more effective.

However, the selection of our strategic ends is just as important as the means. If the U.S. objective is to help a friendly democracy eliminate the threat that drug lords and narcoterrorists pose to the state, we have a broad array of successful experience to draw on; Colombia is a case in point. If, on the other hand, our goal is to “stop the flow of drugs,” we might as well wave the white flag now. No government has ever learned how to do that; not even the United States in our own maximum security prisons.¹

The Obama administration's de facto decision to relax federal prosecutions of medical marijuana cultivators simply recognized the reality that the U.S. judicial system is too overburdened to deal with this issue, regardless of whether you think the measure is a good idea or not. During a 2009 visit by the author to the El Paso-Ciudad Juárez border, U.S. law enforcement agents along the border complained that even when they manage to capture a drug “mule,” if that individual has less than a 500-pound bale of

marijuana, they are hard-pressed to find a U.S. prosecutor who feels it is worth the effort to take on the case.² A similar de facto decriminalization of marijuana and small-scale possession of certain other drugs is already well under way in Mexico, with widespread support from the political establishment, including people such as former Mexican President Vicente Fox.³

This policy shift has simply too many variables—particularly at the local level—for its overall strategic impact to be predictable. One effect might be to shift incentives so that Mexican cartels grow more marijuana for local delivery in the United States, pitting their plantations directly against local, small-scale cultivators. There is no way to distinguish between “legal” and “illegal” marijuana. Partial decriminalization may unwittingly end up giving us the worst of both worlds, by drawing drug violence across the border into the United States, much as the successful U.S. clampdown on precursors to methamphetamine pushed production of that drug from myriad local labs to large, illegal factories, aggravating an already vicious turf war among the various cartels in Mexico (and, as a by-product, stoking anti-immigrant resentment in the United States). Indeed, in anticipation of such a relaxation of the prosecution policy, the Mexican cartels have been steadily moving cultivation north. Even before the policy shift, California newspapers were reporting that local marijuana growers in Mendocino County, traditionally one of the most horticulturally inclined jurisdictions in the nation, were urging local law enforcement to crack down on larger-scale operators working for Mexican cartels who were quite literally making the neighborhood “go to pot.”⁴

Our current policies are steering toward a strategically sound distinction between the sovereign threat that drug lords pose to the state and the public health threat that drugs pose to society. Mexico is making painful but steady progress against the drug lords as a threat to the state and is not likely to become a “failed state” due to security dysfunctions. The illegal drug trade may—perversely—even be a stabilizing factor during the current global economic downturn. Nevertheless, during what both countries must approach with caution as an experimental and transitional phase, policy makers and security officials on both sides of the border must be flexible and prepared to adapt to rapidly shifting and unpredictable local, regional, and binational security challenges.

TAKING A LONG-TERM VIEW

The spectacle of the cartels and their grisly internecine violence should not distract us from broader structural challenges to state and society in Mexico, especially since virtually all these challenges conceal tremendous opportunities, attainable through enhanced cooperation between our countries. The cartels are more a symptom than a cause; they are strong because the state is weak. We must look beyond the short-term crises, including the current economic crisis, to deep-seated trends that threaten to undermine the integrity and cohesiveness of the Mexican state. In light of some of these trends, it is appropriate to ask whether Mexico in the next generation could become a dysfunctional state even if there were no drug problem at all.

The big issues on which Mexico needs to make significant progress, but is not doing so, are roughly captured by the questions below. Collectively and cumulatively these issues will decide

Mexico's destiny as a nation—whether it can assure a decent and rising standard of living to its people, maintain a coherent political system, preserve the integrity of the state, and assert effective sovereignty throughout its entire national territory.

• **Oil: What will Mexico do when it runs out of oil?** Despite two decades of wrenching structural change by Mexico's government, oil revenue still accounts for 40 percent of the federal budget. Mexico's proven oil fields (including the Cantarell field, until recently the second-most productive in the world) are in "terminal decline," with yields dropping by up to 14 percent annually. The U.S. Energy Information Administration projects that Mexico will become a net oil importer as early as 2017, an extraordinary reversal for the second-largest supplier of oil to the United States (Clemente 2008). Even if the legislature passed enabling legislation to crack the sector open to foreign investment tomorrow, it will take years to bear fruit.

• **Water: What will Mexico do when it runs out of water?** North and central Mexico are already hard-pressed by the demands of its cities and industry. Furthermore, global climate change is expected to make this region considerably more arid than it is today.⁵ Water shortages are already cause for squabbling among the border states and with the United States (over treaty rights to the intensively used Colorado River, for example).

• **Competitiveness: Does Mexico have a viable strategy to remain competitive in global markets, particularly vis-à-vis China, India, Brazil, and other large emerging markets?** There is no clear answer to what such a strategy would look like, especially as U.S. sectors that were the basis of Mexico's NAFTA boom,

such as apparel and the automotive industry, shift elsewhere or fade.

• **Old people: How will Mexico support its rapidly aging population?** Mexico's dramatic declines in fertility are among the steepest in the world and the steepest among the major Latin nations. Inconceivable as it may seem today, the workforce is projected to start shrinking after 2030. There will be enormous social and fiscal ramifications as each Mexican worker has to support an increasing number of dependents and as Mexico's traditional extended family structure becomes leaner. The worker-dependent ratio will continue to rise until around 2025 (more workers for each dependent), but after that the aging population will cause this to shift rapidly into reverse (more dependents for each worker). Mexico has only about ten years to come up with a viable strategy for how to pay for its senior citizens—a blink of an eye "as we know from our own U.S. debates on Social Security reform.

• **Young people: If "exporting" Mexico's unemployed and underemployed young people to the United States is no longer an option, where will they go and what will they do?** Not in contradiction with what was set forth in the previous point, for the next ten to fifteen years Mexico will still have a bulging young population. The traditional method of dealing with them, which led to an extraordinary 15 percent of Mexico's population coming to the United States, is now unviable; but the social and political impact, within Mexico, of more effective enforcement of U.S. immigration law is unpredictable and may well boomerang in the form of social and political instability.

• **Regionalism: How will Mexico manage the widening gap between its impoverished, youthful, and heavily indigenous southern states and the rest of the**

country? This is a perennial theme in Mexican history, the stuff of revolutions, driven by demographics and the country's shattered geography. The population dynamics of Mexico's center and north are very different from those of southern states such as Oaxaca and Chiapas. These areas, and the neighboring republics of Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador, are the demographic "hot spots" of the American continent, with large cohorts (sometimes exceeding 50 percent of the population) under the age of fifteen. The demographic patterns of this vast subregion, which has been nicknamed "Mayastán," is typically associated with conflict and instability and similar to what one finds in places such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Somalia (Hayutin 2005; Central Intelligence Agency 2001).

• **Indigenous issues: Has Mexico really found the formula to satisfy the dignity and aspirations of its indigenous peoples?** Mexicans can be legitimately proud of their progress in this area. Yet, despite conspicuous advances in the national standard of living, the poverty rates and marginalization of indigenous communities remain at unacceptable levels and provide fertile ground for populist-revanchist indigenous leaders in the style of President Evo Morales of Bolivia.

AN INTERTWINED FUTURE

These questions will define Mexico's agenda in the twenty-first century. Like it or not, ready or not, that agenda will in no small measure also be ours. With this in mind, a quick quiz is in now order. By the turning point of the Iraq War, in late 2006, which country, after the United States and Great Britain, had lost the most of its citizens in combat in Iraq?

The answer is: Mexico.⁶ This refers not to U.S. citizens of Mexican origin, but to Mexican citizens who are legal U.S. residents and serve in the U.S. armed forces. If ever proof was needed of how our two peoples have become intertwined in ways we cannot begin to imagine, one could hardly do better than to point to the fact that Mexico, or rather, the people of Mexico, in effect were an invisible member of the Coalition.

The United States is now the second-largest Spanish-speaking country in the world, after Mexico (and just ahead of Colombia), and a Spanish-language cultural powerhouse in its own right. The U.S. Census Bureau reports that Hispanics accounted for half the births of U.S. citizens between 2001 and 2007, with a majority of those being of Mexican origin or ancestry. The list goes on and on. History will look on Barack Obama not just as our first Black president, but as our first Brown president—the first to bridge the divide from the Black/White racial politics of our past to the post-racial, multi-ethnic politics of a true nation of immigrants in which one out of five has a foreign-born parent. The irony of this transcendent moment for African Americans is that Barack Obama's meteoric rise to power coincided precisely with the moment when Hispanics overtook them as the nation's largest minority. Hispanics are projected to make up to 20 percent of the U.S. electorate by 2020.

Since the Spanish-American War, the grand strategy of the United States has been to rely on stability in the Western Hemisphere in order to pursue its interests in Europe and Asia. By comparison with places like Europe, Russia, China, and India, we should count ourselves lucky to have neighbors who

❖❖❖ *U.S. policy makers and culture shapers need to see the opportunities behind the challenges and look beyond the short-term linear fact of the border.*

are as simpatico as Mexico and points south. Our good luck will not last forever if not matched with hard work and intelligent thinking about hard choices. U.S. policy makers and culture shapers need to see the opportunities behind the challenges and look beyond the short-term linear fact of the border and think in depth of the region encompassing Mexico, Central America, and Colombia as a single strategic system of 200,000,000 people, linked to us by history, geography, trade, cultural and religious roots, and, increasingly, blood kinship.

At this moment in time, in part due to the accidents of history but also due to a tenacity and sacrifice in recent generations that was nothing short of one of the great epics of the human story, the people of this area have a greater sympathy with the United States than at any moment in their past. This is not a moment to be squandered. That would be poor service to the memory of Lance Corporal José Gutiérrez, a homeless orphan from Central America who came to us, through Mexico, by train, bus, and foot and found his home in the U.S. Marine Corps, and who was—the Pentagon has not been clear about this—either the first or second U.S. casualty of the Iraq War. He was granted U.S. citizenship, posthumously, on 2 April 2003.⁷ Blood is indeed thicker than water, or at least thicker than the Rio Grande.

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ENDNOTES

¹ Among recent examples one could point to the Maryland penitentiary system, where inmates feasted on lobster and champagne, all the while running their drug-trafficking operations.

² The result, predictably, has been a surge in 499-pound shipments—someone must be enjoying the ride. From personal interviews with various U.S. Border Patrol, Drug Enforcement Agency, and local law enforcement officers, El Paso, Texas, January 2009.

³ Personal conversation with former Mexican President Vicente Fox, July 2009.

⁴ This has been amply covered by California newspapers; see the *San Francisco Chronicle* for excellent coverage.

⁵ See reports of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. For a range of climate and security-related scenarios in North America see Schwartz and Randall 2003.

⁶ According to a 2006 unpublished report from the U.S. Department of Defense.

⁷ The first two casualties of the war, on 21 March 2003, were two U.S. Marines, Lt. Shane Childers and Lance Corporal José Gutiérrez. The Department of Defense has never been forthcoming as to which loss occurred first.

Community (Dis)empowerment: The Caño Martín Peña Project

by *Christine Letts*

Professor Christine Letts is the Senior Associate Dean for Executive Education and the Rita E. Hauser Senior Lecturer in the Practice of Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

The Caño Martín Peña was once a navigable waterway through the center of San Juan, Puerto Rico, connecting two lagoons. Impoverished squatters who migrated to San Juan from rural areas during the first half of the twentieth century settled along the caño (canal) and built their houses among mangroves. Over time, the caño closed in with debris and waste. More than 3,000 structures were located where there was no sewer system, contributing to environmental degradation and hazardous health conditions when flooding occurred every time it rained.

With a plan to dredge the Caño in the works, the Puerto Rico Highway Department embarked upon a new strategy to engage the poor communities that would be most affected. Department leaders did this as a result of very bad experiences with several projects in the

past where community opposition effectively stopped progress.

Between 2002 and 2004, highway employees enlisted leadership among the eight poor communities (20,000 residents) that border the caño and engaged in more than 700 meetings and activities, which resulted in a comprehensive development plan and land use plan for the area. At a recent presentation, some community leaders were crystal clear about their motivation to participate: they wanted to protect their right to relocate within the area rather than allow gentrification to push them out of the 200 acres that would be upgraded as a result of the dredging. While the communities affected are among the poorest in Puerto Rico, their employment level is higher than the average.

In 2004, a law was passed creating two bodies that would implement the plans that were decided upon: the ENLACE Corporation (the administrative body) and the Caño Martín Peña Community Land Trust (CMP-CLT). The CMP-CLT was a new threshold in Puerto Rican public policy, transferring more than 200 acres of public land next to the “Golden Mile” (San Juan’s financial district) to a trust held by the residents. The trust is a tool for economic development that benefits the residents as it provides for tenure on the land. Over the next two years another participatory process engaged all the residents in establishing the regulations that govern the land trust and the rights of the residents with regard to holding or transferring their property.

Despite the newly elected governor voicing support for the land trust during the electoral process, in 2009 the mayor of San Juan and the governor got legislation

passed that transferred the land back to the municipality of San Juan and enables the municipality to grant individual land ownership to the residents, eliminating the land trust and creating divisive incentives within the community. This action is consistent with the potential for gentrification, as individuals will have an incentive to sell to the highest bidders, which the land trust had prevented. In June 2009, the CMP-CLT, backed by the G-8 (group of eight communities), filed a civil rights suit against the government in the Federal District Court of Puerto Rico, which is currently pending an appeals decision from the U.S. Appellate Court for the First Circuit. In November 2009, the government of Puerto Rico, the municipality of San Juan, and three government corporations countersued in the Puerto Rico Court of San Juan.

The latest political events notwithstanding, this effort is another chapter in a strong history of the success of community organizing in the development of land trusts. The transfer of power to enable poor communities to manage their own destiny is a change that we should all support. This change takes work, dedication, and, most of all, time and the tenacity to stick with the process until communities are prepared to take over.

PICTORIAL ESSAY

Graduate students from the University of Puerto Rico, the Centro de Estudios Avanzados de Puerto Rico y el Caribe, and several Harvard University schools had the opportunity to visit the Caño and talk to community leaders as part of the 2010 Puerto Rico Winter Institute, which is a collaborative effort between the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies at Harvard University and the University of Puerto Rico. The institute seeks to stimulate research and intellectual exchange by bringing students and faculty from both institutions together for a two-week program in San Juan. What follows is a pictorial essay of the experiences of participants at the Caño. All photographs were taken by Taylor Chapman, a master in public policy candidate at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.



“Politicians in Puerto Rico love to talk about empowerment. That is, until communities like those near the Caño Martín Peña are truly empowered and projects such as ENLACE become dangerous for those in the establishment.”

— Luis Villanueva, University of Puerto Rico Graduate School of Planning



“The Teodoro Moscoso bridge spans the San José lagoon, which is linked to the bay of San Juan by ‘el caño.’ Named after the creator of Operation Bootstrap, Puerto Rico’s industrialization project, the bridge is a symbol of the economic changes that brought hundreds of people from the countryside to the city in the mid-twentieth century, people that settled on the wetlands that once surrounded Martín Peña. However, for the communities in the Caño, this economic advancement became a daily reminder of their worsening living conditions.”

— Julio C. Verdejo, University of Puerto Rico Graduate School of Planning



“Traveling down this luxurious, vacation-home-filled estuary before visiting the Caño Martín Peña offered three unique perspectives. First, it showed the magnitude of inequality in Puerto Rico. Second, it gave some perspective on how beautiful a well-managed caño and its waterfront could look. And third, paradoxically, it offered a warning as to what might happen if ENLACE is destroyed: generations of tradition and dozens of family homes swept aside for ostentatious gentrification.”

— Taylor Chapman, John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University



“The bitter reality is that life in the Caño Martín Peña cannot be put on hold while policy makers and government officials develop a solution. People continue to live in poverty, surrounded by environmental erosion and damage, as they face an uncertain future that rests in the hands of external forces. We must understand the responsibility we have toward the recipients of our policies; development projects like this remind us that we should keep working towards making a difference.”

— Lindsey Robinson, John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University



“The saddest aspect of neglect is the message that it sends to a community’s youth. It is these young souls that are more attune to its significance, to the idea that society does not care about them because they are not given the facilities they deserve, to the understanding that there is something wrong when they live in such harsh conditions while people down the street can live in luxury. If the United States and Puerto Rico are to become a truly inclusive society, then we must ensure that no child in America has to wrestle with these uncomfortable thoughts.”

— Manuel Buenrostro, John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University



“This reminds me of the reason I decided to come to the Kennedy School. The work ENLACE is doing is creating substantial and sustainable change. They are not only improving a community, they are changing lives for generations.”

— Sorbrique “Sorby” Grant, John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University



“With higher participation rates and lower unemployment than the average for the island as a whole, residents of the Caño Martín Peña have strived to establish their own businesses. Vacated by residents and owners, abandoned structures add to the depiction of urban plight. The challenge, something not specific to this community alone, is how to develop small businesses as a tool for economic progress.”

— Julio C. Verdejo, University of Puerto Rico Graduate School of Planning



“We see these scenes all too often around the world, where governments turn their eyes away from poor communities, allowing slum-like conditions to emerge, roads to go unpaved, and garbage to go uncollected. The lack of proper sanitation and drainage services in the Caño Martín Peña are an unhealthy and dehumanizing environment for Puerto Rican families to live in. The political will to clean and rebuild this community should be in response to the organizing efforts of the people who live there, not to make way for rich developers.”

— Alicia J. McGregor, Harvard University
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences



“The contrast of waste and mud with a children’s toy is stark. Vestiges of a thriving waterway are now filled with the culminating product of a community lacking sewage and garbage collection. There is no nature here. I see a swamp, a dump, trash, and what is. I dream of what can be.”

— Matthew Weber, Harvard University Graduate
School of Education

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Cervical Cancer and Latinas: A Preventable Disease

by *Rebecca Medina*

Rebecca Medina is a former Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute/Edward Roybal Public Health Fellow. She worked for the office of Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard (CA-34) where she was tasked with legislative projects for the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Health Task Force and was instrumental in crafting legislation for health issues on maternity care, teenage pregnancy prevention, and cervical cancer in Latino women. Medina holds a master's degree in public health from Loma Linda University, School of Public Health, and a bachelor's degree in health science and health care administration from California State University, Long Beach. Prior to her work on the hill, she served as an assistant project coordinator for the National Council of La Raza/California State University Long Beach Center for Latino Community Health, Evaluation, and Leadership Training. She helped to coordinate health programs for underserved Latino communities through research and education. Her work became central in the development of a white paper, entitled "Critical Disparities in Mental Health." Medina also worked for AltaMed Health Services. She worked to identify the defining features of women and the disparities that impact the use of medical care and social services in Los Angeles.

More recently she worked for the San Bernardino Health Department, Maternal, Child, and Adolescent Health where she helped to develop a labor induction education curriculum on the risks of non-medically indicated inductions to providers, health educators, and women. Her research background includes community-based participatory research in mental health and HIV/AIDS, and her interests include women's health and maternal/child health. She hopes to continue to foster an ongoing commitment to improve the health conditions of underserved Latino communities.

INTRODUCTION

While no race or ethnicity is an exception to ill health, the interplay of Western medicine and Latino culture destabilizes the health dynamics of populations and therefore contributes to the widened health disparities that persist in Latinas today (Kraut 1994). Latinas suffer from cervical cancer at an inordinate rate compared to women of other racial and ethnic backgrounds. To understand the state of Latinas and cervical cancer, we must consider the larger context of cultures, traditions, and the impact of acculturation, generational status, and modes of learning regarding health education. Further, while this commentary is not limited to the experiences of undocumented Latinas, it does shed light on the plight of thousands of undocumented Latinas, their experiences migrating to the United States, and the impact on their health status.

This commentary outlines national data on cervical cancer among Latinas living in the United States to better understand which socioeconomic and cultural challenges exist in shaping policy that

can positively impact the health outcomes of Latinas. The commentary addresses five primary topics:

1. Disparity by age, race/ethnicity, and health outcomes for Latinas
2. Current level of risk behaviors
3. Screening utilization and socioeconomic and cultural influences
4. Financial and programmatic commitment by the federal government
5. Legislative opportunities in the 111th Congress

In conclusion, the commentary outlines policy recommendations to adequately address the health needs of Latinas.

SOURCES OF CERVICAL CANCER DISPARITY

Cancer imposes great pain, burden, and cost on American society. In the United States, approximately 4,000 women die of cervical cancer annually with Latina deaths representing a proportion nearly 40 percent higher than that of non-Latino women (Rhodes n.d.). Tragically, Latinas are also likely to be diagnosed with cervical cancer at a late stage, resulting in higher rates of delayed treatment (Intercultural Cancer Council 2009).

As Latinas continue to change the demographic profile of the United States, there is abundant data on the health care needs and cancer control challenges related to this segment of the population.

An empirical question remains as to why Latinas are more likely to be diagnosed with cervical cancer compared with women of other race/ethnic groups. While no single response precisely answers this question, the disparity in cervical cancer rates for Latinas may be attributed to several factors, including: differences in cultural beliefs; socioeconomic status; lack of access to quality

health care services; limited educational attainment; and differences in rates of Pap smear screening (Watts et al. 2009; Intercultural Cancer Council 2009).

Research has shown that language proficiency, cultural preference, legal status, acculturation, and social networking appear to be some of the constant health barriers for this population. If these are not addressed in a timely manner, Latinas will suffer from disproportionate and inefficient health services, making it increasingly difficult to obtain optimal care (Zambrana et al. 1999, 468). The timeliness of care, especially for a population that has been historically poorly served by our medical system, provides an important indicator of the health status of Latinas.

While screening is positively associated with younger age, higher income, greater educational attainment, health insurance, and usual source of care, Latinas are neglected from the health care system because they present a reverse profile (Zambrana et al. 1999, 470). Research shows that compared with other racial/ethnic groups, Latinas are less likely to have visited a physician in the last year, less likely to know cervical cancer warning signs, more likely to be unemployed or employed in low-wage, service-sector jobs, and generally have lower median annual incomes (Zambrana et al. 1999, 470). Not enough Latinas are receiving preventive services, and too many are likely to navigate a health system that is inadequate and ill-prepared to meet their unique health needs.

Understanding the etiology of cervical cancer is key in light of Latinas' cultural beliefs and attitudes about screening utilization behaviors. The human papillomavirus (HPV) is a virus that

❖❖❖ *Not enough Latinas are receiving preventive services, and too many are likely to navigate a health system that is inadequate and ill-prepared to meet their unique health needs.*

can spread through sexual contact, and almost a dozen strains of HPV can infect a woman's cervix (National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health 2007). It has been widely noted that HPV strains 16 and 18 have been found in 70 percent of cervical cancers (National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health 2007; Sanderson et al. 2009, 1795). Because cervical cancer is a slow-growing cancer and symptoms may go unnoticed until the cancer has spread, the disease may be difficult to detect (Mayo Clinic 2009). The difficulty of detection is amplified by the limited understanding of the disease amongst Latinas.

As a result, this population is more likely to delay seeking medical care, thus increasing its risk for cervical cancer. In fact, Latinas with low literacy are more likely to feel disempowered during an encounter with their provider, which leads to limited participation in the medical decision-making process. Additionally, while obtaining a pap test is the best means of preventing the development of cervical cancer, it may be a daunting experience for Latinas, whose cultural beliefs about discussing reproductive organs with a provider may discourage them from seeking care (Fernandez et al. 2009). Latinas value modesty, and obtaining a pap test may be considered too intimate and therefore uncomfortable (Saleh 2006, 2). Stronger efforts are needed to facilitate communication between Latinas and their

providers, and educational materials should be culturally competent and easily understood.

One of the most effective ways to improve communication between patients and providers is through community outreach. For example, *promotoras* (community health liaisons) are Latina cancer survivors who are trained to be health educators in their own communities. The *promotora* module has great potential to reduce cervical cancer in Latinas since *promotoras* successfully encourage Latinas to get screened, share information, and conduct frequent follow-up reminders. Rather than conceptualizing *promotoras* as a process that enables community liaisons to deliver particular messages to Latinas—a hard-to-reach population—consider the *promotora* module a process of human development, reaching individuals one at a time. By understanding the health concerns and behaviors of Latinas, *promotoras* are able to empower women to get screened to accomplish their goal. In many instances, the resources that are missing are not monetary but rather a support community. Such focus and importance on primary prevention draws national attention for the need to reevaluate cervical cancer prevention messages for Latinas, ensuring these efforts are not short-lived.

PUBLIC POLICY AND CERVICAL CANCER IN LATINAS

In 2008, the American Cancer Society reported that approximately \$93.2 billion was associated with direct medical costs nationwide for all cancers, while only slightly more than \$2 million has been spent on treatment for cervical cancer (American Cancer Society 2009; Bhattacharya 2005). These figures are especially disheartening since cervical cancer is a highly preventable disease. Increasingly, cervical cancer is becoming a disease among low-income women who have limited access to basic health care. Although cervical cancer can be prevented using an HPV vaccine, it is challenging for low-income women to finance a series of HPV shots expected to cost \$300 to \$500 (Hunt et al. 2009, 309).

To improve access to cervical cancer screenings, Congress passed the Breast and Cervical Cancer Mortality Prevention Act of 1990 (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2010). This program guided the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to set up a nationwide program—the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program—to provide screening and diagnostic services and meet the demands of low-income women (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2010). Congress passed a similar bill in 2000—the Breast and Cervical Cancer Prevention and Treatment Act—that currently funds all fifty states, the District of Columbia, five U.S. territories, and twelve American Indian tribes. Though this program has proven to be important because it provides full-range cervical cancer screening services across racial/ethnic groups, it fails to adequately address the health needs of minority communities, especially Latinas. Reaching

priority populations such as Latinas may be difficult and costly, requiring outreach efforts and ongoing collaboration with communities to find women who are rarely screened or never screened (Cabrera 2003, 86).

As the Latino population in the United States increases, a stronger public health system with additional investments in prevention, especially for diseases such as cervical cancer, is needed. Ideally, a reformed health care system would emphasize prevention within the purview of cultural and linguistic factors to effectively address the health needs of Latinas.

The current health care system in the United States cannot continue to operate as an immediate curative response system. During the past several years, minimal consideration was given to public health. However, the Obama administration and the 111th Congress recognize the importance of advancing public health; during the 2008 campaign Barack Obama's health plan acknowledged that "our health care system has become a disease care system, and the time for change is well overdue" (Slone 2008, 25). As efforts to reform our nation's health care system continue to develop, we must seize the opportunity to craft a system that centers on disease prevention and fosters culture and health.

At the time of this writing, Congress had not yet passed historic health care reform legislation or made developments to amend provisions in the recently passed Senate bill, H.R. 3590. The House of Representatives had passed a health bill that featured a provision to reduce health disparities that gained little attention but gave equal importance and opportunity to improve the health status and well-

being of minority groups, including Latinas. Tucked in the manager's amendment (a document designed to modify or add new language to a bill) was a provision that would increase attention on eliminating health disparities by codifying the Office of Minority Health and establishing Minority Health offices across the programs in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Institutionalizing attention to minority health would prioritize quality improvement for Latinas. The House bill would fundamentally improve surveillance and research to allocate funds to grant programs focused on minority populations, including Latinas. The government's leadership role in reducing health disparities could drive programs to improve coordination efforts of screening and preventive health services. Though the final health legislation will be contingent upon Congress' decision to reconcile the House or Senate versions of a bill, minority health advocates recognize the language in the House health bill provides steps toward lowering rates of cervical cancer and improving the health status of Latinas.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations provide a broad framework to guide federal policy makers in efforts to support and serve Latinas enduring a preventable disease.

- **Strengthen the public health system** to increase the number of culturally and linguistically competent medical providers. The public health issues facing Latinas must be understood if effective programs are to be developed. For example, substantial efforts are needed to increase the pool of providers to address the health care needs as well as the access

to and use of cervical cancer screening. Improved continued public education and community outreach is needed to promote screening behaviors in a way that is understood by Latinas, including having programs tailored to their responses and lifestyles.

- **Preserve and expand the reach of federally funded programs to Latinas.** Latinas are likely to participate in screening service programs if recommended by a medical provider at appropriate intervals. Federally funded programs have shown limitations in reducing cervical cancer rates, which signals the need to streamline such programs specific to this population. For example, underlying sociocultural, linguistic, and economic factors should be considered to understand the full extent of burden of disease for Latinas. Gaining insight and understanding about cervical cancer, particularly from the perspective of a Latina, can facilitate the development of programs that may be useful to Latina health care providers. This would increase the number of Medicare-eligible recipients to increase preventive health services and screening rates.

- **Incorporation of nontraditional *promotora* projects** would increase the efficiency and appropriateness of cervical cancer programs. *Promotoras* are trained and well-respected community health liaisons that help connect Latinas to the health care system. Using this model of care will personalize education for Latinas and will improve the knowledge and attitudes about cervical cancer.

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Latinos in the Great Depression

by Adam J. Gonzales, Editor-in-Chief, Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy, 2010 master in public administration candidate, John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, and 2010 master of business administration candidate, MIT Sloan School of Management

Savvy students and practitioners of public policy frequently look to history to inform decision making. Data from the past can shine light on demographic trends, demystify foreign affairs, and identify best (and worst) government practices. Historical observation is particularly enlightening in times of crisis; indeed, in the current economic recession, federal policy makers have used lessons from the Great Depression to illuminate a path to brighter times.

But history offers more than just facts and figures. The four stories in this section show that we may also look to history to inspire personal strength, ingenuity, and resolve in times of great uncertainty. The collapse of the stock market in 1929 marked not only the beginning of the most severe economic crisis of the twentieth century, but it also triggered a tidal wave of tribulation that challenged American families of all races, colors, and creeds. Yet, the pain of the economic destruction was only matched

by the power of American families to pull together, plow ahead, and overcome.

Latinos were no exception. In fact, as these stories show, Hispanic families were often hardest-hit by the economic misadventures of the 1930s. But the Great Depression, for most Latino communities, signaled not the defeat and withdrawal of a newly arrived immigrant population, but, rather, announced that Latinos were here to stay—and they would rely on the love of family to propel them through the storm.

These stories are meant not to belittle the frustration, fear, and pain of our current recession. Rather, they should instill pride for the generations that came before us, hope for ourselves and the future, and a sense of responsibility for the generations that will follow. With this in mind, the *Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy* proudly presents the stories of Theresa Perez, Iris Pereles Suarez, Apolinar Salazar Arteaga, and the family of Jose Porfirio Abeyta and Carmen Sabina Sandoval.

Theresa Perez: Memories of Growing Up in Manassa, Colorado, During the Depression

by Patricia Perez-Haidinger, M.P.A. '91



Theresa Perez in Manassa, Colorado, third from the left in the front row.

The ninth of twenty-two children born to Adelaida Chacon and Augustin DeHerrera, Theresa Perez, my mother, recalls her early years growing up in the small agricultural town of Manassa, Colorado, during the Depression years. Winters were long and hard, and her parents had many mouths to feed, yet Theresa says, “I don’t remember ever being hungry. We ate good food that we grew ourselves that, today, would be a luxury.” While she and her siblings slept

three or four to a bed, she says she never thought she was poor.

The family had a small plot of land, and “everybody worked hard in summer to prepare for winter, even the children. We had to harvest and can the food we grew.” Her mother canned meat and stored vegetables, such as beets, rutabagas, turnips, and carrots, in the kitchen “cooler” (a sandbox in the subfloor of the kitchen) where they would stay fresh through the winter months. Her father

always had chickens, cows, rabbits, and pigs so they were supplied with milk, meat, and eggs. Having lost his leg to gangrene, however, Augustin relied on his wit and humor to get the work done in the field. On crutches, he would spread uprooted bean vines on tarps to dry and then call on the children to jump on the layers of tarps, as if jumping on a bed. “We had a great time and didn’t realize we were helping our father harvest the beans. When he lifted the tarps, we were always surprised to see all the beans collected at the bottom,” Theresa recalls warmly.

As was common at the time, families exchanged goods with one another or with stores and other suppliers. Theresa remembers her father taking sacks of beans to the mill in exchange for flour. She also recalls, as a young girl, carefully taking an egg from the chicken coop down to the local store where they would

visiting, family members got jobs in the shipyards there and, eventually, decided to move the rest of the family out to California. While the family had lived well off their land, the enticement of work in California convinced them to leave their home in Colorado.

❖❖❖ *“I don’t remember ever being hungry. We ate good food that we grew ourselves that, today, would be a luxury.”*

give her a piece of candy in exchange. Relatives who came to visit from New Mexico would bring tomatoes and apples with them to sell in the valley where these goods were not available. Beyond that, her parents got by with simple resourcefulness and ingenuity, such as making underwear out of flour sacks.

With the events of World War II in the early 1940s, Theresa’s older brother joined the Navy and was stationed in San Pedro, California, where he was visited by his mother and a couple of siblings before setting out to sea. While

Iris Pereles Suarez: Family Bonds Prevail in Bayamon, Puerto Rico

by Iris Pereles Suarez



I had a big family and was the youngest of eight siblings—three boys and five girls. I was born in 1925, but it was not until the following year that I was registered with the county. My father had become very ill that same year and had died. He had been the only breadwinner in the family.

Those who knew my father described him as a tall, Black man, elegant, with Greek features. He ran the main horse racing track in Puerto Rico's second-largest city at the time. He was respected and loved by everyone. My mother was in charge

of the household, and she took care of the children. She was White, of medium height, pretty, and naturally graceful.

We lived in a rented house in the town of Bayamon, Puerto Rico, but after my father's death we had to find a new home that we could afford. During that time we lived day to day, at times accepting help from my mother's side of the family and at other times depending on the mercy of others to survive.

As the living situation got worse we moved into a room in Cataño, which was a slum in a swamp. The area was starting to fill in with small and simple wooden and cardboard shacks. We were all poor, hungry, and in need of basic necessities. We used oil lamps at night and drank swamp water that we cooked in a fire box. We were able to find blue crabs, and at an early age I learned how to dig them out of their holes. I would also gather roots that my mother would cook. Looking back now I understand why all our dinners were so salty. My mother would add extra salt to the food, making us thirsty and always drinking water, so we would not feel hunger pains.

I'll never forget the time when a wealthy Puerto Rican couple from New York visited my mother. They were sent by a neighbor who was moved by what my family was going through. They wanted

During the 1930s my mother began working in a tobacco factory. I remember her drinking coffee and eating bread very early in the morning before walking miles to get to work on time.

I thank God for the blessings I have had throughout the years. Today, at eighty-four years old, I can affirm that even though the adversities were great and we were poor, we had love.

❖❖❖ *My mother listened with tears in her eyes. Then, she sat me on her lap and said, “No, thank you, but I cannot give my little girl away.”*

my mother to give me to them. They promised to send me to school and give me a better future. They said I would return to visit the family every year. My mother listened with tears in her eyes. Then, she sat me on her lap and said, “No, thank you, but I cannot give my little girl away.” My features reminded her of my father, whom she still loved so much.

Apolinar Salazar Arteaga: Learning to Walk Again in Industrial Chicago

by *Andrea Cacho*



Apolinar Salazar Arteaga was born on 10 March 1929 and passed away on 15 October 2009. My grandpa was a true survivor and never adapted to the extravagant/excessive lifestyle Americans developed after the Great Depression. His family consisted of his father, Augustin Arteaga, his mother, Adalberta Salazar Arteaga, and his six siblings, Maria, Jovita, Augustin, Jose, Zenon, and Ventura. They lived in a three-story house on 88th and Burley that is no longer standing on the South Side of Chicago. He believed he was lucky to be a baby and toddler in the early 1930s because his mother did not cut too far back on most of his needs. His father worked at U.S. Steel, and his mother was a housewife. Their diet consisted mainly of rice, beans, and tortillas. He said he vaguely remem-

bers eating meat and fruit as if it happened only a few times a year.

He told me that his father, Augustin, once won eight chicks in a bet over a handball competition at Calumet Park. In order to keep the chicks a secret and lessen the risk of them being stolen, my great grandfather kept them in the basement, and it was my grandpa's "job" to feed them. These chickens provided them with eggs and, eventually, meat. His mother was also able to barter the eggs for milk when necessary.

His older sister, Jovita, got married very young to a man named Larry Flores. Larry entering the family was a blessing. He was several years older than my grandfather's eldest sibling and he took a responsible role. Eventually, my great grandfather was only able to work two to three days a week due to cutbacks. Jovita and Larry rented the top floor from my great grandparents and paid rent to help the family meet its needs. At some point, my great grandparents couldn't afford electricity, and the power was shut off. Larry cut a hole in the ceiling from the third floor and hung a light bulb down to my great grandparents' one-room apartment.

As a child in 1937, my grandfather contracted spinal meningitis. His family was unable to afford any treatment and was told that he must be quarantined due to the contagious nature of the disease. He was put in a bedroom and lived in darkness for an unknown amount of time. Miraculously, his body overcame

❖❖❖ *Having survived a disease that everyone believed would kill him, he was grateful to be alive. To feel cold and to feel hunger was a blessing and a reminder that his body was working.*

the disease, and he taught himself to crawl and then to walk again. However, the experience left him severely deaf, permanently affecting his life and leaving him a “special needs” person.

By the end of the Depression, my grandfather followed in his brothers’ footsteps and left home for weeks at a time in order to help alleviate the burden on their parents. There were short-term opportunities to make a little bit of money downtown, which the brothers would bring back to their parents. My grandfather said that he could make it from 88th up to 12th Street, eating at salvation kitchens and sleeping in public. He said he could sleep in hotel hallways and lobbies and be left alone. He actually loved being out there. Having survived a disease that everyone believed would kill him, he was grateful to be alive. To feel cold and to feel hunger was a blessing and a reminder that his body was working. He was young and strong and only grew stronger for all the things he had been through. He eventually became a “pretty decent” boxer and went on to serve as a soldier in the U.S. Army.

Jose Porfirio Abeyta and Carmen Sabina Sandoval: Desperate Situation, Desperate Measures in Carrizo Canyon, New Mexico

by Victor A. Abeyta



This piece is excerpted from Victor A. Abeyta's book *Carrizo: Portrait of a New Mexican Family* (BookSurge, 2005).

The decade of the 1930s was particularly hard on my parents and their children. Adding to their devastating loss to "La Nevada" [the blizzard of winter, 1931-1932], the effect of typhoid fever on their health, the Great Depression that gripped the United States and the mass migration of people, they found themselves without money or the means to generate income. My parents were not the only ones affected and most of these families simply picked up and moved out, leaving all they had worked for behind. Regrettably, there was no one to record and publicize the hardship and deprivation that rained down on these forgotten people. Nor was there any single entity ready to come to their aid. Livestock lost all cash value, and everyday commodities like sugar and coffee became impossible to acquire on the open market. As the economy

worsened, the people in Carrizo canyon became even more isolated. Cash for any type of purchase was unavailable and the homesteaders depended on barter for their survival. When barter dried up, even the hardest souls began the exodus, many opting for a move to Albuquerque, or far off California where jobs were believed to be as plentiful as oranges on the trees. Most of the Hispanic families departed for California, never to return. They put down roots in places such as Los Angeles, San Francisco, Vallejo, and other cities and towns whose names evoked nostalgia, but were Hispanic in name only. There they took whatever jobs were available for unskilled laborers, most with little or no English to back them in an English-speaking world. But the work was appreciated and they remained, taking up their place in their adopted state with an eye on the future.

In the mid-1930s my parents and my mother's brother, Ramon, went into the business of producing moonshine.

According to my mother, their involvement in the production of *mula*, moonshine, had its genesis in those terrible hardships and setbacks I have described. The word *mula* probably derived from the phrase, “*patada de mula*,” kick of a mule. Everyone who has worked around mules knows they have a fearsomely strong kick. “*Mula*” referred to all bootleg whiskey distilled clandestinely.

It is not difficult to provide an explanation of the “why” of the endeavor, especially when one considers the dire economic straits our parents found themselves in at this time in their lives. Having endured terrific losses to bad weather, they were now facing the loss of their land for back taxes. . . . With cash money unavailable, they weighed their options. One would be simply to abandon the homestead, as many had done, and move to the city. The other would be to make an attempt at saving the homestead by finding a way to generate income. . . . In effect, a desperate situation called for a desperate measure.

❖❖❖ *My parents were not the only ones affected and most of these families simply picked up and moved out, leaving all they had worked for behind.*

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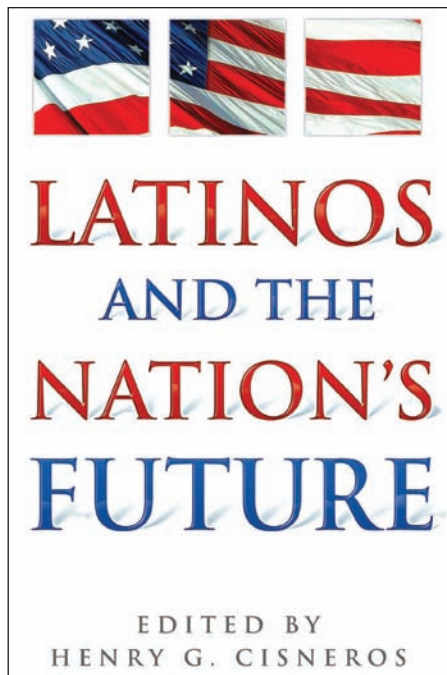
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The Interweaving of the United States and the Hispanic Community: A Review of Latinos and the Nation's Future

by Henry G. Cisneros (ed.)
(Arte Público Press, 2009)

Reviewed by Kenneth C. Burt



Kenneth C. Burt, M.P.A. '84, is the political director of the California Federation of Teachers and a visiting scholar at the University of California, Berkeley. The author of *The Search for a Civic Voice: California Latino Politics*, Burt has authored chapters in five anthologies, an encyclopedia entry, and academic articles relating to Latino politics, labor, and the Cold War. He has started a blog focusing on national Latino political history since the 1930s. For more information, visit www.KennethBurt.com.

“The same things are said today of Puerto Ricans and Mexicans that were once said of Irish, Italians, Germans and Jews: ‘They’ll just never adjust; they can’t learn the language; they won’t be absorbed.’” So wrote former U.S. President John F. Kennedy some five decades ago in *A Nation of Immigrants*. The sixteen contributors to *Latinos and the Nation’s Future* share President Kennedy’s assumption that immigrants make good Americans. On one level the authors seek to refute the present generation of nativists; on another they seek to proscribe a path forward in the subjects of politics and policy, business and labor, and primary and secondary education, as well as capital formation, housing, and health care. But this anthology has a far more significant and overarching message: the dramatic growth of the Latino community—which, as cited in the book, is projected to increase to 25 percent of the national population in 2050—means that the economic, social, and civic health of the United States as a whole is increasingly intertwined with that of the Hispanic community.

Henry Cisneros, former San Antonio mayor, cabinet secretary in the Clinton administration, and businessman, edited this timely book, which succeeds as both

a scholarly tome and a practical guide for policy makers. He demonstrates how rapidly the process of integration is occurring in his introduction and opening chapter. According to Cisneros, “the flaw in the arguments of [Harvard] Professor [Samuel] Huntington and others who fear Latino separatism is that they are insufficiently respectful of the strength of American culture to create an irresistible magnet for full integration.” In this, Cisneros is both idealistic and practical. He articulates the need for society to facilitate “the process of integration” while recognizing that “integration into American life requires the intense personal commitments of motivated people.”

The chapters that follow span an array of topics by many well-known individuals. An overview of each is provided below.

Janet Murguía, president and CEO of the National Council of La Raza (NCLR), notes in the foreword that a hundred years ago there was a network of institutions with a mission of helping immigrants adapt and adjust. By contrast, today's new arrivals are largely left on their own to navigate life. This raises the question: What should be done to assist Latinos and immigrants in the United States?

Nicolás Kanellos's essay, “The Latino Presence: Some Historical Background,” is one of my favorites because he showcases Hispanic influence in the New World that was more extensive than many people understand. He also discusses early labor leaders, important because of the proletarian nature of most Latino communities.

Raúl Yzaguirre, former NCLR executive who now serves as U.S. ambassador to the Dominican Republic, begins with the Spanish influence on Latino-

mainstream relations and goes on to examine the marginalization of Latinos by English-speaking Americans and more recent civil rights struggles.

In “Becoming American—The Latino Way,” former journalist (now immigration advocate) Tamar Jacoby posits a new lens to understand Latino naturalization patterns by borrowing a metaphor from Albert Maslow's “hierarchy of needs.”

University of Southern California Professor Harry P. Pachon contributes a fine essay, “Increasing Hispanic Mobility into the Middle Class.” He stresses that “the acquisition of educational capital is undoubtedly the most common means of such movement,” while also emphasizing the importance of home ownership.

Businesswoman Aída M. Álvarez, former director of the Small Business Administration under President Bill Clinton, examines the dynamic nature of entrepreneurship in the Latino community as well as the high rate of self-employment.

Building on Pachon's emphasis on education, former Clinton education adviser Sarita E. Brown prescribes how institutions can increase the rate of higher education success. She also examines a number of successful efforts by colleges and universities with large Latino populations.

Florida activist and former Democratic congressional candidate Joe Garcia examines the emergence of Latinos as a political force in the aftermath of the massive immigration-related protests of 2006 to 2007. He stresses that in states like Florida Hispanic voters cannot be seen as reliable supporters of either party.

Advertising executive Lionel Sosa served as adviser to former Presidents Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush, George W. Bush, and a number of other

Republican political figures. He asserts that Latino values are Republican values.

Journalist Sergio Muñoz Bata argues that Mexican Americans should make closer U.S. relations with Mexico a political imperative in the same way that Cubans, Jews, and Greeks have done successfully in the context of U.S. foreign policy. The international journalist notes that Puerto Ricans have had mixed success in this effort.

UCLA School of Public Affairs Professor Leobardo F. Estrada and University of Southern California Annenberg School for Communication Professor Roberto Suro provide complementary looks into attitudes, demographics, and trends among various Latino subgroups. Suro previously served as the founding director of the Pew Hispanic Center.

Health and housing—two pressing needs within the Hispanic community—are discussed by nationally recognized experts Dr. Elena V. Rios, past president of the National Hispanic Medical Association, and Saul N. Ramírez Jr., head of the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials.

Ernesto Cortés pens the concluding essay. A national leader in the Industrial Areas Foundation, the longtime community organizer reflects on education and community action. Cortés stresses the need for more conversations and community-school interactions as the foundation for Latino student and adult learning.

While the multiple Hispanic experiences are each unique in a number of aspects, they share characteristics with each other as well as with other immigrants in search of the middle-class life that defines the American Dream. Taken together, the essays featured in *Latinos and the Nation's Future* provide a starting point for new and more purposeful policy conversations both within the diverse Latino community and, equally important, between Latinos and non-Latinos.

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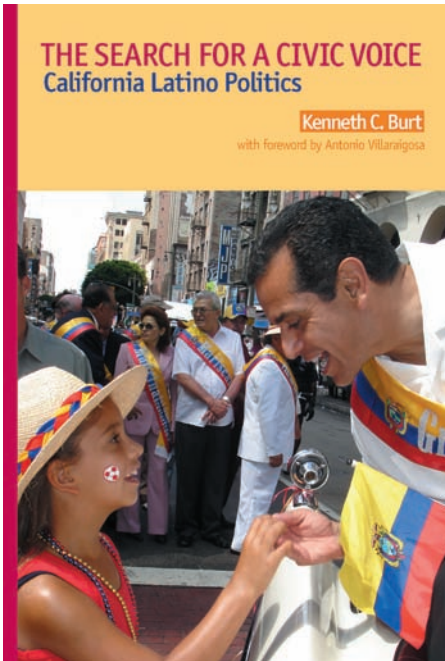
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An Overdue Examination of Latino Politics in California:

A Review of *The Search for a Civic Voice: California Latino Politics*

by *Kenneth C. Burt*
(Regina Books, 2007)

Reviewed by *Henry A.J. Ramos*



Henry A.J. Ramos (M.P.A. '85) is founding editor of the *Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy* and a member of the journal's

national advisory board. He is a consultant to leading private foundations, an executive book editor affiliated with the University of Houston's Arte Publico Press, and a member of the California Community Colleges Board of Governors.

It is ironic, given California's historic significance in American politics and the size of its Latino population, that so relatively few books have meaningfully examined the evolution of Latino politics in the state and the impacts of growing Latino involvement in California political life on national political leadership and policy. Kenneth C. Burt's *The Search for a Civic Voice: California Latino Politics* helps substantially to fill this void.

Indeed, Burt's comprehensive book (more than 350 pages in length) establishes itself as a seminal contribution to the literature. It does so for the breadth of its coverage, the unique insights it provides drawing often on little known, but fascinating, facts, and the author's remarkable capacity to synthesize the various epochs of Latino politics into a coherent narrative that helps the reader piece together otherwise seemingly disconnected developments in the trajectory of Latino public life.

The book covers leadership and developments from the late 1930s through the present, with a particular focus on the critically important fifty-year history dating from 1938, with the rise of the First National Congress of Mexican and Spanish Speaking Peoples of the United States (El Congreso) in Los Angeles, to 1978 and the gubernatorial administration of former California Governor Edmund G. (Jerry) Brown Jr., which led to the landmark California Agricultural Labor Relations Act and the rise of the conservative Reagan revolution

that still informs much of the nation's political culture.

One of Burt's central theses, which he firmly establishes in his book, is that "modern" California Latino politics actually began not with the renowned and popularly invoked farm labor movement led by César Chávez but rather with the civic- and labor-oriented efforts of Latino leaders of the 1930s, often working in tandem with Jewish, African American, and progressive Anglo leaders. These efforts in turn were advanced in later years by groundbreaking civic and political leaders. These included Edward Roybal, former Los Angeles city council member and California congressman; Henry López, the Harvard-educated 1958 California statewide political candidate; James Carlos McCormick, Kennedy campaign and presidential aide who led the hugely effective *Vive Kennedy!* effort that helped to elevate Latino political visibility onto the national stage; and Herman Gallegos, the San Francisco Bay Area-based founding president of the National Council of La Raza.

As suggested earlier, a key by-product of formative Latino community political strategy based on highly limited political representation was the necessity of creative coalition building with other key elements of the body politic seeking needed reforms to address their shared interests. Burt chronicles resulting Latino partnerships with not only other racial and ethnic groups to achieve common aims in California, but also collaborations with leading labor and religious leaders, as well as more enlightened mainstream politicians to gain power and influence change.

A culminating and instructive victory resulting from such strategic coalition building, not widely recalled today, was

the 1961 passage of a Non-Citizens Old Age Pension measure that then Community Service Organization (CSO) leader Dolores Huerta helped to shepherd through the state legislature. Through successful organizing involving support from labor, religious, and progressive leaders across the state, Latino leaders like Huerta were able to persuade both the California assembly and senate—neither of which at the time had a single Latino sitting member—to approve the extension of retirement benefits to qualifying rural and urban noncitizens. Former California Governor Pat Brown signed the bill into law. By any measure, such a victory was epic; and it is difficult even today to fully comprehend the incredible odds Huerta and her colleagues faced in achieving such a victory.

On this note, another of Burt's important organizing insights in his book is his acknowledgement that women played a much more significant leadership role in key chapters of Latino political life than most observers have recognized. Leaders like Luisa Moreno, founder of *El Congreso*, Maria Duran and Hope Mendoza of the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union, and Huerta, the early CSO and United Farm Workers organizer, all contributed singularly to the advancement of Latino political empowerment in California.

More generally, Burt's analysis shows how early formative efforts by California Latino and Latina leaders to gain influence and status in the state and national Democratic Party, along with substantial demographic growth in the Latino population of California and other key states, ultimately pressed Republican leaders to also incorporate Latino concerns, beginning with former President Richard Nixon and extending to former President Ronald Reagan. Through this process of

Latino integration into the major political parties, Latino leaders were able to, in turn, garner important policy and representational concessions from both parties leading to the present day's political landscape in which Latino leadership in California is much more aligned with the Latino community's robust share of the state's population. Indeed, four of the last six speakers of the California Assembly have been Latinos, and presently more than forty California cities and municipalities are governed by Latino mayors, including Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, who is also a former assembly speaker.

The Search for a Civic Voice: California Latino Politics is a comprehensively researched and well-written recount of essential and often new information about the Latino political journey and contribution to public life in California and the nation. It is worthy and indeed essential reading for all students of Latino political life, as well as more general readers who wish to inform themselves of the origins of contemporary Latino political advancement.



LATINO LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE

PREPARING TO LEAD: AN INITIATIVE FOR NEXT GENERATION LATINO LEADERSHIP

It is estimated that the Latino community will double in size over the next 40 years and will comprise more than 30% of the United States population by 2050. To help develop a cadre of next generation leaders from and for this community, the Center for Public Leadership (CPL) at the Harvard Kennedy School (HKS) is establishing the Latino Leadership Initiative (LLI), which will host its first class of young leaders in June 2010.

Program Support

The Initiative, currently in its planning phase, has been made possible by a generous donation of seed funding by Entravision Communications Corporation, and by its Chairman and CEO, Walter Ulloa. Funding for the launch and long-term sustainability of this new program is key to its success. Pledges to support the program over its initial three years would be formally acknowledged on the Center's website and in marketing publications.

For more information about the Latino Leadership Initiative, please contact Dario Collado, Program Manager, at (617) 496-0280 or dario_collado@hks.harvard.edu.

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In Memoriam: Celebrating the Legacy of Senator Edward “Ted” Kennedy



Photo: Martha Stewart

by Manuel Buenrostro, Director of Board Relations, Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy, and 2010 master in public policy candidate, John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University

As the “Lion of the Senate,” Edward M. Kennedy dedicated his life to fighting for those in need. Indeed, his work on civil rights, education, immigration reform, labor, and health care has touched the lives of countless Latinos across America.

Amongst his many accomplishments, Senator Kennedy’s passion for fairness informed his efforts to strengthen the legal immigration system. His first legislative victory was the Immigration Act of 1965, which replaced the national

origin quota system with a system of priority based on skills and family relationships. Since then, he successfully helped to obtain legal status for undocumented workers, addressed discrimination of immigrant laborers, and helped increase family immigration. More recently, Senator Kennedy introduced a bipartisan comprehensive immigration reform bill to fix the nation’s broken immigration system and provide a path to citizenship for immigrants working in the country.

Fairness has also been central to Senator Kennedy’s work in civil rights, education, health care, and labor. As a member of the Judiciary Committee in 1982, he sponsored the Voting Rights Act Amendment, leading to a significant increase in minority representation nationwide. He was also a main sponsor of the Voting Rights Language Assistance Act, which provided language assistance during the voting process to Latinos, Asian Americans, and Native Americans with limited English skills. Kennedy also led the fight to ensure high quality education for all, championed for quality, affordable health care, and sustained efforts to increase the minimum wage sixteen times during his Senate career.

As the third longest serving member in the history of the United States Senate, he has left an unforgettable mark on U.S. history. We will surely miss his energy and ability to work across the aisle to get things done for the American people. As the *Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy* reflects upon his life and legacy, we celebrate his accomplishment and consider the work yet to be done. In Senator Kennedy’s own words: “The work goes on, the cause endures, the hope still lives and the dreams shall never die.”

