

# INTERCULTURALISM: Hispanics

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Project of A' Class of High School

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## I. Introduction

### A. Interculturalism

Interculturalism refers to support for cross-cultural dialogue and challenging self-segregation tendencies within cultures. Interculturalism involves moving beyond mere passive acceptance of a multicultural fact of multiple cultures effectively existing in a society and instead promotes dialogue and interaction between cultures. Interculturalism has arisen in response to criticisms of existing policies of multiculturalism, such as criticisms that such policies had failed to create inclusion of different cultures within society, but instead have divided society by legitimizing segregated separate communities that have isolated themselves and accentuated their specificity. It is based on the recognition of both differences and similarities between cultures. It has addressed the risk of the creation of absolute relativism within postmodernity and in multiculturalism. Philosopher Martha Nussbaum in her work *Cultivating Humanity*, describes interculturalism as involving "the recognition of common human needs across cultures and of dissonance and critical dialogue within cultures" and that interculturalists "reject the claim of identity politics that only members of a particular group have the ability to understand the perspective of that group".

Interculturalism has both supporters and opponents amongst people who endorse multiculturalism. Gerald Delanty views interculturalism as capable of incorporating multiculturalism within it. In contrast Nussbaum views interculturalism as distinct from multiculturalism and notes that several humanities professors have preferred interculturalism over multiculturalism because they view multiculturalism as being "associated with relativism and identity politics".

The United Nations' agency UNESCO adopted the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions in 2005 that declares support for interculturality. In Germany all universities are required to have a section on intercultural competence in their social work programs, that involves students being able to be open to listen and communicate with people of different cultural backgrounds, have knowledge of the backgrounds of cultural groups, knowledge of existing stereotypes and prejudices involving cultural groups, and other criteria. Salman Cheema, the Head of Marketing and Communications of the British Council, in an article titled "From Multiculturalism to Interculturalism - A British perspective", spoke of an event co-hosted by the British Council and Canada's Institute for Research on Public Policy (IRPP) in Montreal, Quebec, Canada on April 11, 2013, interculturalist advocate Phil Wood declared that multiculturalism has faced serious problems that need to be resolved through interculturalism, and rejected those opponents of multiculturalism who seek to restore a pre-multiculturalist monoculturalist society. Several days later in Montreal, the New Democratic Party of Canada (NDP) declared support for interculturalism in the preamble of its constitution adopted its federal convention held in Montreal on April 14, 2013.

### B. Summary

Hispanics constitute a large group who migrated to America. They affect Americans in culture. They left their countries for various social, political and financial reasons. Mainly, they migrate to North Central America. From 1800 until today, the immigration of Hispanics is very intense. They migrate either legally or illegally. The Hispanics are influenced by the American culture and vice versa. How-

ever, they still have their own worldview that is very interesting. For all these reasons, we are attracted to the Hispanics and we have decided to focus upon their research.

## II. Descent of Hispanics

Like African-Americans, Hispanics (Latinos) make up about one-eighth of the U.S. population. Although they generally share Spanish as a second (and sometimes first) language, Hispanics are hardly a monolithic group. Latinos are people of “Latin-American” descent. Widespread usage of the term “Hispanic” dates back to the 1970s, when the Census asked individuals to self-identify as Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central/South American or “other Hispanic.”

Latin America has a very diverse population with many ethnic groups and different ancestries. Only in three countries, do the Amerindians make up the majority of the population. This is the case of Peru, Guatemala and Bolivia. In the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries there was a flow of Iberian emigrants who left for Latin America. Portuguese left for Brazil and Spaniards left for the rest of the vast region. Of the European immigrants, men greatly outnumbered women and many married natives. This resulted in a mixing of the Amerindians and Europeans and today their descendants are known as mestizos. Even Latin Americans who are considered “European” usually have some native ancestry. Today, mestizos make up the majority of Latin America's population. Many of the African slaves in Latin America mixed with the Europeans and their descendants (known as Mulattoes) make up the majority of the population in some countries, such as the Dominican Republic, and large percentages in Brazil, Colombia, etc. Mixes between the Blacks and Amerindians also occurred, and their descendants are known as Zambos. Many Latin American countries also have a substantial tri-racial population, which ancestry is a mix of Amerindians, Europeans and Africans. Large numbers of European immigrants arrived in Latin America in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, most of them settling in the Southern Cone (Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, and southern Brazil). Nowadays the Southern Cone has a majority of people of largely European descent and in all more than 80% of Latin America's European population, which is mostly descended from five groups of immigrants: Italians, Spaniards, Portuguese, Germans.

## III. Explaining Questions

### A. Who are the Hispanics?

#### 1. Mexican

Three-fifths, are of Mexican origin—some descended from settlers in portions of the United States that were once part of Mexico (Texas, Arizona, New Mexico, and California), others legal and illegal migrants from across the loosely guarded Mexico-U.S. border. The greater opportunities and higher living standards in the United States have long attracted immigrants from Mexico and Central America. At the 2010 Census, there were 319,263 Mexican Americans living in New York City. Mexicans are the fastest growing group of Hispanic population.

#### 2. Puerto Rican

Puerto Ricans are American citizens by virtue of the island commonwealth's association with the United States. New York City has the largest Puerto Rican population outside of Puerto Rico. The first group of Puerto Ricans moved to New York in the mid-19th century, when Puerto Rico was a Spanish colony and its people Spanish subjects. The following wave did so after the Spanish-American War of 1898. The largest wave of migration came in the 1950s, in what became known as "The Great Migration"; as a result, more than a million Puerto Ricans once called New York City home. Presently the Puerto Rican population is around 800,000. Puerto Ricans now make up about 10% of the U.S. Latino population.

### 3. Dominican

Immigration records of Dominicans in the United States date from the late 19th century, and New York City has had a Dominican community since the 1980s. From the 1960s onward, after the fall of the Rafael Trujillo military regime, large waves of migration have thoroughly nationalized the Dominican Republic, metaphorically blurring its frontier with the United States. Areas with high a concentration of Dominicans are in Washington Heights, Corona, and certain areas in the Bronx.

### 4. Ecuadorian

In 2009, it was estimated that 211,378 Ecuadorian Americans lived in New York City, representing 8.9% of the city's Hispanic population. They are the fourth largest sub-group of Hispanics.

### 5. Colombian

Colombians have come in small numbers to New York City since the 1960s. 75% of Colombians in New York City live in Queens, specifically in Jackson Heights, Corona, Elmhurst and Murray Hill.

### 6. Salvadoran

Since 1990, the Salvadoran population has been growing very rapidly in New York City. More than 50% of Salvadorans live in Queens. Many Salvadorans reside in the Bronx as well. There are also pockets of Salvadorans in Brooklyn and in East Harlem, Manhattan.

### 7. Cubans

Quite different, though also Spanish-speaking, are the Cubans who fled Fidel Castro's communist revolution of 1959 and their descendants. Their social and political attitudes differ significantly from those of Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans, though this distinction was lessened by an influx of 120,000 Cuban refugees in the 1980s, known as the Mariel immigrants.

## B. Where do they immigrate?

### 1. USA

#### H Arizona

- h Guadalupe, AZ
- h South Phoenix
- h South Tucson, AZ

#### H California

- h South Gate, CA
- h South Los Angeles



- H Finland
- H France
- H Germany
- H Greece
- H Italy
- H Netherlands
- H Norway
- H Sweden
- H United Kingdom

**3. CANADA**

- H Ontario
- H Quebec
- H Alberta
- H British Columbia
- H Manitoba
- H Saskatchewan
- H Nova Scotia
- H New Brunswick
- H Prince Edward Island
- H Newfoundland and Labrador
- H Yukon
- H Northwest Territories
- H Nunavut

**4. POLYNESIA**

- H Philippines
- H Easter Islands
- H Northern Mariana Islands
- H Palau

**5. AFRICA**

- H Western Sahara

**C. When did Hispanics start immigrating?**

When	Who	Where
1492	Christopher Columbus	from Spain to Mexico
1535	Hernan Cortes	to California
1540 - 1542	Francisco Vazquez de Coronado	from Spain
1610	Spanish	from Spain

1778 - 1783	Spanish	from Malaga & Canarian Isl. to Louisiana
1910	Maxicans	from Mexico
1917	Puerto Ricans	from Puerto Rico
1959	Fidel Castro	from Cuba

**D. The Characteristics of Hispanic Immigration**

Immigration to the United States has gone through many different phases. The latest phase, which covers the years since the 1960s, is characterized by a sharp shift in immigration source countries from Europe to Latin America and Asia. Hispanics make up the largest share of new arrivals. Nearly half of all foreign-born persons currently living in the U.S. came from Mexico, Central America, South America, or the Spanish-speaking Caribbean countries. Table 2 provides detailed figures for 2005. Over 30% of foreign-born Americans are natives of Mexico. This is a very high share for one single country. The concentration of the sources of immigration has fueled fears that Hispanics will establish a permanent parallel culture in the United States rather than assimilate into the dominant culture. Recall, again, Huntington’s words at the start of the chapter. Many of those who expect Mexican and other Hispanic immigrants to eventually assimilate like all other immigrant groups have done in the past nevertheless still fear that the massive inflow of people from one single foreign country will substantially change American culture.

It is interesting to ask why reactions to Hispanic immigration are so much less favorable than reactions to recent immigration from Asia. Asian immigration to the U.S. does not seem to generate the same emotional response among the native U.S. population that Hispanic immigration does. This is surprising because Asian immigration to the U.S. has grown just as fast as immigration from Hispanic countries. Perhaps Asian immigration seems less threatening because its sources are spread evenly among several distinctive cultures. For example, the Philippines, India, China, Vietnam, and South Korea each account for between 3 and 4.5% of foreign-born Americans. Another possible factor is that a greater percentage of Asian immigrants are highly educated professionals while the great majority of Hispanic immigrants are laborers with less than high school education.

Another reason that Hispanic immigration may generate more openly expressed concerns is that it has been highly concentrated in a few states such as California, New York, Florida, and Texas. This geographic concentration effectively amplifies the cultural influence of immigrants in those areas. This is not to say that all Hispanic immigration to these states is from the same countries; Mexican immigrants favor California and Texas, while immigrants from Caribbean countries such as Cuba and the Dominican Republic most often settled in Florida and New York, respectively. Central Americans have favored California. Also, in recent years Hispanic immigrants have increasingly settled in Southern and Midwestern states, where food processing and other manufacturing are concentrated. It is not clear yet whether this wider dispersion of Hispanic immigrants merely makes new regions of the U.S. more aware of immigration or whether it reduces the fear that Hispanic immigration will establish a permanent parallel culture in the U.S.

**E. Why do they immigrate?**

There are many reasons why Hispanics go to the US. They want to come to the US because they want to have a better life and because they need to support their families. They also want a better education for their children, a job and a home.

Many people wonder why Hispanics immigrate to the North. When Hispanics from the lower areas of

the Americas arrive, many are confused why they recall so fondly in tales the way life used to be in their former homeland. Many Americans and now Canadians do not quite understand the phenomena of Hispanics in their midst. In this lack of understanding, many wrong stereotypes are cast as well as rifts in what could be potentially a beneficial arrangement for everyone.

Many if not all migrants come to America looking for a better life financially. Many times Hispanics do so with disillusioned ideas of what life in the United States and Canada are really like. Much of this disillusionment comes from movies and media that portray a very different life than what the average American or Canadian experiences themselves. They view life in the United States as full of potential.

The average Hispanic immigrant believes that by coming to the United States or Canada, through hard work and dedication can make a better life for themselves as well as their family. They come seeking work, education and a comfortable way of life. To be able to go to work and afford the bare essentials in life and a few modest extras is the expectation. With the harbored hopes and dreams of one day owning their own home, possibly owning a business and having their family live comfortably is the dream and hope they share with those of who already live in these lands.

Many arguments arise that these Hispanic Immigrants will come and take jobs from those who are citizens of these areas. Some look upon Hispanic Immigrants as uneducated and a burden on society. Many fears arise from the lack of understanding between the races, which live in the areas to which Hispanic Immigrants wish to relocate to. Let us look for a moment at each one of these issues without arguing the point and see if on some point each side does not have merit.

To the idea of Hispanic Immigrants taking jobs from Americans or Canadians, let us examine what types of jobs the average Hispanic Immigrant takes upon arriving to the United States. Usually as an immigrant, there is a language barrier, which must be overcome before any real opportunity can be offered, and consequently the immigrant, even if qualified to fill higher positions is usually forced into a lower position in the job market. This, in all fairness, is true of any immigrant from another country unless immigration is for the sole purpose of working in said position.

So what types of positions do these immigrants take upon coming? They take jobs such as farm workers, house cleaners, office cleaners, plant workers, seasonal workers, childcare providers, street vendors, dockworkers, man for hire and a variety of other lower skilled labor that few of us, if we are honest, would be willing to fulfill yet the demand for such services remains. None of these positions is appealing to the average American or Canadian as they have the advantage of tailored education and language that makes positions they desire out of the reach of the average Hispanic Immigrant and equally makes these positions unappealing and them overqualified.

It can be said there is an abundance of people who could benefit from taking these positions and coming off welfare programs but the fact also must be acknowledged that these same people also look at these positions as unappealing and therefore refuse them, which is their right to do so. Many of these people rather take advantage of the system by remaining on the social service programs, which in and of itself opens up a whole new debate or upon the end of their time, accept the offer to upgrade their skills and seek a higher paying position which no one can deny is beneficial to society as a whole.

Like their forefather, Hispanic Immigrants come to America and Canada and make great sacrifices to remain there. Dreams of a better life and to have the comforts as Hispanics today are seeking. The need driving them to a foreign and hostile land where at one point they were looked down upon as they took the menial jobs of service paving the way for future generations to prosper. The Great American and Canadian dream of a better life. Though these two countries boast a vastly different lifestyle, the dream yet remains a reality to many people.

As these immigrants work and live amongst the host countries, they likewise pour money back into the system by becoming a consumer. Taxes are levied even upon the illegal immigrant as well as the legal when they pay taxes while purchasing as American or Canadian citizens do. The difference is that the illegal immigrant is not entitled to the advantages of tax credits as they are nor are they offered health insurance at their place of work. In any case, the cost of health insurance is a struggle for the average skilled worker and

even if offered would be out of reach to any of the service industry afore mentioned, whether they be Hispanic immigrants or Citizen born. To be sure, that in all areas and populaces there are those who will burden a society, yet the fact remains that immigrant Hispanics come to these countries in search of work and through hard work and sacrifice to contribute to the society in which they reside.

### What are the consequences of the Hispanic immigration ?

- The greatest obstacle for them all is the fear of not understanding each other. The fear of changes to come that they are not completely in control over; the fear of losing one's position in society to a rival; a fear of rising crime. All of these fears are valid fears, though not necessarily valid in consideration of Hispanic Immigrants. The answer apparent is to embrace cautiously one another.
- The labor of immigrants is essential to the American nation. Because they do the dirty jobs that "Americans" do not wish to do, they have become the foundation of the way Americans live.

While many think that immigrants just clean houses or grow food in California, they stabilize many industries that Americans around the country depend upon. Even in Vermont, when it comes to hard jobs such as milking cows, 40% of hired help are immigrants. Because of the necessity of the immigrants, many of whom are illegal, even the police look away when it comes to immigration law enforcement.

Immigrant labor has always been cheap, from the Irish to the Chinese to the Hispanic people now coming to the USA. The cost of labor has been even further decreased by the fact that those who hire illegal immigrants often do not pay overtime, give required benefits, or even pay minimum wage. Businesses then come to rely on cheaper labor.

Income levels are rising. While the Hispanic/Latino median income is lower than the U. S. average, data suggest that more Hispanics/Latinos are moving into the middle class (earning at least \$40,000). In addition, Hispanics/Latinos are an increasing proportion of the total affluent market (defined as adults with household incomes of \$100,000 or more). From 1991 to 2000, the growth of affluent Hispanics/Latinos rose 126%. Hispanic/Latino teens are a growing segment. In 2006, Hispanic/Latino teens constituted 20% (estimated 6.3 million) of the U. S. teen population and accounted for more than 38% of the total Hispanic population in the United States.

Hispanics live longer. Despite having a lower income than white Americans, Hispanics live longer than whites. Hispanics have an average life-expectancy of 75.1 years for men and 82.6 years for women compared to white Americans of 74.8 years for men and 80.1 years for women.

Getting diseases is a bigger concern than dying. For the Hispanic community, issues of morbidity rather than mortality are of greatest concern, which include lifestyle and behaviors affecting health; environmental factors such as exposure to pesticides, unclean air and polluted water; and the ongoing need for more effective use of existing health services.

A Survey found that 35% of respondents preferred the term "Hispanic," whereas 13.4% preferred the term "Latino." More than 32% of respondents said either term was acceptable, and 18.1% indicated they did not care.

Consider custom publications since they have proven to be an important way to communicate with the Hispanic/Latino market. Companies such as Procter & Gamble and Sears have invested millions to reach and enhance their relationships with Hispanic/Latino consumers via custom publications in Spanish

that address their lifestyle interests and needs. Hispanic/Latino teens respond best to bilingual ad messages—especially from English-language celebrities "who happen to slip in some Spanish"—because it mirrors their own usage patterns.

### **G . How did they immigrate?**

Some Hispanic people did not come to the US, the US came to them. The places they were living became part of the US by war or treaty. Some Hispanic people came to the US by land from Mexico and countries to the south. Some came by boat from South America, Central America, The Caribbean, or from Spain or Portugal.

Colombians, and Dominicans, the last of whom have acted as a bridge between the black and Latino communities. Latinos have come together for better health, housing, and municipal services, for bilingual school programs, and for improved educational and economic opportunities. The major exodus of Colombians came in the early 1980s when many of Colombian cities were facing hardships from drug traffickers, crime and lack of employment. While representatives of every social group are among them, the initial wave of Cubans was distinctive because of the large number of professional and middle-class people who migrated.

## **IV. Hispanic's Assimilation to US Society**

### **A. Assimilation**

Historical evidence suggests that immigrants to the U.S. have almost always assimilated within one or two generations. Even at the previous height of immigration at the start of the twentieth century, when the foreign-born population surpassed 15% of the total population, immigrants quickly moved up to the average income and education levels of the native U.S. population. Blau's (1980) often-referenced study used detailed data for the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to determine that immigrants quickly caught up to native-born Americans in income. Equally well-known is Chiswick's (1978) study, which used 1970 Census data to show that immigrants' earnings caught up to, and then exceeded, native-born Americans' average incomes after just 10 or 15 years. These average outcomes do not describe all immigrants a century ago, of course. There were high rates of return immigration after World War I and during the Great Depression, and many immigrants and their descendants remained poor. However, today even the average indicators for immigrant assimilation suggest that the traditional myth of immigrants as anxious to assimilate and become "American" as quickly as possible may be inaccurate. Perlmann and Waldinger's (1997) statistical analysis shows that in the 1990s the children of immigrants still lagged substantially behind the rest of the U.S. population in education, income, and in terms of other socioeconomic indicators. Perlmann and Waldinger's data on recent immigrants in the U.S. suggest that U.S. immigration from Latin America and from Mexico in particular, is the main cause of the change in assimilation rates. When they eliminate Mexican immigrants from their sample, they find that the socioeconomic disadvantage among children of immigrants vanishes.

### **B. Reactions to Hispanics' Immigration**

Often labeled as "Mexicans," the recent influx of Hispanics has proven to be the latest wave in the periodic cycles of immigration to the USA. While the Immigration and Nationality Act (1977) abolished discriminating quotas, and mass grants of amnesty for those who have been in the USA since a certain date have allowed for more legal immigrants, many of those coming across the border today are viewed as illegal . From "Operation Wetback" to the idea of building a wall between Mexico and the US, tensions have been building between the two nations over the issue of immigration. However, the source of the problem goes further back, to the mid 18th century (time period

sound familiar?). On the West Coast, "Americans" were originally the immigrants, and as said in Bobby by one Mexican man, "We didn't cross the border, the border crossed us!"

Owning large ranches and with a thriving culture, these (more) original occupants of North America were driven off their land after the Mexican-American War. Once driven off their rich land, they were relegated to picking the crops owned by white men. As the prosperity of the USA increased and the many Hispanic countries remained poor, immigrants went to America to earn money to send home to their families. Indeed, today the single second largest part of the Mexican economy is remittances from those working in the USA sent back home to their families. However, with the slowing US economy, many are considering returning home.

Not all of those seeking work in the USA are Mexicans. The Mexican people themselves must deal with those such as Guatemalans who cross from their country to the Mexico hoping to make it to the US. Further controversies arise because of US legal law. If a Hispanic woman crosses the border and gives birth to her son in the US, he is a US citizen. However, if the mother is caught, she can be deported. This causes splits in families as the son would be kept, in many cases, in the US while his family is sent home.

### **C. Americans are depending on Immigrants**

The labor of immigrants is essential to the American nation. Because they do the dirty jobs that "Americans" do not wish to do, they have become the foundation of the way Americans live. While many think that immigrants just clean houses or grow food in California, they stabilize many industries that Americans around the country depend upon. Even in Vermont, when it comes to hard jobs such as milking cows, 40% of hired help are immigrants. Because of the necessity of the immigrants, many of whom are illegal, even the police look away when it comes to immigration law enforcement.

Immigrant labor has always been cheap, from the Irish to the Chinese to the Hispanic people now coming to the USA. The cost of labor has been even further decreased by the fact that those who hire illegal immigrants often do not pay overtime, give required benefits, or even pay minimum wage. Businesses then come to rely on cheaper labor.

### **D. Economic Impact on the Country**

Immigrants have played a very important role in the history of the U.S. and in the changing, turbulent times of a global, digital economy.

Wharton professor Mauro Guillén believes :“It is impossible for the United States to seal off its border with Mexico. There are 12 million undocumented people who work, pay taxes and have a normal life,” he explains. He believes that the best interests of the United States in the future depend on welcoming immigrants and integrating them into the society. United States could become a “nation of nations.” “I believe that the United States has a tendency to assimilate immigrants; to integrate them. Something I do consider possible is that the Spanish language will one day challenge English as the most-spoken tongue. ”

## **V. COSMOTHEORY**

### **A. FOOD & MEALTIME CUSTOMS**

### 1. Food History

Mexican Americans have lived in the United States for most of the country's history. However, other Spanish-speaking immigrants did not begin arriving in large numbers until after World War II (1939-1945). Many Puerto Ricans arrived in the 1950s. Cubans, Dominicans, Colombians, and Costa Ricans immigrated in the 1960s. And, people from still other Latin American countries followed in succeeding years. As of 2001, the three largest Latino ethnic groups were Mexican American, Puerto Rican, and Cuban American. The states with the largest populations of Latino Americans are California, Arizona, New Mexico, Florida, and New York.

Like most immigrant groups, Latino Americans have remained loyal to the food traditions of their homelands. Many shop in small ethnic markets called bodegas that carry specialty foods used in Latin cooking. When they cook, they follow recipes handed down to them by their parents and grandparents. Specialty food companies have thrived by supplying Latinos with traditional cooking ingredients. The most famous of these is Goya Foods, whose products can be found in grocery stores throughout the country.

The third and fourth generations of Latino families have begun to transform their cooking traditions. They vary their recipes with new ingredients and include dishes from other ethnic groups in their meals. In turn, Latin American cooking has become increasingly popular among non-Latino.

### 2. Foods of the Latino Americans

Although Latino Americans belong to a number of different cultures, their cooking styles have certain things in common. Meat, usually pork or beef, is central to the Latino diet. It is often eaten with the spicy sauces (salsas) for which Latinos are famous. The main ingredient in salsa, as well as many other Latin dishes, is hot chili peppers. Latinos cook with fresh, dried, and ground chilies. There are many different kinds of chilies, including Habanero, Jalapeno, Malagueta, and Poblano.

Corn, beans, rice, and root vegetables are staples of the Latino diet. Some of the root vegetables commonly used in Latino cooking are sweet potatoes, yams, yucca, jicama, Jerusalem artichokes, and taro. Also popular is a pear-shaped squash called chayote. It goes by several other names, including tayote, chuchu, and xuxu. Latinos are able to enjoy many fruits native to their homelands, which are either imported or cultivated in the United States. These include plantains, guavas, mangoes, papayas, passion fruit, and prickly pears.

Turnovers are very popular in Latino cooking. These are dishes that consist of a variety of dough and filling. Two popular types of turnovers are tamales and empanadas. Nacatamales, chuchitos, humitas, and bolos are just a few of the many types of tamales eaten by Latinos in the United States.

Most Latino desserts (like flan, a type of custard) are made from dairy products. Most traditional Latino drinks contain two of the following three ingredients: milk, rum, and fruit.

### 3. Food for Religious and Holiday Celebrations

The vast majority of Latinos are Roman Catholic and celebrate the holidays of the Christian calendar. Making tamales and pasteles together is a popular family tradition around the Christmas holidays. Both consist of dough wrapped around meat or some other filling. The tamale dough is placed inside an empty cornhusk. The pastele dough is placed inside a wrapper made from banana leaves. Another Christmas favorite is menudo, a spicy stew made with hot chilies and a cow's stomach (called tripe).

A special Latino New Year's Eve tradition is to eat twelve grapes or raisins at midnight. They stand for the twelve months of the new year. Adults often welcome the new year with a drink that contains rum and tropical fruit. It is poured into a punch bowl, and a whole pineapple is put in the

bowl. It is said that the people who drink this beverage will enjoy friendship throughout the coming year. On New Year's Eve, Latinos of Colombian descent enjoy a dessert called bunuelos . These are balls of dough made from flour, sugar, eggs, and butter and deep fried.

On Good Friday, three days before Easter, a soup called potaje do vigile is served in many Latino homes. It is made with garbanzo beans, fish, and spinach. It also contains egg yolks, garlic, almonds, and seasoning.

**4. Mealtime Customs**

Most Latinos eat three meals a day. The main meal is eaten at dinnertime. Eating together with the family is important to Latinos. Many families pray together before meals.

Busy schedules sometimes keep families from eating together during the week. On Sundays, they can still gather to cook together and share food, prayer, and the latest news. Many Latino children have Sunday dinner with their aunts, uncles, grandparents, and cousins.

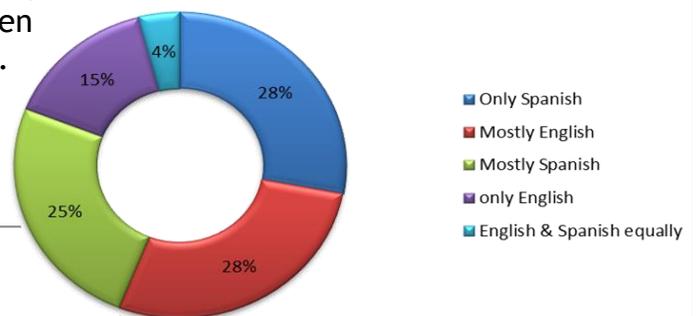
In the past, most Latinos ate large, home-cooked meals every day. Foods were made from traditional recipes that were hard to prepare and were time consuming. As more women have entered the work force, there is less time to cook some of these traditional foods. Also, Latinos, like other Americans, eat out more than they used to. Some even gather in restaurants for the big family dinner on Sunday.

Each Latino ethnic group has its own food customs and traditions. Cubans consider many foods symbolic. For example, sweet foods symbolize happiness. Fruits are often the main part of a Cuban meal. Puerto Ricans are known for their love of fancy meals. Many Puerto Ricans still serve a wide variety of dishes at two of their meals every day.

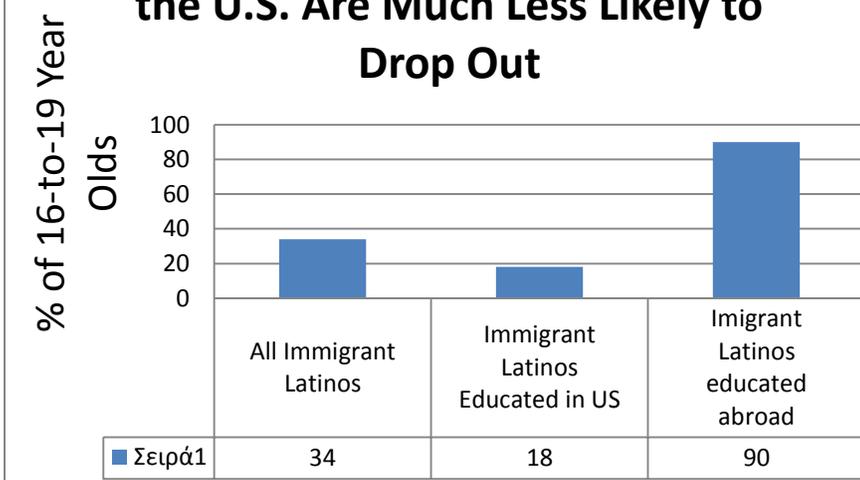
**B. EDUCATION**

In recent years an influx of young immigrants, who left school before coming to the United States, has swollen the ranks of those counted as Hispanic dropouts. Those youth present long-term policy challenges in language and employment training, but their level of school completion does not reflect the quality of U.S. schools or of Latino achievement in those

**Language Usage of US Hispanics**



**Immigrant Latinos Educated in the U.S. Are Much Less Likely to Drop Out**

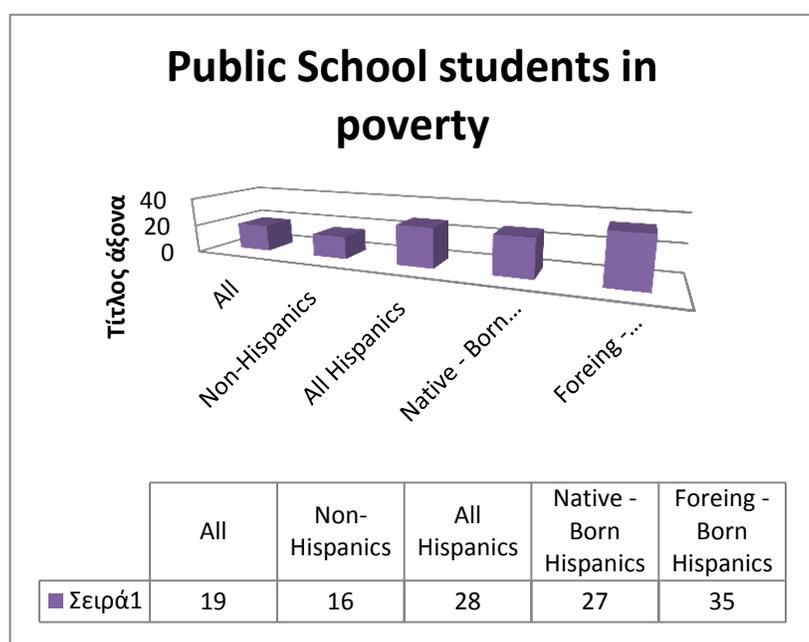


schools. Rather their presence reflects immigration and labor force trends.

Focusing on data for Hispanics who have dropped out of U.S. schools before completing high school reveals a problem that is quite grave and that has serious long term implications for the education system, Latino communities and the nation as a whole. However, these numbers show that the problem is not as bad

as is commonly thought. Simply put, dropout rates of 30 percent or more are frequently cited for Hispanics overall, but these figures include a great many immigrants who never set foot in a U.S. school. Counting only Latinos who dropped out after engaging the American education system yields a rate of about 15 percent among 16- to 19-year-olds. That is good news. The bad news is that this dropout rate is twice as high as the dropout rate for comparable non-Hispanic whites. Further on the positive side, this report finds that the dropout rate for Latinos in U.S. schools is improving as has been for non-Latinos.

- h Because of the enormous growth in the number of Hispanic youth due to immigration and high birth rates, the number of Latino 16- to 19-year-old dropouts grew dramatically, from 347,000 to 529,000 between 1990 and 2000. However, the dropout rate for native born Latinos declined over that period from 15.2 percent to 14.0 percent.
- h Thirty-five percent of Latino youth are immigrants, compared to less than five percent of non-Latino youth.
- h Of the 529,000 16- to 19-year-old Latino high school dropouts in 2000, one out- of-three, or roughly 175,000, are immigrants who had little or no contact with U.S. schools.
- h Nearly 40 percent of immigrant Mexican 16- to 19-year-olds is dropouts, while the dropout rate for Mexican immigrants educated in U.S. schools is 20 percent.
- h The dropout rate for immigrant Central American youth is nearly 25 percent, but it is only 7 percent for U.S.-educated immigrant youth from Central America, about the same as for white youth.
- h A lack of English-language ability is a prime characteristic of Latino dropouts. Almost 40 percent do not speak English well. The 14 percent of Hispanic 16- to 19-year-olds who have poor English language skills have a dropout rate of 59 percent.
- h The unemployment rate for U.S.-born Latino dropouts is 26 percent, slightly better than for white dropouts. For immigrant Latino dropouts who attend U.S. schools the unemployment rate is 6.4 percent. Latino immigrant dropouts who never went to school in the U.S. have an 8.3 percent unemployment rate.
- h The average white high school dropout earns \$7,300 per year, compared to \$6,500 for U.S.-born Hispanic dropouts and around \$10,000 for immigrant Hispanic dropouts.

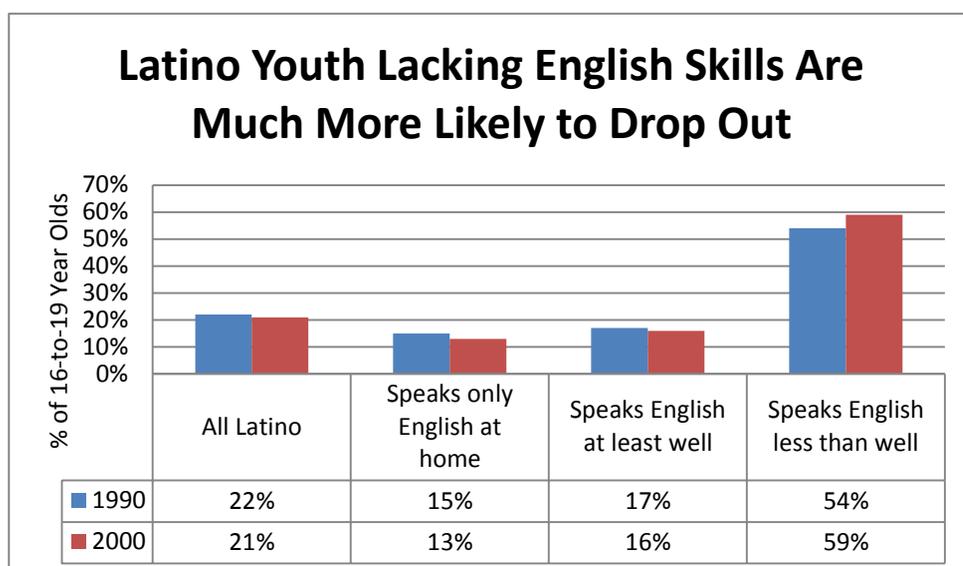


Improved educational attainment for Latinos is a key requirement for their overall, long-term economic success. By excluding the category of Latino youth who immigrate to the U.S. solely to find jobs, Latino educational progress in U.S. elementary and secondary schools becomes considerably clearer and more positive. The more carefully delineated statistics show a much lower dropout rate for Hispanic youth who are involved with U.S. schools, both native-born and immigrant, and they reveal much higher English-speaking abilities among U.S.- born Latinos than aggregate numbers suggest.

The more targeted statistics also provide nuances that should prove helpful in addressing problems and finding solu-

tions. The low unemployment rates and relatively high salaries for immigrant Latinos who attend U.S. schools but drop out suggest that the lure of the job market for that segment of students poses a particular challenge. By and large, however, the improving dropout statistics show that educational and language-training efforts are paying off. That trend is good news for the Latino community and for educators striving for continued progress in the face of a rapidly increasing Hispanic student population.

English language ability is an important indicator for the likelihood of dropping out of high school among Latinos. Unlike most white and African American dropouts, Latino dropouts overall are not proficient English speakers. Almost 40 percent of Latino high school dropouts, including recent immigrants who never attended U.S. schools, do not speak English at least “well”. But English proficiency is fairly widespread among Hispanic youth. In 2000, about 86 percent of Hispanic 16- to 19-year-olds either spoke only English or spoke English at least well. The 14 percent of Hispanic 16- to 19-year-olds who have poor English language skills have a very high dropout rate. About 60 percent of these youth are high school dropouts. Among Latino youth with fluent English skills, about 15 percent are high school dropouts.



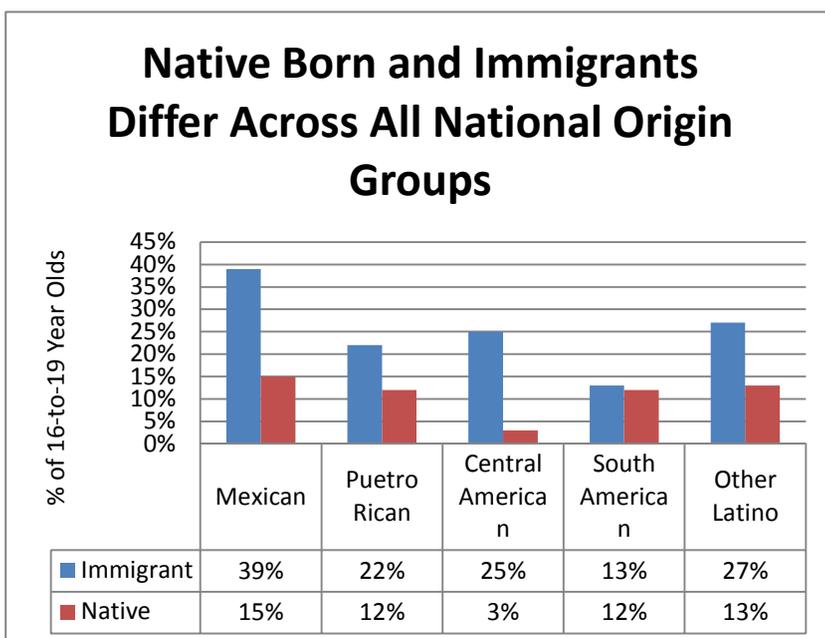
Fortunately, English language proficiency seems to be strongly correlated with U.S. schooling experience. Nearly all native Hispanic 16- to 19-year-olds speak English. Most Latino youth educated in U.S. schools speak English at least well. The U.S.-educated Latino youth who do not speak English fluently are primarily foreign born and thus less likely to have been in U.S. schools since kindergarten. For immigrant Hispanic dropouts who have received at least some U.S. schooling, more than

55 percent speak English at least well. On the other hand, almost 80 percent of Latino immigrant dropouts who never attended U.S. schools do not speak English.

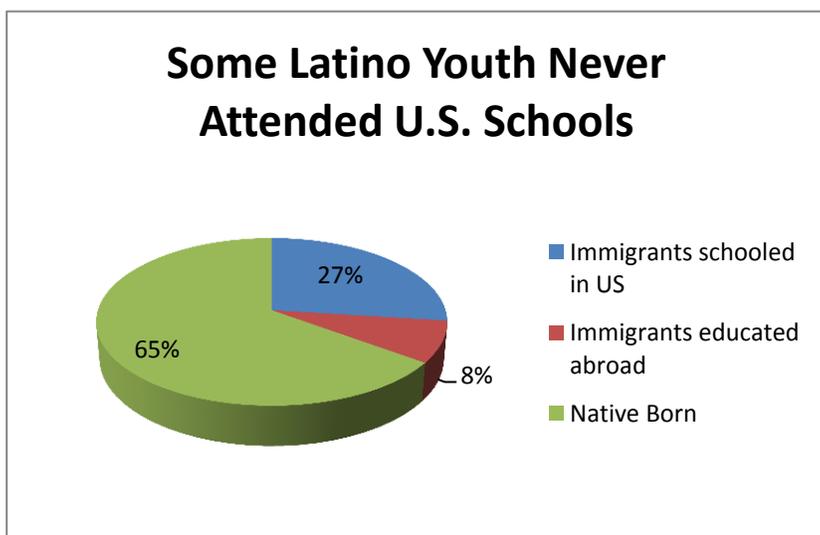
Of the half million Latino dropouts, only 9,000 are native-born youth who do not speak English at least well. In a comparison of 16- to 17-year-old Latino dropouts to Latino youth of the same age who remain in school, native Hispanic high school dropouts are more likely than their in-school counterparts not to know English. Since dropouts tend to be older than youth who remain in school, the comparison of dropouts to the enrolled population is best done for a narrow age band.

### 1. Highlighted Characteristics of Hispanic Public School Students

- h The vast majority of Hispanic public school students (84%) were born in the United States.
- h More than half (52%) of all Hispanic students are enrolled in public schools in just two states, Texas and California.
- h Although most Hispanic students live in the nine “established” Hispanic states, foreign-born Hispanic students are more likely than native-born Hispanic students to live in the “new” and “emerging” Hispanic states.
- h Hispanic kindergartners in public schools are overwhelmingly born in the U.S. (93%), compared with 86% of Hispanic students in grades 1 through 8 and 77% in high school.



- h The majority of Hispanic students are of Mexican origin (69%), followed by Puerto Rican (9%), Dominican (3%), Salvadoran (3%) and Cuban (2%).<sup>3</sup>
- h Nearly three-in-five Hispanic students (57%) live in households with both of their parents compared with 69% of non-Hispanic white students and 30% of non-Hispanic black students.



h More than seven-in-ten U.S. born Hispanic students of immigrant parents (71%) live with both parents. Smaller shares of foreign-born students (58%) and U.S.-born students of native parentage (48%) reside with both parents.

h More than a quarter of Hispanic students (28%) live in poverty, compared with 16% of non-Hispanic students. In comparison, more than a third of non-Hispanic black students (35%) reside in poverty and about one-in-ten (11%) non-Hispanic white students live in a poor household.

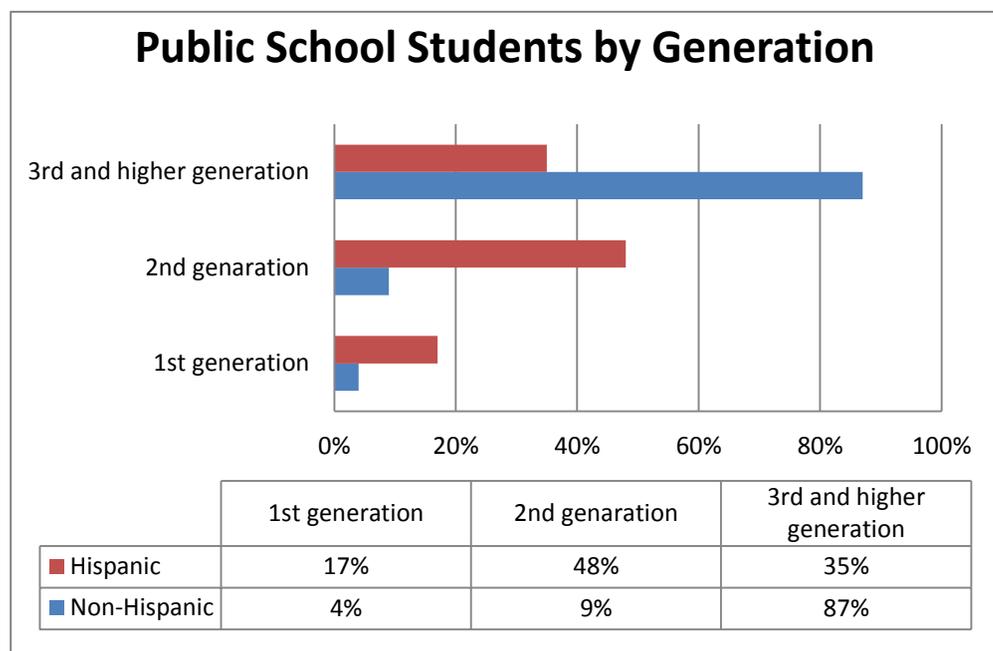
h Foreign-born Hispanic students (35%) are more likely than their native-

born counterparts (27%) to live in poverty.

- h A significant minority of Hispanic public school students (34%) have parents who have not completed high school. Fewer than one-in-ten (7%) non-Hispanic students have parents who have not finished high school.

National polling results consistently show that Hispanics have higher aspirations for postsecondary education than the population in general. But their aspirations have not been matched by

results. Recognizing these barriers and understanding their effects are important initial steps in raising the educational attainment of the Hispanic immigrant population specifically, and the Hispanic population in general.



The Latino foreign-born population in the United States has increased 700% in the last thirty years. due to migration. California held one-third of the nation's twenty million immigrants in 1995 (Rumbaut 17) and as of the year 2000, over fifty-five percent of the eight million foreigners in the state are Latino (Campbell). What is most significant regarding these figures is the youthfulness of the Latino population.

School districts across California are faced with the complexity of dealing with immigrant students – an issue compounded by the multiplicity of languages among new students. It is estimated that immigrants comprise close to one-fourth of the school population, and language minority students almost one-third (Suarez-Orozco 226). Spanish is overwhelmingly a language that is used among these immigrant children. These new student populations generate major challenges for California schools, among them the need for bilingual teachers. In 1996, the voters of California passed Proposition 227, which in effect abolished bilingual education across the state. The end of structured bilingual programs adds to the challenges facing immigrant students in California schools as more and more immigrant children are forced to negotiate with a predominantly English speaking culture in their schools.

## 2. School & Economics

### a) Employment Rates

Latino youth in general tend to be relatively successful in the labor market in comparison to white and black youth. They have higher earnings because they work longer hours (Fry and Lowell, 2002). The work orientation of Hispanic youth is also apparent among high school dropouts. Fifty-six percent of Hispanic high school dropouts hold jobs, in comparison to forty-nine percent of white dropouts. Two-thirds of foreign-born Latino high school dropouts who were never enrolled in U.S. schools are employed. Of those who work, nearly 90 percent of this group work fulltime. Native-born Hispanic high school dropouts are active in the labor market, though to a lesser extent. Of those who work, nearly 70 percent of native-born Hispanic high school dropouts work fulltime, in comparison to 52 percent of white high school dropouts.

### b) Unemployment Rates

Unemployment rates also underscore the relative success of Latino dropouts in the labor market in comparison to white high school dropouts. The unemployment rate for white high school dropouts is about 28 percent. For U.S. - born Latino high school dropouts the unemployment rate is slightly better, 26%. But the unemployment rate among immigrant Latino dropouts presents a dramatically different picture. For foreign-born Latino dropouts who received some U.S. schooling the unemployment rate is 6.4 percent. For foreign-born Latino dropouts who never attended U.S. schools the unemployment rate is also a comparatively low 8.3 percent.

c) Earnings

The relatively high labor market involvement of Latino high school dropouts' results in relatively higher annual earnings in comparison to white and African American high school dropouts. The average white high school dropout earns \$7,300 per year. The typical U.S.-born Hispanic high school dropout earns \$6,500, and immigrant Latino high school dropouts earn around \$10,000 per year. Gender The Latino dropout population is significantly more male than the white and African American dropout populations. This feature stems from the high numbers of young Latino males who immigrate to find work opportunities and never attend U.S. schools. Latinas who drop out appear to experience a higher rate of teenage pregnancy than either white or Black female dropouts. In 2000 more than 20% of Latina dropouts reported having a child within the previous year, significantly above the white rate.

d) Poverty rate

The poverty status of Latino dropouts is similar to white high school dropouts. About a quarter of both white and Latino high school dropouts resides in poverty. This is surprising since child poverty is much higher for Latino children than white children. Nine percent of white children reside in poverty, versus twenty-seven percent of Hispanic children (Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, 2002). This anomaly reflects the fact that Latino high school dropouts do relatively well in the labor market. In addition, Latino dropouts are much less likely to be living with their parents than white or African American dropouts. Among 16- to 17-year-old dropouts, more than half of Latinos do not reside with one or more of their parents. Latino dropouts are more than twice more likely to live independently of parents than either white or African American dropouts. Poverty status is based on a comparison of household income to needs. The differing living arrangements of Latino dropouts may result in their households having a larger number of earners and/or fewer siblings in the households. Not surprisingly, the tendency to live independently of parents is particularly marked among immigrant Latino dropouts, especially those not schooled in the U.S. who migrate for jobs. But comparing 16- to 17-year-old Latino dropouts to Latino youth of the same age who remain in school, native dropouts are much more likely to be residing independently of their parents than the native or immigrant Hispanic in-school population.

### 3. Discrimination - a Shared Perception

When it comes to experiences of discrimination, Hispanics and non-Hispanics are equally likely to say they feel they have been personally discriminated against in the past year – one-third of each group responded in the affirmative. Perceptions of prejudice can vary by ethnicity. While 89% of Latinos said Hispanics confront discrimination somewhat often or very often, a smaller but still substantial 71% of non-Hispanics also have felt Latinos are discriminated against. It is not unusual for members of one group to feel they face more prejudice than other groups. In this survey, that was especially true when Hispanics were asked if they felt discriminated against “very often.” Fifty-five percent of Hispanics said members of their group encounter frequent discrimination, while 67% strongly or some-what agree that as a group Hispanics are discriminated against more than other ethnic minorities. While the majority perceives Hispanics as a group are frequently discriminated against, one in three (34%) Hispanics indicated that they themselves have personally experienced discrimination within the past year.

The communities where Hispanics felt most discriminated against are the areas with the smallest Latino populations—cities such as Detroit, Nashville and Charlotte. The exception was Phoenix, which also had similar high ratings, yet has a substantial Latino population. Most likely, Arizona's state law requiring local police to ascertain the citizenship of people they suspect of being in the U.S. illegally has affected the views of respondents living there. Interestingly, non-Hispanic residents of Detroit, Nashville and Charlotte are among the least likely to have experienced discrimination themselves.

The 34% of Hispanic individuals who say they have experienced discrimination are demographically diverse. Gender, level of education, income and employment status appear to have no or limited bearing on someone's odds of experiencing discrimination. The single biggest factor is geography, as noted above.

### **C. Interesting facts**

Immigration to the United States has gone through many different phases. The latest phase, which covers the years since the 1960s, is characterized by a sharp shift in immigration source countries from Europe to Latin America and Asia. Hispanics make up the largest share of new arrivals. Nearly half of all foreign-born persons currently living in the U.S. came from Mexico, Central America, South America, or the Spanish-speaking Caribbean countries. Over 30% of foreign-born Americans are natives of Mexico. This is a very high share for one single country. The concentration of the sources of immigration has fueled fears that Hispanics will establish a permanent parallel culture in the United States rather than assimilate into the dominant culture. Many of those who expect Mexican and other Hispanic immigrants to eventually assimilate like all other immigrant groups have done in the past nevertheless still fear that the massive inflow of people from one single foreign country will substantially change American culture.

It is interesting to ask why reactions to Hispanic immigration are so much less favorable than reactions to recent immigration from Asia. Asian immigration to the U.S. does not seem to generate the same emotional response among the native U.S. population that Hispanic immigration does. This is surprising because Asian immigration to the U.S. has grown just as fast as immigration from Hispanic countries. Perhaps Asian immigration seems less threatening because its sources are spread evenly among several distinctive cultures. For example, the Philippines, India, China, Vietnam, and South Korea each account for between 3 and 4.5% of foreign-born Americans. Another possible factor is that a greater percentage of Asian immigrants are highly educated professionals while the great majority of Hispanic immigrants are laborers with less than high school education.

Another reason that Hispanic immigration may generate more openly expressed concerns is that it has been highly concentrated in a few states such as California, New York, Florida, and Texas. This geographic concentration effectively amplifies the cultural influence of immigrants in those areas. This is not to say that all Hispanic immigration to these states is from the same countries; Mexican immigrants favor California and Texas, while immigrants from Caribbean countries such as Cuba and the Dominican Republic most often settled in Florida and New York, respectively. Central Americans have favored California. Also, in recent years Hispanic immigrants have increasingly settled in Southern and Midwestern states, where food processing and other manufacturing are concentrated. It is not clear yet whether this wider dispersion of Hispanic immigrants merely makes new regions of the U.S. more aware of immigration or whether it reduces the fear that Hispanic immigration will establish a permanent parallel culture in the U.S. Language is an important aspect that one should be sensitive because it has less to do with competency and more to do with the cultural meanings people attach to language. For Hispanics/Latinos in the U. S., Spanish is a key marker of personal, social and political identity. As a result, Spanish-language TV remains important for even those who are fluent English speakers and who regularly watch English-language TV. In communicating with Hispanics, it is not an either/or question but a matter of carefully integrating both languages to best communicate with the Hispanic/Latino consumer in the U. S.

Culture is central in their health habits. These four characteristics have been consistently identified as influencing health habits and should be reflected in communication:

(1) A reliance on traditional healing systems is common not only because it is culturally approved but also because of the lower costs involved. Expensive modern medical care is unaffordable for many.

(2) Collectivist values or group orientation passes through Hispanic life and individuals often look to one another for opinions. A collectivist orientation may serve as a valuable asset in terms of health promotion. For instance, dissemination of information about good health habits can be easily achieved in a cost-efficient manner.

(3) An emphasis on the cultural diversity within the Hispanic population when conducting health assessment and promotion. The subgroups of the Hispanic population such as Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and Cubans differ in their lifestyles, health beliefs, and health practices.

(4) Many recent immigrants are less educated than their U. S. counterparts. They may live a marginal life here, on minimal incomes from low-paying jobs, without health insurance or other fringe benefits. The acculturation struggle has become a source of stress, leading to interpersonal conflicts, family breakdowns, and health problems. Hispanics often accord health-related concerns a secondary relevance only, and traditional health-and illness-related habits and behaviors linger.

It is understood that Hispanics/Latinos are assimilating to prevalent U. S. culture, but they are not, and probably never will be, fully assimilated. Instead, theirs is a path of acculturation. It is a process of integration of native and traditional immigrant cultural values with dominant cultural ones.

### D. HISPANICS & BUSINESS

#### 1. Hispanics are big business now

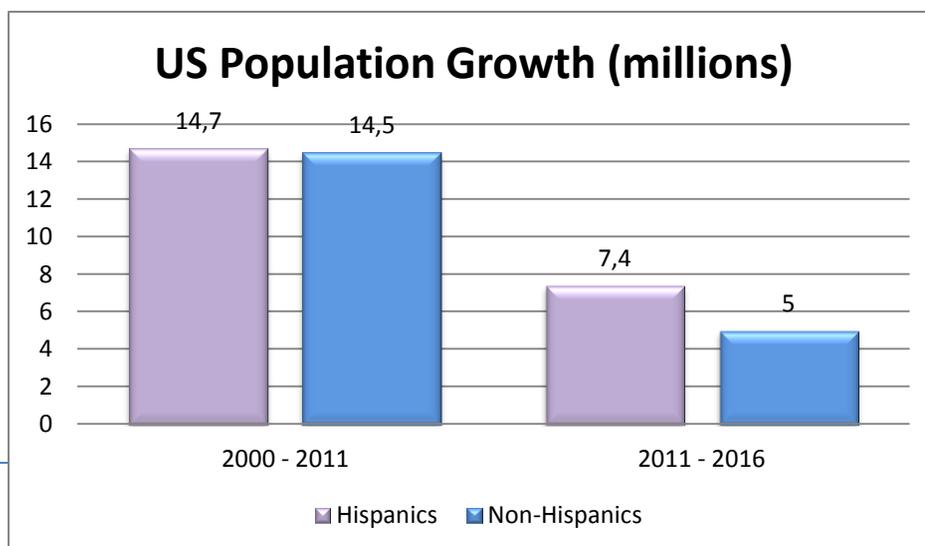
The United States is on a path to ethnic plurality, which is largely driven by remarkable Latino consumer market growth. The country's vibrant demographic composition, with its healthy multicultural dynamic and youth, are a critical American asset in the global economic competition. At the heart of this asset, both now and over the next several decades, is the Hispanic population.

Over 52 million strong, Latinos are impacting every aspect of the national landscape including popular culture, the workforce, consumerism, politics and American national identity. The Hispanic market's size, growing clout, and buying power of \$1 trillion in 2010 and \$1.5 trillion by 2015 require thoughtful understanding about what the market represents to a company's bottom line.<sup>1</sup> Latinos are no longer just a sub-segment of the economy, but a prominent player in all aspects of American life.

Many companies believe that significant growth opportunities come from outside the U.S., but the Hispanic market offers unique growth prospects within our borders. If it were a standalone country, the U.S. Hispanic market buying power would make it one of the top twenty economies in the world.<sup>2</sup> What's more, the per capita income of U.S. Hispanics is higher than any one of the highly

coveted BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China).<sup>3</sup> Despite the recession, U.S. Latino households that earn \$50,000 or more are growing at a faster rate than total households.

Companies like Procter & Gamble, General Mills, Unilever, Coca Cola, and Walmart have made the Latino market an im-



perative for growth. Many have recognized that the American marketplace has changed and Latinos are a primary driver of growth, essential to future success. Similarly, major political candidates are specifically targeting Hispanics who are critical to the vote when considering Latino driven change in the electoral map and the sizeable presence of Latinos in swing states like Florida, Nevada, and Colorado. In politics or business, Hispanics can be the difference between winning and losing the battle.

Based on above average consumption of many consumer products and their continued demographic growth, Hispanics will be the dominant and in many cases the only driver of domestic CPG sales growth.

**2. Hispanics account for most of U.S. future growth**

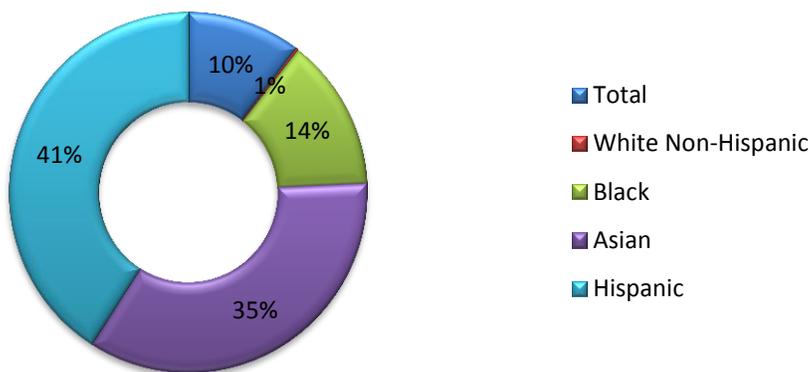
Between 2000 and 2011, Hispanics accounted more than half of the U.S. population increase with slightly greater growth than that of all other non-Hispanics combined. Hispanics will contribute an even greater share (60 percent or higher) of all population growth over the next five years. Even though immigration is down sharply, Hispanics continue to experience dynamic growth. In fact, Hispanics are the fastest growing ethnic segment expected to grow 167 percent from 2010 to 2050, compared to 42 percent for the total population.

The per capita income of U.S. Hispanics is higher than any one of the highly coveted BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China).

The overall U.S. population is graying, but the Latino population remains young and the primary feeder of workforce growth and new consumption. Over 60 percent of the U.S. Hispanic population is under age 35, and 75 percent is under age 45. The 2011 graph demonstrates a reversal of population trends around age 45, where Hispanics are concentrated in younger segments and non-Hispanic Whites in older groups. The median age of the Latino population is 28 years old, nearly ten years younger than the total market median age of 37 years. Given that the age for a new homebuyer is between 26 and 46 years old, Latinos will become a force in residential purchasing over the next ten years.

Because of Latinos' favorable demographics and increasing economic buying power, IBISWorld, producer of Industry Research Reports, has identified seven economic sectors expected to benefit most from Latino demographic change: residential buying, food (grocery and restaurants), retail (especially clothing and electronics), education (higher education and technical

**Projected US Population Growth from 2010 to 2050**



restaurants), retail (especially clothing and electronics), education (higher education and technical

schools), financial services, transportation (automotive and airline), and entertainment and media industries.

### 3. Technology adaption and Adoption

Latinos may use the same technology as the rest of the country, but adapt it differently making it more of a culture focused tool. The following discussion of Internet and mobile phone use addresses similarities and differences when comparing Hispanics and the total market. Approximately nine out of ten Hispanics have access to the Internet, when extended family, work, school, and other public places are included. Hispanics are less likely to have Internet access at home compared to the U.S. average (62 percent and 76 percent, respectively). Over the past year, Hispanics increased home broadband use by 14 percent, which is more than double the 6 percent growth of broadband use in the general market.

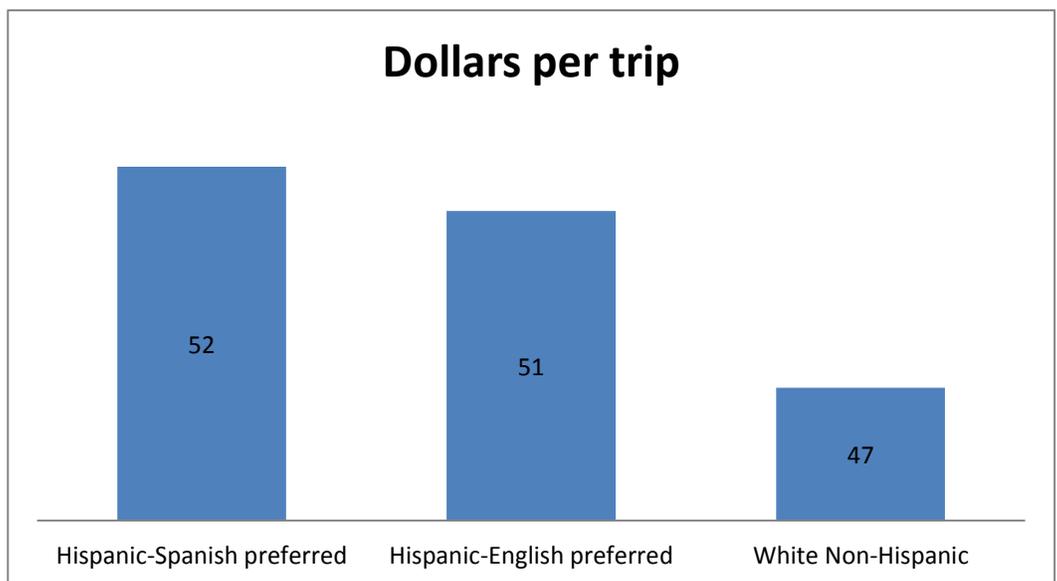
There is an emerging segment of tech savvy Hispanics who have leapfrogged Internet home access altogether. Hispanics are three times more likely to have Internet access via a mobile device, but not have Internet at home (9 percent vs 3 percent, respectively). Overall, Hispanics are 28 percent more likely to own a smartphone than non-Hispanic Whites, which is a significant avenue of opportunity for marketers. Hispanics outpace all ethnic groups in mobile data service consumption including music and picture downloads, and at a growing rate. Hispanic dependence on mobile devices for Internet connectivity could explain why their average bill is 8 percent higher than the general market.

### 4. Shopping Trips and Dollars per Trip

In many categories, Hispanics have different consumption growth rates than Non-Hispanics. Beverage sales trends show powerful evidence of Hispanic consumers acting as the accelerators for growing categories and the brakes for declining ones. This can be described as the Hispanic Advantage that is found in the projected Compounded Annual Growth Rates (CAGR) from 2010 to 2015 in eight of nine beverage categories, where Hispanic CAGR is equal to, and in many cases higher than the CAGR of non-Hispanics. These projections mirror trends of the past several years and substantiate Hispanic's growing contribution to future beverage business.

Hispanics spend substantially more than the total market in the top ten Hispanic product use categories which include baby products, hair care, and toiletries. These figures show a small sampling of highly personal and meaningful categories, where marketers benefit from understanding whether Hispanic category consumption differs from the general market. For instance in the hair care category,

Latinas begin dying hair at an earlier age than the total market, and purchase hair color dye more frequently. Hair color is seen as an important and inexpensive path to self-



expression and beauty, which can bring light to potent consumer insights for hair care marketers. In baby care, several companies have shifted how they approach the Latino market, no longer relegating them to second tier consideration, but making Latinos a focal driver of business growth.

## E. MUSIC

More obscure influences on American music by Latin music go much further back and include "The Habanera" beat or "Spanish Tinge" - a term made popular by New Orleans musician Jelly Roll Morton in the early 1900's. "Spanish Tinge" refers to the method of spicing up the conventional 4/4 rhythm most commonly used in jazz.

*"If you can't manage to put tinges of Spanish in your tunes, you will never be able to get the right seasoning,"*  
Morton is quoted as saying.

Celia Cruz, Selena, Tito Puente, Gloria Estefan, Carlos Santana, Jenni Rivera, Enrique Iglesias, Cypress Hill, Ricky Martin, Los Tigres del Norte, Kat DeLuna, Kid Frost, Marc Anthony, Tito El Bambino, Jennifer Lopez, Calle 13, Los Lonely Boys, La

Mafia, Daddy Yankee - all have made their mark, and there are hundreds of other Latinos who aren't quite as famous.

Those born in the United States, as well as those who immigrated here, those in the spotlight and those working behind the scenes - they have all contributed to the music we listen to each day. Very few American music genres can claim to be free of Latin influence, and Latinos in the U.S. continue to shape the landscape. Latinos in the U.S. and from all over Latin America give us plenty of reason to literally sing and dance in celebration during Hispanic Heritage Month and all year long.

Folk and popular dance and music also varies greatly among Hispanics. For instance, the music from Spain is a lot different from the Hispanic American, although there is a high grade of exchange between both continents. In addition, due to the high national development of the diverse nationalities and regions of Spain, there is a lot of music in the different languages of the Peninsula (Catalan, Galician and Basque, mainly). See, for instance, Music of Catalonia or Rock català, Music of Galicia, Cantabria and Asturias, and Basque music. Flamenco is also a very popular music style in Spain, especially in Andalusia. Spanish ballads "romances" can be traced in Mexico as "corridos" or in Argentina as "milongas", same structure but different scenarios.

On the other side of the ocean, Latin America is also home to a wide variety of music, even though "Latin" music is often erroneously thought of, as a single genre. Hispanic Caribbean music tends to favor complex polyrhythms of African origin. Mexican music shows combined influences of mostly Spanish and Native American origin, while traditional Northern Mexican music – norteño and banda – is more influenced by country-and-western music and the polka, brought by Central European settlers to Mexico. The music of Hispanic Americans – such as tejano music – has influences in rock, jazz, R&B, pop, and country music as well as traditional Mexican music such as Mariachi. Meanwhile, native Andean sounds and melodies are the backbone of Peruvian and Bolivian music, but also play a significant role in the popular music of most South American countries and are heavily incorporated into the folk music of Ecuador and Chile and the tunes of Colombia, and again in Chile where they play a fundamental role in the form of the greatly followed nueva canción. In U.S. communities of immigrants from these countries it is common to hear these styles. Latin pop, Rock

en Español, Latin hip-hop, Salsa, Merengue, colombian cumbia and Reggaeton styles tend to appeal to the broader Hispanic population, and varieties of Cuban music are popular with many Hispanics of all backgrounds.

## F. Religion

The primary religion throughout Latin America is Christianity, mostly Roman Catholicism. Practitioners of the Protestant, Pentecostal, Evangelical, Mormon, Buddhist, Jewish, Islamic, Hindu, Bahá'í, and indigenous denominations and religions exist. Various Afro-Latin American traditions, such as Santería, and Macumba, a tribal- voodoo religion, are also practiced. Evangelicalism in particular is increasing in popularity.

*Hispanic Religion*: a phrase that equates to Roman Catholic faith among most Hispanics.

### 1. Hispanic Religious Celebrations

Hispanics see religion as a way of living therefore they bring to the faith the Hispanic family life, their strength in values, the love of celebrating and following rituals, and the value they give to people over things.

The main celebrations of Hispanic religion are:

- h Lent, which is called Cuaresma”
- h Holy Week, which is called Semana Santa”
- h Three Kings Day or Los Tres Reyes Magos”
- h Christmas, which is called La Navidad”

#### (i) How Hispanics do the Lent?

h For Hispanic Christians, Lent – the 40 weekdays and Saturdays before Easter (Sundays are not considered days of penance) – means some rituals and customs from home blended with traditional practices from their adopted countries.

h It is traditional for Mexican Catholics to have a home altar, a "small version of what takes place in a parish, a place of real ritual and holiness.

h There are many symbolic and ritual observances tied to Lent. Each Friday for instance, many Christians fast or abstain from eating meat to recognize the time that Jesus spent fasting in the wilderness.

h On Good Friday at Our Lady of Guadalupe parish in Ferguson, about a dozen young adults in costumes dramatize the Via Crucis, or Way of the Cross, which depicts the various scenes leading up to Christ's crucifixion. The Stations of the Cross, as they're also called, are often held inside a church, but in some Hispanic cultures, the Via Crucis is performed in the streets.

#### Five Traditional Lent Ideas

h Use Fasting. This is the most traditional and most common way to celebrate Lent. Fasting represents a commemoration of the roughly 40 hours that Jesus lay in the tomb after the crucifixion, as well as the fasting that the apostles did to mourn him. The exact restrictions of the fast evolved over

the years and are now different for various Christian denominations. You might fast all day and only eat at night, or eat a restricted diet that avoids “luxury” foods like eggs, meat, and cheese. Or, you might simply give up one favorite food like chocolate, coffee, or red meat as a penance during Lent.

**h** Bake Lenten Breads. Baking Lenten breads like hot cross buns or pretzels is another traditional way to celebrate. The crosses in these breads represent a monk’s arms crossed in prayer.

**h** Use Purple Decorations. The color purple is associated with the suffering Jesus experienced during the crucifixion. As the color of royalty, purple also symbolizes Jesus’ status as the son of God. Churches and homes are often decorated with purple during Lent for this reason.

**h** Read About the Stations of the Cross. Lent is the most traditional time to perform the stations of the cross, which is a devotional that helps believers focus on each event in Jesus’ final hours leading up to the crucifixion. Many countries in Latin America have a performance group that acts out the stations with full participation of the audience.

**h** Practice Charitable Giving. God gave the world his only son in order to be our salvation. In recognition of this divine gift, believers traditionally step up their own charitable giving during Lent. This giving act is one of the most perfect lent ideas because it gives you the opportunity to involve your children teaching them the power of giving and how it helps others.

### *(ii) The Church and Immigrants’ Participation in Receiving Communities*

Two aspects of religious views emerged in this study to help to understand the immigrants’ perceptions of the religious institutions in their lives. The first is linked to how the context of exit shapes the immigrants’ views of their participation in religious institutions and church activities. The other aspect is related to how the context of arrival influences the immigrants’ perceptions of church activities. Together, these two aspects demonstrate how the exit and arrival contexts influence immigrants’ perceptions, and how the frameworks developed within those social milieus help the immigrants to make sense of religious institutions (and of their own worlds, more generally) in the host society.

### *(iii) If you ask a Hispanic he will tell you about Holy Week - Semana Santa...*

**h** It all starts when we are little. As Hispanics, we typically grow up practicing the Roman Catholic faith we inherited from the Spaniards. Holy Week is one of the top Hispanic celebrations engraved in our traditions that we treasure dearly.

**h** Living in the U.S. and sending my little one to school made me realize how different are things here for Hispanics when it comes to religion. In Latin America we normally attend Catholic schools, private or public, where religion is a top priority.



**h** Until not long ago there was no separation from church and state in many of our countries of origin, therefore we acquired all the knowledge about these Hispanic celebrations in our weekly dosage of religious studies.

**h** I would say Holy Week is our most important religious celebration, therefore the nuns educated us to answer these questions: Why do we celebrate Easter, its meaning, and how we celebrate it at home and at school.

**h** Pretty much throughout Latin America, no stores or businesses are open at least from Jueves Santo or Holy Thursday on. Schools close the entire week, and for many, *Semana Santa* is a mixture of relaxation and religious celebration, translation: Beach time and praying.

### (iv) *What is Holy Week*

Holy week is the yearly commemoration in the Christian calendar of the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. *Semana Santa* starts with Palm Sunday or *Domingo de Ramos*, and ends with Easter Sunday or *Domingo de Resurrección*.

### (v) *How Hispanics Celebrate Semana Santa*

#### b) Domingo de Ramos or Palm Sunday

The entire week has its own mini celebrations. On Domingo de Ramos or Palm Sunday Hispanics start by attending the procession of *Domingo de Ramos*, where Jesus comes riding on a donkey while the participants salute him with palms. These palms become the dark ashes for next year's start of lent or Cuaresma on Miércoles de Ceniza or Ash Wednesday.

#### (i) *Jueves Santo or Holy Thursday*

On *Jueves Santo* or Holy Thursday, Hispanics commemorate the Last Supper and the institution of the Eucharist. During reenactments of the twelve apostles at the "Last Supper" in neighborhood churches, everybody pays special attention to Judas the traitor.

In San Juan de Puerto Rico, the famous *Procesión del Silencio* attracts many who come to see the young man who personifies Jesus. The multitude accompanies him silently to meet Judas who is going to betray him for 30 silver coins.

In Spain and other South American countries it is typical of Holy Thursday to visit the *Monumentos*. A *Monumento* or monstrance is the special place where the body of Christ resides for the following two days, Holy Friday and Holy Saturday when we don't celebrate mass.

#### (ii) *Viernes Santo or Holy Friday*

*Viernes Santo* is the busiest day of all because in many countries churchgoers reunite to participate in the procession that reenacts the passion of Christ. Young men and women make these processions alive by personifying Jesus, Mary, Pilatos, Mary Magdalen, etc., and their last actions.

If there is no reenactment, then "La Procesión del Santo Sepulcro" carries the images of Jesus of Nazareth, *La Dolorosa* or the Virgin Mary who is in pain to see what is happening to her son, Mary Magdalen, etc., until the multitude arrives at church to pray at the time Jesus dies. In countries like Perú many celebrate with a mix of indigenous tradition and religious fervor. For example, on Holy Friday in Puno, many climb the small mountains and fast; later on they prepare special meals. At the same time youngsters congregate around bonfires to sing and enjoy.



### (iii) *Sábado Santo or Holy Saturday*

Semana Santa continues with *Sábado Santo* which is a day to think about Jesus' death and meaning as well as his visit to where all dead people are. Participants anxiously await Sunday to participate in the mystery of the resurrection.

During Holy Saturday churches dim the lights, altars are empty and all is quiet. It is a day of silence and reflection which ends with the *Vigilia Pascual*

### (iv) *Domingo de Resurrección or Easter Sunday*

Hispanics end the *Semana Santa* or Holy week with *Domingo de Resurrección, Pascua* or Easter Sunday. This is the most important day of all because Roman Catholic Hispanics celebrate the resurrection of Jesus which is the main event that gives meaning to their faith.

Hispanics celebrate by attending Sunday mass where they light the *Cirio Pascual* or Paschal Candle. Some traditions are quite interesting, for example the province of Badajoz Spain, celebrates Easter Sunday with a competition of burning Judas.

In cities around Caracas Venezuela, the people not only burn Judas but also baptize him and name him "Secuestro" or kidnaping, "Narcotraficante" or drug trafficker and "Mr. Dollar." In many other Hispanic countries processions are the norm.

### ***Latin Christmas Traditions***

#### ***Three Kings Day or Los Tres Reyes Magos***

January 6th is Three Kings Day. It is a date celebrated throughout Latin America, Spain, and in Hispanic communities of the United States. This is the Epiphany of the church calendar, the 12th day after Christmas, when the Magi arrived bearing gifts for baby Jesus. Traditionally, children receive gifts on this day, brought by the three kings, Melchor, Gaspar and Baltazar. In Latin America, January 6th, and not necessarily Christmas, is the day that children receive their gifts.

In the days preceding Three Kings Day, children write letters to the Magi requesting a toy or gift that they would like. On the night of January 5th, the figures of the Wise Men are placed in the nativity scene. In Mexico, children would traditionally leave out their shoes with a bit of hay in them to feed the animals of the Magi (they are often shown with a camel.) When the children wake up in the morning, their gifts will have appeared in the place of the hay. Nowadays, like Santa Clause, the Kings tend to place their gifts under the Christmas tree instead of in a shoe.

The most iconic tradition associated with Three Kings Day is the customary eating of a Rosca de Reyes (King's Ring), a sweet bread shaped like a wreath, with candied fruit on top, and a figurine of a baby Jesus baked inside. The person who finds the figurine is expected to host a party on Día de la Candelaria (Candlemas), celebrated on February 2nd.

Here in the United States, the tradition of the Three Kings Day has carried on. Hispanic bakeries throughout the country typically sell hundreds of Roscas de Reyes during the day, and children patiently wait for their second gift of the holiday season.

### (v) *Las Navidades, Navidad*

These are two names for Hispanic Christmas. Hispanics tend to direct their attention towards the spiritual aspect of it but they also love to "parrandear" or have parties to celebrate the holiday, and enjoy the gift-giving tradition. In most Hispanic countries the official Hispanic Christmas tradition that dictates the beginning of the "Navidades" is the Advent, which is the fourth Sunday before "Nochebuena" or Christmas Eve. In keeping their Hispanic traditions they always start las navidades on the first week of December and

they involve their family in the process. They start enjoying Christmas while they make the tree, pesebre and place the decorations. Nowadays the practice of playing “Secret Santa” or just giving a present to the person whose name you withdraw from a bag, is becoming fairly common. All based on the economic situation of the families that decide upon the game.

(vi) *Misa de Gallo - Midnight Mass*

Misa de Gallo or Mass of the Rooster is the midnight mass which is a very common practice Hispanics observe. They go to mass at midnight to commemorate the birth of baby Jesus. The legend says the first rooster flew on “Nochebuena” above the manger announcing “Christ has been born,” and the second one crowed “In Bethlehem.”

(vii) *Las Posadas y Las Pastorelas*

Hispanics also celebrate by recreating the pilgrimage of Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem trying to find “posada” or lodging. The “posadas” or processions and “pastorelas” which are plays, are ancient Hispanic Christmas traditions born from the need to revive the pilgrimage mentioned above. This tradition is primarily Mexican. Children and adults dress up as Mary and Joseph or the participants carry the images of them in a semi-procession during the nine days before “Nochebuena” or Christmas Eve. The first eight nights Mary and Joseph are rejected when they ask for lodging but the last night they finally find a place and that night Jesus is born. Schools and churches participate in the tradition throughout Mexico and some parts of the U.S. where many Mexicans reside.

(viii) *“La Novena de Navidad” or “La Novena de Aguinaldo” -The Novena*

La Novena is a nine-day religious practice that Hispanics use to prepare before the arrival of “El Niño Jesus” or baby Jesus. Families gather around the “pesebre” or nativity to complete it during these nine-days and pray at the same time. This practice is more common in South American countries like Venezuela, Colombia, and Ecuador. “La Novena” has a basic program they follow and it is complemented with “villancicos” or Christmas carols which they sing along with rattles they make of bottle caps passed through wire. They also play the tops of the pans as cymbals.

The novena has not only Jesus as central figure but also all of their children who love praying the novena and singing.

(ix) *La Nochebuena or Hispanic Christmas Eve*

Hispanics celebrate Christmas Eve by reuniting with their families, going to mass and together having “La Cena de Nochebuena” or Christmas Eve dinner before or after attending mass. The “fiesta” -celebration- starts with great music and lots of appetizers, main dishes and desserts all of which are traditional foods and characteristic of each country or region. “La cena de Nochebuena” varies in terms of main course, side dishes and desserts depending on their country’s traditions. Pork, chicken and beef as well as tamales are common entrees. Turkey has been adopted lately, modeled after the American Christmas. Lechón asado or barbecued pig in Cuba, niño envuelto or stuffed cabbage in the Dominican Republic, and roasted pork in Puerto Rico are the typical Christmas foods in these Hispanic Islands. For Venezuelans Christmas is a big celebration like in many Hispanic countries. Their main dish hallacas are unique and delicious. Their traditions during Christmas are also tied to their Catholic roots.

(x) *Poinsettias - The Eternal “Flor de Navidad”*

The perennial Poinsettias from Mexico or “Polifacias” are the typical Christmas flower. Even though they use them in some countries of Central and South America, and heavily in the U.S., Mexicans are those who use them the most. The Aztecs called Poinsettias “Cuetlaxóchitl,” and they are in part a gift from Mexico. The beautiful plant traveled to the U.S. in 1829 thanks to Joel R. Poinsett the first U.S. minister to Mexico. But it was a farmer from Los Angeles, Paul Ecke, who a century later started to cultivate the Poinsettia as a potted plant. There are several stories about how the Poinsettia became “the Christmas flower.” The less

romantic of all tells us that Paul Ecke traveled across country promoting the plant by convincing growers, wholesalers and retailers to carry it explaining it would make a great Christmas gift and a beautiful decoration piece during the holidays.

### (xi) *La Pólvora or fireworks*

Many countries have Hispanic Christmas traditions that include “polvora” or fireworks which are totally fun to enjoy.

### (xii) *El Arbol De Navidad - The Christmas Tree*

“El árbol de Navidad” means the Christmas tree, and it is generally located in a place to be seen like a window, the middle of the living room or beside the nativity. On the top they place an angel or a star which reminds them of how the Three kings and the shepherds found the new born Jesus. Under the tree they place gifts for family and friends which they give on December the 16th when the “Novena de Aguinaldos” starts. “Aguinaldo” means Christmas gift in Spanish, and that is one of the reasons for the name “Novena de Aguinaldo” since it is on the same day they give the presents to friends, acquaintances, neighbors, or extended family. Puerto Ricans, Cubans, Nicaraguans, Salvadorians, Venezuelans, Argentineans, Colombians, etc., don’t celebrate Hispanic Christmas exactly the same. One thing is for sure, strong religious influence, celebrating with family, typical music and “villancicos”, drinks made from representative ingredients from the region, and foods characteristic of each country are bountiful and a strong part of typical Hispanic Christmas traditions.

### (xiii) *Christmas Decorations*

Which decorations will you find in their homes during the “Navidad Hispana”? They decorate with nativities, candles, “faroles” -luminaries-, angels, handmade ornaments typical of their countries of origin and many more...

### (xiv) *The Role of Symbols in Hispanic religion*

Symbols play an important role by keeping Hispanics close to their faith. How ? By surrounding themselves with them. Physical images of virgins, stamps of saints, and crosses hanging in their homes are some of the examples.

The main symbols in Hispanic religion are:

- h The cross
- h Images of saints
- h The rosary
- h Image of the Virgin Mary

### (xv) *Hispanic Saints and Patrons*

Representations of saints take center stage in Hispanic religion. They pray, light candles and talk to their patrons which are saints. Each Latin American country has a patron saint or virgin they celebrate. Patron Saints are also assigned to towns and regions, and they celebrate “Las Fiestas Patronales” or the patrons’ festivities in many Hispanic countries.

- h “San Juan Bautista” - Puerto Rico’s patron
- h “Nuestra Señora de Chiquinquirá” - Patron virgin of Colombia
- h “La Virgen de la Caridad” - Patron virgin of Cuba
- h “Nuestra Señora de Altigracia” - Patron virgin of the Dominican Republic
- h “Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe” - Patron virgin of Mexico

### *(xvi) Hispanic Religion and The Virgin Mary*

On December 8th many Catholics including Hispanics celebrate this holy day. In Colombia there is a massive celebration throughout the cities where families and especially children light candles and decorate the fronts of their homes to honor the virgin's Immaculate Conception. A party follows after.

The most popular virgins in Hispanic religion are:

**h** [La Virgen de Guadalupe](#)

**h** [Our Lady of fatima or Virgen de Fátima](#)

**h** The Virgin of the Immaculate Conception or Virgen de la Inmaculada Concepción

The apparitions of the Virgin of Fatima created a lot of interest surrounding the well known [Fatima prophecies](#) that in 1917 she revealed to three little [Shepherds](#) at Cova da Iria, Portugal.

### *(xvii) Hispanics and the Transformation of American Religion*

Latinos today are playing a very important role in the transformation of American religion. Many immigrants continue to pour into the country and with them comes their faith which in the majority of cases is the Catholic religion. On the other hand statistics show they are practicing a different kind of Christianity, more guided towards the charismatic and renewalist movements.

### *(xviii) How Hispanics Celebrate Thanksgiving*

Growing up Hispanic in the United States is unique compared to any other experience throughout the Latin American world. It is a complex yet full experience in that you find yourself learning and respecting your roots and identity with the freedom to participate in the many different celebrations throughout the other communities. Though for the most part they do not adopt these holidays as their own, they do share in some of the festivities. Thanksgiving, though not a traditionally celebrated holiday in Latin America is sometimes celebrated by Hispanics living in the United States for several generations.

For the most part immigrants as a whole do not celebrate Thanksgiving, partly as they do not quite understand what the Holiday is about and partly because they are still holding onto their own individual customs from the homeland. Once time has passed and the migrant learns more about what the holiday signifies, they seem more open to celebrating it in a very unique and ethnic way.

It is important to understand that for the most part Hispanics usually celebrate Thanksgiving because they like to eat, get together with family and have fun. They within their tradition have many days in which they give thanks for their good lives as well as the fact that traditionally it is not a part of their culture nor is it their heritage. It is in the Euro settlers' history and it is in their tradition, yet, as any good Hispanic will tell you, any party is a good party as long as you are invited to celebrate. As time goes by and Hispanics become more accepted into the mainstream on a personal level, they will adopt this holiday and make it a new tradition.

### *(xix) Hispanic/Latino Folklife in Southern Nevada*

Nevada's Hispanic and Latino communities have grown rapidly in the last twenty years, paralleling the influx of immigrants nationwide and especially in the West. There are significant Latino populations in the Reno-Carson City area and in the ranching regions of Northern Nevada, where Mexicans continue unique rodeo traditions called charreadas and Peruvians work as sheep herders. The largest numbers, however, are in Southern Nevada where at least twenty Hispanic/Latino cultures make Las Vegas home.

Hispanic immigrants have imported a wide variety of traditions. Natives of Mexico have brought ancestral celebrations with them, adapting to their environment. Probably the largest religious celebration is Fiestas Guadalupanas. Held in the early part of December, Catholic Mexicans and other Hispanics celebrate the day the Virgin Mary of Guadalupe appeared in Tepeyac, close to Mexico City, in 1531.

As well as traditional music and food, one special ceremonial group is the matachines, or elaborately masked dancers. The Perez family members and friends formed the group Danza del Carrizo in 1991, which dedicates its performances to the Virgin.

Another celebration dedicated to Our Lady of Guadalupe takes place on December 11 on the

west side of Las Vegas, at the cross streets of Silver Dollar and Valley View. People from the state of Guerrero, Mexico, build an altar to the Lady of Guadalupe in the central courtyard of the apartment building where most of them live. The event features live music, folkloric dance, and food. The celebration begins with a procession from the house that kept the image of the Virgin during the year to the apartment courtyard. A group of children then perform the dance of the birds or Pajaritos, and the doors of apartments open to welcome visitors with their hosts offering traditional dishes such as pozole, tostadas, tamales, atole de piña, and ponche.

Mexicans from Michoacan started organizing in 2000. They have formed about twenty-three clubs which provide meeting places for people from specific regions of Michoacan including Patzcuaro, Turicato, Puruandro, Tacambaro, Morelia, Curupo, Santa Clara de los Reyes, and Apatzingan. Together the clubs founded the United Michoacan Federation. Like other immigrant clubs and associations, the Federation assists new immigrants and serves as a political bridge between Las Vegas residents and the Mexican government. The associations raise money to send the deceased back to Mexico when appropriate. Members help communities in Michoacan while assisting people as they integrate into American life. The Michoacan Federation also sponsors a week-long celebration showcasing Michoacan culture that features food, dance, music, and storytelling.

Most Mexican associations are active participants in the annual Clark County Festival, which celebrates the Mexican Dia de Muertos on the first and second days of November. The “Life in Death Festival” was created in 2001 to preserve the Dia de Muertos (“Day of the Dead”) tradition. The festivity offers Mexican music, dance, and food, plus the opportunity to learn about ofrendas (“offerings”)—altars which participants construct to honor their ancestors. Also included in this celebration is the reading of Calaveras (literally “skulls”), which are satirical poems dedicated to living community leaders and politicians as if they were dead. The festival brings together most of the Mexican folkloric dance groups of Las Vegas including Ballet Mexicano de Martha Luevano (the oldest folkloric group in the city), Mexico Vivo Dance Company, Xyachimal, Tepuchcalli, Izel, Le Dance Company, Grupo Guerrerence, Danza del Carrizo, Los Viejitos de Patzcuaro, Grupo Perla Tapatia, Los Viejitos de Corupo, and the Arturo Cambeiro Senior Dance Group.

Since 2003, a group from Oaxaca called Primer Comite de la Virgen del Rosario has organized another important festivity in Las Vegas at the beginning of October. They celebrate their town's patron saint, the Virgen del Rosario with a calenda, or procession, in which men carry huge balloon-like ornaments called marmotas that represent the earth, the moon, and the sun. Young girls wearing traditional hand-woven costumes walk in two lines behind the image of the Virgin. They carry heavy, beautifully-decorated baskets on their heads. When the girls arrive in the atrium of the church, they dedicate a dance to the Virgin and then attend mass. When the mass is over, they dance again and share tamales, mole, bread, chocolate, and candy with the people who joined them.

One of the oldest Mexican civic organizations in Las Vegas is the Mexican Patriotic Committee headed by Edmundo Escobedo,



owner and founder of the Spanish language newspaper *El Mundo*. For at least twenty-five years, the Mexican Patriotic Committee has sponsored two festivities a year in Freedom Park, which combine folklore, contemporary music, and food.

The second largest group of Hispanics in Las Vegas comes from El Salvador. Their presence in the community is evident in the city's numerous Salvadoran restaurants. Also from Central America, many Guatemalans call Las Vegas home. In September, the *Comite de Unidad Guatemalteco* (Guatemalan Unity Committee) or *COMULGA* sponsors a celebration of the Guatemalan anniversary of independence from Spain. A recent addition to the event is a comedy act called *Los Reyes Feos* ("The Ugly Kings"), which mocks public figures. The Las Vegas Guatemalan community also has a radio program on Sundays called *La Hora Chapina* offering marimba music and Guatemalan news.

Other Hispanic/Latino groups residing in Las Vegas are from Cuba, Puerto Rico, Santo Domingo, Brazil, Venezuela, Paraguay, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia, Ecuador, Argentina, Paraguay, Chile, Peru, and Spain. Most have clubs or associations to promote their culture and to help their compatriots.

The Boricua Association of Las Vegas assists the Puerto Rican community with education, housing, employment, health, and safety. Like other cultural organizations, this group is also committed to the dual purpose of acting as community liaisons while teaching the larger population about the diversity of Latino culture. The Boricua Association of Las Vegas is especially committed to the preservation of Puerto Rican history, music, arts, and literature. Members participate in a yearly Three Kings celebration in early January. In 2000, they created the Annual Hispanic International Day Parade which brings together members of many Hispanic cultures to celebrate Columbus Day—known in Latin America as *Día de la Raza* ("Day of the Race").

People of Chilean heritage living in Las Vegas have a yearly picnic in September where they celebrating their independence from Spain. Participants enjoy typical Chilean food, music, and dance. The group *Ecos de Chile* ("Echoes from Chile") presents traditional dances with live music.

The Colombian association of Las Vegas (*COLAVE*) is another active organization. It hosts an annual celebration and provides assistance to new Colombian immigrants.

One of the youngest organizations dedicated to Latino folklore in Las Vegas is *El Centro de Cultura y Folklore de Peru* ("The Center for the Culture and Folklore of Peru"). Arturo Amaya leads the group, which is sponsored by the Peruvian Cultural Arts Association. The Center has introduced the tradition of *La Tunantada* to Las Vegas. This centuries-old custom satirizes Spanish conquistadors, recalling a time when Spain challenged the ancient Incan culture of Peru.

The most recent Hispanic group to organize in order to celebrate and cultivate its traditions is from the Dominican Republic. Founded in 2005, *Dominicans in Nevada* celebrates independence from Spain with a dance in February, which includes several rhythms such as merenge and salsa. In 2007 the organization partnered with the Hispanic Museum of Nevada to present an art exhibit featuring talented Dominican artists.

## G. TRADITIONS

### 1. General Meaning of Tradition

Tradition is...

- h The transmission of beliefs, celebrations, customs, ideas, information, legends, practices, stories, etc., from one generation to another. Many traditions are passed down in oral form.
- h An established order or method of how to do certain things.
- h An accepted manner of behavior, which may include both religious and secular practices and beliefs.

## 2. Hispanic Traditions

These are some important and popular Latino traditions:

- h The Three Kings (Los Reyes Magos)
- h El Día de los Difuntos
- h Quince Años celebration
- h Las Mañanitas (Happy Birthday song)

## 3. The most popular customs both in Latin America and US

### a) Hispanic Traditions - Las Piñatas

A piñata is a brightly-colored party ornament made from either a clay container or cardboard (usually embellished with papier-mâché). If made of cardboard, the piñata can be of any shape, including geometric forms, superheroes, flowers, and animals - among many others. Many experts believe that the piñata originated in Mexico. Archeological evidence shows that the Aztecs, Mayans and other native people had their own versions of the piñata. These early piñatas were pots made of clay which were broken (usually using sticks) to reveal its contents. Such items represented gifts from the gods. The piñata tradition is very popular in Central America and other Latin American countries, including Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Puerto Rico, and Venezuela. This tradition has also spread to the United States. In Central America, the "piñata ritual" went like this: a child would be selected to hit the piñata. He or she would then be blindfolded. With a stick or club, the child would attempt to break the piñata. This remains a very popular and festive Hispanic tradition.

### b) Hispanic Traditions - Quince Años

The Quince Años celebration - also known as Fiesta Quinceañera, Quinces or Fiesta Rosa - is a very popular tradition in most Latin American countries. The Fiesta Quinceañera marks the rite of passage from girlhood to young womanhood. Each country and/or community has a slight variation of the celebration, but it generally consists of a big party with the Quinceañera as the focus of the event. For this special day, the girl wears a very elaborate dress, usually in a pastel color. Most parties also include a waltz, which the girl dances with her father, older brother or other male relative. Nowadays, many girls do opt for a less formal party and some even take a trip with family and/or friends as an alternative to the traditional "quince".

### c) Hispanic Traditions - Las Mañanitas

This is a traditional Mexican birthday song (some people say that in fact, it is two songs in one). You will also find that Las Mañanitas is performed in different musical genres, the mariachi version being one of the most popular. There are - among others - several Las Mañanitas banda versions and there are pop variations. The tradition has spread to different Latin American countries, particularly in Central America where it has become widely popular. The song is usually sung in the morning and sometimes as a serenade (serenata).

### d) Hispanic Traditions - Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead)

El Día de los Muertos (also known as Día de los Difuntos or Día de Finados ) is widely celebrated in most Latin American countries. This tradition is observed on November 2nd (All Souls' Day according to the Catholic calendar). In Mexico and other countries November 1st is dedicated to

honoring and remembering babies and children who have passed on. The date coincides with All Saints' Day, which is celebrated by Catholics around the world. During the Day of the Dead, people remember family members and friends who have passed away. In Mexico, people erect "altares" (altars) in honor of the departed. These altars can be decorated with flowers, pictures of the deceased, fruits and other foodstuffs. Indeed, some of these altars can be quite elaborate. On this day, people also go to the cemetery to "enflorar" (place flowers on the graves of family members and friends) and many spend the day there. Even though this day revolves around death, it is a very festive tradition which focuses on celebrating the life of those who have crossed to the other side.

## VI. CULTURE

Culture is a learned system of knowledge, behaviors, attitudes, beliefs, values, and norms that is shared by a group of people (Smith, 1966). In the broadest sense, culture includes how people think, what they do, and how they use things to sustain their lives. Cultural diversity results from the unique nature of each culture. The elements, values, and context of each culture distinguish it from all others. Hispanic or Latino culture encompasses the traditions, language, idioms, religious beliefs and practices, legends, arts, music, literature, cuisine, history, social and family values of the Hispanic people. Some people use the terms Hispanic culture and Spanish culture interchangeably. However, they refer to two different things: Hispanic culture consists of the traditions and customs of people with Latin American roots and whose primary language is Spanish. Spanish culture encompasses the heritage and traditions of the people of Spain.

Hispanics come from a collectivistic culture where group activities are dominant, responsibility is shared, and accountability is collective. Because of the emphasis on collectivity, harmony and cooperation among the group tends to be emphasized more than individual function and responsibility.

### A. Arts

Beyond the rich tradition of indigenous art, the development of Latin American visual art owed much to the influence of Spanish, Portuguese and French Baroque painting, which in turn often followed the trends of the Italian Masters. In general, this artistic Eurocentrism began to fade in the early twentieth century, as Latin-Americans began to acknowledge the uniqueness of their condition and started to follow their own path. From the early twentieth century, the art of Latin America was greatly inspired by the Constructivist Movement. The Constructivist Movement was founded in Russia around 1913 by Vladimir Tatlin. The Movement quickly spread from Russia to Europe and then into Latin America. Joaquín Torres García and Manuel Rendón have been credited with bringing the Constructivist Movement into Latin America from Europe. An important artistic movement generated in Latin America is Muralism represented by Diego Rivera, David Alfaro Siqueiros, José Clemente Orozco, Rufino Tamayo and many others in Mexico and Santiago Martínez Delgado and Pedro Nel Gómez in Colombia. Some of the most impressive muralist works can be found in Mexico, Colombia, New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Philadelphia. Mexican painter Frida Kahlo remains by far the most known and famous Latin American artist. She painted about her own life and the Mexican culture in a style combining Realism, Symbolism and Surrealism. Kahlo's work commands the highest selling price of all Latin American paintings.

## B. Literature

Pre-Columbian cultures were primarily oral, though the Aztecs and Mayans, for instance, produced elaborate codices. Oral accounts of mythological and religious beliefs were also sometimes recorded after the arrival of European colonizers, as was the case with the PopolVuh. Moreover, a tradition of oral narrative survives to this day, for instance among the Quechua-speaking population of Peru and the Quiché of Guatemala.

From the very moment of Europe's "discovery" of the continent, early explorers and conquistadores produced written accounts and crónicas of their experience—such as Columbus's letters or Bernal Díaz del Castillo's description of the conquest of Mexico. During the colonial period, written culture was often in the hands of the church, within which context Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz wrote memorable poetry and philosophical essays. Towards the end of the 18th Century and the beginning of the 19th, a distinctive criollo literary tradition emerged, including the first novels such as Lizardi's *El Periquillo Sarniento* (1816).

The 19th Century was a period of "foundational fictions" (in critic Doris Sommer's words), novels in the Romantic or Naturalist traditions that attempted to establish a sense of national identity, and which often focussed on the indigenous question or the dichotomy of "civilization or barbarism" (for which see, say, Domingo Sarmiento's *Facundo* (1845), Juan León Mera's *Cumandá* (1879), or Euclides da Cunha's *Os Sertões* (1902)).

At the turn of the 20th century, modernismo emerged, a poetic movement whose founding text was Rubén Darío's *Azul* (1888). This was the first Latin American literary movement to influence literary culture outside of the region, and was also the first truly Latin American literature, in that national differences were no longer so much at issue. José Martí, for instance, though a Cuban patriot, also lived in Mexico and the United States and wrote for journals in Argentina and elsewhere.

However, what really put Latin American literature on the global map was no doubt the literary boom of the 1960s and 1970s, distinguished by daring and experimental novels (such as Julio Cortázar's *Rayuela* (1963)) that were frequently published in Spain and quickly translated into English. The Boom's defining novel was Gabriel García Márquez's *Cien años de soledad* (1967), which led to the association of Latin American literature with magic realism, though other important writers of the period such as Mario Vargas Llosa and Carlos Fuentes do not fit so easily within this framework. Arguably, the Boom's culmination was Augusto Roa Bastos's monumental *Yo, el supremo* (1974). In the wake of the Boom, influential precursors such as Juan Rulfo, Alejo Carpentier, and above all Jorge Luis Borges were also rediscovered.

Contemporary literature in the region is vibrant and varied, ranging from the best-selling Paulo Coelho and Isabel Allende to the more avant-garde and critically acclaimed work of writers such as Giannina Braschi, Diamela Eltit, Ricardo Piglia, Roberto Bolaño or Daniel Sada. There has also been considerable attention paid to the genre of testimony, texts produced in collaboration with subaltern subjects such as Rigoberta Menchú. Finally, a new breed of chroniclers is represented by the more journalistic Carlos Monsiváis and Pedro Lemebel.

The region boasts six Nobel Prizewinners: in addition to the Colombian García Márquez (1982), also the Chilean poet Gabriela Mistral (1945), the Guatemalan novelist Miguel Ángel Asturias (1967), the Chilean poet Pablo Neruda (1971), the Mexican poet and essayist Octavio Paz (1990), and the Peruvian writer Mario Vargas Llosa (2010).

### C. Philosophy

In the 1870-1930 period, the philosophy of positivism or "cientificismo" associated with Auguste Comte in France and Herbert Spencer in England exerted a strong influence on intellectuals, experts and writers in most of the region.

Intellectuals embraced positivism with enthusiasm as they saw it as the key to modernization of their economies and societies and a weapon to break the old colonial patterns that still survived. Positivism had an impact on government policy; in Mexico, for example, the administration of President Porfirio Díaz (1876 to 1911) relied heavily on a group of scientific and technocratic advisors who reflected Positivist thinking.

### D. Film

Latin American film is both rich and diverse. But the main centers of production have been Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, and Cuba.

Latin American cinema flourished after the introduction of sound, which added a linguistic barrier to the export of Hollywood film south of the border. The 1950s and 1960s saw a movement towards Third Cinema, led by the Argentine filmmakers Fernando Solanas and Octavio Getino. More recently, a new style of directing and stories filmed as been tagged as "New Latin American Cinema."

Mexican movies from the Golden Era in the 1940s are significant examples of Latin American cinema, with a huge industry comparable to the Hollywood of those years. More recently movies such as *Amores Perros* (2000) and *Y tú mamá también* (2001) have been successful in creating universal stories about contemporary subjects, and were internationally recognised. Nonetheless, the country has also witnessed the rise of experimental filmmakers such as Carlos Reygadas and Fernando Eimbicke who focus on more universal themes and characters. Other important Mexican directors are Arturo Ripstein and Guillermo del Toro.

Argentine cinema was a big industry in the first half of the 20th century. After a series of military governments that shackled culture in general, the industry re-emerged after the 1976-1983 military dictatorship to produce the Academy Award winner *The Official Story* in 1985. The Argentine economic crisis affected the production of films in the late 1990s and early 2000s, but many Argentine movies produced during those years were internationally acclaimed, including *Plata Quemada* (2000), *Nueve reinas* (2000), *El abrazo partido* (2004) and *Roma* (2004).

In Brazil, the Cinema Novo movement created a particular way of making movies with critical and intellectual screenplays, a clearer photography related to the light of the outdoors in a tropical landscape, and a political message. The modern Brazilian film industry has become more profitable inside the country, and some of its productions have received prizes and recognition in Europe and the United States. Movies like *Central do Brasil* (1999) and *Cidade de Deus* (2003) have fans around the world, and its directors have taken part in American and European film projects.

Cuban cinema has enjoyed much official support since the Cuban revolution, and important filmmakers include Tomás Gutiérrez Alea.

### E. Modern dance

Latin America has a strong tradition of evolving dance styles. Some of its dance and music is considered to emphasize sexuality, and have become popular outside of their countries of origin. Salsa and the more popular Latin dances were created and embraced into the culture in the early and middle 1900s and has since been able to retain its significance both in and outside the Americas. The mariachi bands of Mexico stirred up quick paced rhythms and playful movements at the same time that Cuba embraced similar musical and dance styles. Traditional dances were blended with new, modern ways of moving, evolving into a blended, more contemporary forms.

Ballroom studios teach lessons on many Latin American dances. One can even find the cha-cha being done in honky-tonk country bars. Miami has been a large contributor of the United States' involvement in Latin dancing. With such a huge Puerto Rican and Cuban population one can find Latin dancing and music in the streets at any time of day or night.

Some of the dances of Latin America are derived from and named for the type of music they are danced to. For example, mambo, salsa, cha-cha-cha, rumba, merengue, samba, flamenco, bachata, and, probably most recognizable, the tango are among the most popular. Each of the types of music has specific steps that go with the music, the counts, the rhythms, and the style.

Modern Latin American dancing is very energetic. These dances primarily are performed with a partner as a social dance, but solo variations exist. The dances emphasize passionate hip movements and the connection between partners. Many of the dances are done in a close embrace while others are more traditional and similar to ballroom dancing, holding a stronger frame between the partners.

### **F. Theatre**

Theatre in Latin America existed before the Europeans came to the continent. The natives of Latin America had their own rituals, festivals, and ceremonies. They involved dance, singing of poetry, song, theatrical skits, mime, acrobatics, and magic shows. The performers were trained; they wore costumes, masks, makeup, wigs. Platforms had been erected to enhance visibility. The 'sets' were decorated with branches from trees and other natural objects.

The Europeans used this to their advantage. For the first fifty years after the Conquest the missionaries used theatre widely to spread the Christian doctrine to a population accustomed to the visual and oral quality of spectacle and thus maintaining a form of cultural hegemony. It was more effective to use the indigenous forms of communication than to put an end to the 'pagan' practices, the conquerors took out the content of the spectacles, retained the trappings, and used them to convey their own message.

Pre-Hispanic rituals were how the indigenous came in contact with the divine. Spaniards used plays to Christianize and colonize the indigenous peoples of the Americas in the sixteenth century. Theatre was a potent tool in manipulating a population already accustomed to spectacle. Theatre became a tool for political hold on Latin America by colonialist theatre by using indigenous performance practices to manipulate the population.

Theatre provided a way for the indigenous people were forced to participate in the drama of their own defeat. In 1599, the Jesuits even used cadavers of Native Americans to portray the dead in the staging of the final judgment.

While the plays were promoting a new sacred order, their first priority was to support the new secular, political order. Theatre under the colonizers primarily at the service of the administration.

After disease, exploitation, and murder occurred to the native population, the indigenous consciousness and identity in theatre disappeared, though pieces did have indigenous elements to them. The theatre that progressed in Latin America is argued to be theatre that the conquerors brought to the Americas, not the theatre of the Americas.

### 1. Progression in Postcolonial Latin American Theatre

Internal strife and external interference have been the drive behind Latin American history which applies the same to theatre.

1959-1968: dramaturgical structures and structures of social projects leaned more toward constructing a more native Latin American base called the "Nuestra America"

1968-1974: Theatre tries to claim a more homogenous definition which brings in more European models. At this point, Latin American Theatre tried to connect to its historical roots.

1974-1984: The search for expression rooted in the history of Latin America became victims of exile and death.

## VII. CONCLUSION

Hispanic and Latino Americans are an ethnolinguistic group of citizens of the United States with origins in the countries of Latin America or the Iberian peninsula.

Beginning with the 1492 arrival of Christopher Columbus and continuing for over four centuries, the Spanish Empire would expand across most of present day Central America, the Caribbean Islands, Mexico, and much of the rest of North America including the Southwestern, Southern coastal, and California's Pacific Coast regions of the United States.

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