

Latino/Hispanic Health Equity Initiative 2013-2014
Achieving Health Equity Through
Education, Collaboration and Action
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Understanding Latina/os to Strengthen Healthcare Service Delivery

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Popular beliefs about Latinos/Hispanics in the United States

- Latino immigrants increase crime.
- Latinos don't want to learn English.
- Latinos don't want to assimilate.
- Latino immigrants are "takers." They don't pay taxes, and they take away our jobs.
- Most Latinos in the United States are foreign born.

Which of these statements is true and which is false?

All of the preceding statements are false.

Understanding Latina/o communities

Common misperceptions and myths about Latina/os:

- **Have a detrimental impact on whether Latina/os receive basic services in the areas of education, housing, criminal justice and healthcare**

and

- **Impede our ability to implement best practices and effective service delivery approaches.**

About this presentation . . .

This presentation will

- Look at popular misconceptions about Latina/os in the United States,
- Briefly review the long history of negative images of Latin Americans and Latina/os and why myths persists, and
- Recommend moving beyond stereotypes to forge new ways of understanding and respecting each other in the diverse society we inhabit.

Immigrants and Crime: Myths and reality

- Immigrants to the United States actually have **lower incarceration rates** than other groups in the population (Butcher and Piehl 2005).
- Immigrants to the United States, mainly, tend to be **highly motivated to use their skills in forging a better life** and not interested in run-ins with the law that could hinder achieving their goal (Butcher and Piehl 2005).
- Research has shown that “recent immigration generally does not increase community levels of homicide” and that “**immigration can be a stabilizing force that suppresses criminal violence**” (Lee 2003, 80).
- Sociologists have pointed out that immigrants actually **help reduce crime and bring economic activity and revitalizing communities** (see, e.g., Karmen 2000; Vigdor 2014).

References:

Butcher, Kristen F., and Anne Morrison Piehl. 2005. “Why are immigrants’ incarceration rates so low? Evidence on selective immigration deterrence, and deportation.” Working Papers 2005-19. Chicago: Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, http://www.chicagofed.org/publications/workingpapers/wp2005_19.pdf (accessed June 17, 2007).

Karman, Andrew. 2000. *New York murder mystery: The true story behind the crime crash of the 1990s*. New York: New York University Press.

Lee, Matthew. 2003. *Crime on the border: Immigration and homicide in urban communities*. New York: LFB Scholarly Publishing.

Vigdor, Jacob L. 2014. *Immigration and New York City: The contributions of foreign-born Americans to New York’s renaissance, 1975–2013*. New York: Americas Society/Council of the Americas.

Latino/a Immigrants and Crime: Myths and reality

- Latino/a immigrants **are no more prone** to commit crime than other groups. After taking into consideration factors such as age and vulnerability to pre-trial detention, Latino/a immigrants are actually **less** likely to be involved in crime than citizens (Hagan and Palloni 1999).
- Latino/a immigrants come to the United States with **strong cultural and family traditions that are incompatible with criminal behavior** (Hagan and Palloni 1999).
- Latino/a family and cultural strengths are **“social and cultural capital” that serve to deter crime** (Hagan and Palloni 1999; see also Martínez 2002).
- The supposed link between crime and Latino/a immigrants tend to be a product of the criminal justice and immigration laws, policies, and practices (Hagan and Palloni 1999).

References:

- Hagan, John, and Alberto Palloni. 1999. "Sociological Criminology and the mythology of Hispanic immigration and crime." *Social Problems* 46 (4): 617-32.
- Martínez, Jr., Ramiro. 2002. *Latino homicide: Immigration, violence and community*. New York: Routledge.

Immigration Realities

- Unauthorized immigration is **not** associated with higher crime rates.
- “High immigration” states have the **lowest crime rates.**
- Crime rates in Arizona have been **falling** for years.
- Arizona’s new immigration law distracts police from fighting crime.

Source:

Immigration Policy Center. 2010. Arizona’s Punishment Doesn’t Fit the Crime: Studies Show Decrease in Arizona Crime Rates Over Time, <http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/just-facts/arizona%E2%80%99s-punishment-doesn%E2%80%99t-fit-crime-studies-show-decrease-arizona-crime-rates>

Crime rates in Arizona have been falling for years

The Bureau of Justice Statistics reports that the rates for both property crime and violent crime (including murder, assault, and rape) have fallen in Arizona in recent years:

- “The violent crime rate fell from 545.4 per 100,000 people in 2006 to 481.1 per 100,000 people in 2008. . . .
- The property crime rate fell from 5,849.8 per 100,000 people in 2002 to 4,087.3 per 100,000 people in 2008.” (Immigration Policy Center, 2010).

Source:

Immigration Policy Center. 2010. Arizona’s Punishment Doesn’t Fit the Crime: Studies Show Decrease in Arizona Crime Rates Over Time, <http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/just-facts/arizona%E2%80%99s-punishment-doesn%E2%80%99t-fit-crime-studies-show-decrease-arizona-crime-rates>

Immigrants and English Language Acquisition

- Research shows it is **not** true that immigrants—including Latinos/as— refuse to learn English.
- **“The large majority of immigrants *are learning English and learning it well.*”** Data for all immigrants—including Latinos—show remarkable progress in English-language acquisition (Tse 2001,12-21).
- Contrary to popularly held beliefs about the influence of culture, differences in social class affect the rate of English language acquisition much more than cultural heritage (Tse 2001,12-21).
- **English is not threatened, and that “[c]hildren of immigrants, in fact, favor English over their heritage language, which has spelled the systematic loss and eventual death of heritage language in immigrant families”** (Tse 2001,71).

Reference:

Tse, Lucy. 2001. *Why don't they learn English?: Separating fact from fallacy in the U.S. language debate*, New York: Teachers College Press.

Immigrants and English Language Acquisition

- **Class and prior educational opportunities**, not culture, play a key role in how fast immigrants learn English (Tse 2001).
- When one controls for social class, **“fluent or ‘true’ bilingual children actually outperformed monolinguals on a variety of achievement tests.”** (Portes and Rumbaut 2006, 242).
- **Latinos value education** and rank learning English high in importance.

“By overwhelming margins, Latinos say it is very important that English be taught to children of immigrant families” (Pew Hispanic Center 2006, 2).

- One of the greatest obstacles to learning English is not the lack of desire to learn it, but the lack of ESL and similar programs (Tse 2001).

References:

Tse, Lucy. 2001. *Why don't they learn English?": Separating fact from fallacy in the U.S. language debate*, New York: Teachers College Press.

Portes, Alejandro, and Rubén G. Rumbaut. 2006. *Immigrant America: A portrait*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press.

Pew Hispanic Center. 2006. *Fact sheet: Hispanic attitudes toward learning English*. Washington, D.C., Pew Hispanic Center, <http://pewhispanic.org/files/factsheets/20.pdf> (accessed July 29, 2007).

Immigrants and Assimilation:

Recent data show that immigrants are assimilating and integrating into U.S. society

- The longer immigrants are in the U.S., the more integrated into the United States they become. This fact remains consistent across the nation, whether or not they came from Mexico and Central America or from other countries.
- **Arizona**
Arizona stands out as an example, where Latino immigrants have proven much more successful than some have assumed.

After 18 year of residence,

- 66.6% are homeowners,
- 59.2% speak English well, and
- 57.9% earn better than a low income.

Source:

Myers, Dowell and Pitkin. 2010. Assimilation today: New evidence shows the latest immigrants to America are following in our history's footsteps. Washington, D.C.: Center for American Progress.

Immigration and assimilation:

Recent data show immigrants are assimilating at rates as fast or faster than previous immigrants

- Regardless of their socioeconomic starting point, immigrants, in most instances, have been integrating at high rates since 1990.
- Integration has occurred most rapidly in the areas of citizenship and homeownership, especially in the first 18 years of U.S. residency.
- The rate of citizenship grew rapidly, from under 10% in 1990 to 56% by 2008.
- High school completion rates as well as earnings have also been increasing. The percent of foreign-born men earning above a low income, rose from 35% in 1990 when they recently arrived, to 66% in 2008, after having been in the country.
- Immigrant children—and specifically Latino children—show high rates of attainment in education and occupation than adult immigrants, who have less access to education as newly-arrived workers.
- U.S.-born children of immigrant parents, generally, are exceeding their parents' educational attainment levels.

Source:

Myers, Dowell and Pitkin. 2010. Assimilation today: New evidence shows the latest immigrants to America are following in our history's footsteps. Washington, D.C.: Center for American Progress.

Unauthorized immigrants are not “takers”

- Undocumented immigrants pay
 - Sales taxes
 - Property taxes—even if they rent
 - At least half pay income taxes
 - Taxes on wages for benefits, like social security, they will never receive.
- In 2010, households headed by undocumented immigrants paid **\$11.2 billion in state and local taxes**.
- “The states receiving the most tax revenue from households headed by unauthorized immigrants were
 - California (\$2.7 billion),
 - Texas (\$1.6 billion),
 - Florida (\$806.8 million),
 - New York (\$662.4 million),
 - and Illinois (\$499.2 million)” (Immigration Policy Center 2011).

“These immigrants—and their family members—are **adding value** to the U.S. economy; not only as taxpayers, but as workers, consumers, and entrepreneurs as well” (Immigration Policy Center 2011) .

Source:

Immigration Policy Center. 2011. Unauthorized Immigrants Pay Taxes, Too. Washington, D.C.: American Immigration Council. <http://www.immigrationpolicy.org/just-facts/unauthorized-immigrants-pay-taxes-too>

Does immigration result in job losses?

Research data show it does not. Just the opposite, immigrants help create jobs.

Economist Giovanni Peri: “immigrants expand the U.S. economy’s productive capacity, stimulate investment, and promote specialization that in the long run boosts productivity,” and “there is no evidence that these effects take place at the expense of jobs for workers born in the United States” (Immigration Policy Center 2012).

- **Studies show no correlation between immigration and unemployment.**
 - “If immigrants took jobs away from large numbers of native-born workers, one would expect to find high unemployment rates in those parts of the country with the largest numbers of immigrants. . . [Instead,] recent immigrants accounted for a *higher* share of the population (4.6 percent) in counties with the *lowest* unemployment rates.”
- **Immigrants help *create* jobs because they are consumers and many are entrepreneurs.**
 - They “spend their wages in U.S. businesses—buying food, clothes, appliances, cars, etc.
 - They “are more likely than natives to start their own businesses.”
 - They fuel technological and scientific innovation as well. According to a report from the Brookings Institution, “among people with advanced degrees, immigrants are three times more likely to file patents than U.S.-born citizens.”
- **Immigrants and native-born workers are typically in different job markets and thus are not in competition for the same jobs.**
 - Immigrants and native-born workers have different levels of education.
 - Immigrants and native-born workers are employed in different occupations.
 - Immigrants and native-born workers specialize in different kinds of tasks.
 - Immigrants and native-born workers live in different places.
- **Immigration tend to provide a small boost to the wages of most native-born workers.**
 - E.g., “the addition of immigrant workers to the labor force stimulates investment as new restaurants and stores open, new homes are built, etc. This increases the demand for labor, which exerts upward pressure on wages.”

Source: Immigration Policy Center. 2012. Value Added: Immigrants Create Jobs and Businesses, Boost Wages of Native-Born Workers . Washington, D.C.: American Immigration Council.

The majority of Latinos in the United States are U.S. born.

- **U.S. Latina/o Population: 53,027,708 in 2014, a 50% increase since 2000**
- **Three out of five Latinos are U.S. born.**
- **Two-thirds of all U.S. Latina/os are of Mexican origin**

Population:	Numbers	Percentage of Latinos
• Mexicans	33,539,000	64.6
• Puerto Ricans	4,916,000	9.5
• Salvadorans	1,952,000	3.8
• Cubans	1,889,000	3.6
• Dominicans	1,528,000	2.9
• Guatemalans	1,216,000	2.3
• Colombians	989,000	1.9
• Spaniards	707,000	1.4
• Hondurans	702,000	1.4
• Ecuadorians	645,000	1.2
• Peruvians	556,000	1.1
• Nicaraguans	395,000	0.5
• Argentineans	242,000	0.5

Sources:

Brown, Anna. 2014. The U.S. Hispanic population has increased sixfold since 1970. Washington, D.C.: Pew Research Center/Pew Hispanic Center, <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/02/26/the-u-s-hispanic-population-has-increased-sixfold-since-1970/>

Lopez, Mark Hugo, Ana Gonzalez-Barrera, and Danielle Cuddington. 2013. Diverse Origins: The Nation's 14 Largest Hispanic-Origin Groups. Washington, D.C.: Pew Research Center/Pew Hispanic Center, <http://www.pewhispanic.org/>

Latina/os in the New York-Northeastern NJ Metropolitan Area

▪ Hispanic Population	4,317,000
▪ Share Hispanic Among Population	24.2%
▪ Among Hispanics, Share Foreign Born	42.5%
▪ Among Under 18, Share Hispanic	29.6%

Top Hispanic Origin Groups (Group, Share)

▪ Puerto Rican	28.4%
▪ Dominican	20.8%
▪ Mexican	12.2%
▪ Salvadoran	5%
▪ Cuban	3%
▪ Guatemalan	2%

Source:

Brown, Anna and Mark Hugo Lopez. 2013. Mapping the Latino Population, By State, County and City. Washington, D.C.: Pew Research Hispanic Trends Project, <http://www.pewhispanic.org/2013/08/29/mapping-the-latino-population-by-state-county-and-city/>

Myths and realities about Latina/os and Latina/o immigrants

- **Why do myths about immigrants exist and persist over time?**
- **What do we know historically about how previous immigrants were treated?**
- **Why were they treated that way?**
- **What do we know about the history of race in the United States?**
- **Has much changed?**

Race and Racialization

The long and troubling history involving race in the United States and its enduring legacy shape contemporary attitudes around immigration.

Race

- Race involves differentiating among people based on skin color.
- Race is a social construct not based in biology or science.

Racialization

- Racialization occurs when a person or a group of people are viewed or treated as “others” based on presumed racial differences.

Immigrants: Past and Present

- ▶ Myths and misperception about previous immigrants to the United States are similar to those about Latinos today.
- ▶ The Irish, Italians, Jews, Chinese and other immigrants who were not Anglo Saxon Protestants were frequently characterized as a **threat to the country, prone to criminal conduct, and unwilling and unable to assimilate.**
- ▶ The Irish, Italians, Jews, Chinese and other immigrants were viewed and treated as non-white. That is, they were considered **racially “other”** compared to the Anglo Saxon.

Italian and Irish Immigrants, 1880

The New York Times, Editorial, May 15, 1880:

There is a limit to our powers of assimilation and when it is exceeded the country suffers from something very like indigestion. . . . **We are not in need of any more aliens** at present. Foreigners who come here and **herd together like sheep** remain foreigners all their lives. We know how stubbornly conservative of his **dirt** and his **ignorance** is the average immigrant who settles in New York, particularly if he is of **a clannish race like the Italians**. Born in squalor, raised in filth and misery and kept at work almost from infancy, **these wretched beings change their abode, but not their bad habits** in coming to New York . . . A **bad Irish-American** boy is about as **unwholesome** a product as was ever reared in any body politic. (Simon 1985, p. 186) [emphasis added]

Reference:

Simon, Rita J. 1989. *Public opinion and the immigrant*. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.

Immigration and the concept of race in U.S. history:

- Even after slavery was abolished in 1865, it was still legal to discriminate against persons based on race.
- In *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1869), the U.S. Supreme Court made legal a system of “separate but equal,” commonly referred to as “Jim Crow.”
- It took 85 years before the Court would rule that “separate but equal” is unequal and unconstitutional.

Latina/os and the concept of race in U.S. history:

Latina/os were also subject to racial/ethnic segregation and discrimination in schools, restaurants, public pools, restrooms and other public accommodations.



Defining Latin Americans and Latinas/os as Racially “Other”

- **Manifest destiny**—a term coined in 1845—not only justified U.S. expansionism as a God-given right, it was premised on the racial, religious, and cultural superiority of White Anglo-Americans over Latin Americans (Smith 2000; Stephanson 1995).
- Advancing the image of Latin Americans as racially “other” and the White Anglo American as superior, was key to justifying the U.S. expansionism of the 1800s, including U.S. conquests in Mexico by 1848 and the colonization of Puerto Rico and other islands and peoples in 1898 (Morín, 2009).
- **“Race”** and **racialization** has played a central role in defining U.S. laws and policies having to do with Latin Americans and subsequently with Latinas/os in the United States.
- There is a long history of racialization, racially-negative depictions and unequal treatment of Latin Americans, and by extension, of Latinos/as in the United States.

References:

- Morín, José Luis. 2009. *Latino/a rights and justice in the United States: Perspectives and approaches*, 2nd ed. Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press.
- Smith, Peter H. 2000. *Talons of the eagle: Dynamics of U.S.-Latin American relations*. 2d ed. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Stephanson, Anders. 1995. *Manifest destiny: American expansion and the empire of right*. New York: Hill and Wang.

Manifest Destiny and The Racialization of Latin Americans: Defining Latin Americans and U.S. Latinos as Racially “Other”

MEXICANS

James Buchanan in the 1800s spoke of the “Mexican race” as a “**mongrel**” **race** incapable of participation in a democracy (Horsman 1981, 251) .

Premised on the ideology of **manifest destiny** and the racial, religious, and cultural superiority of Anglo Americans, the United States took possession of approximately half of Mexico’s land base through war by 1848, an area that now comprises roughly one-third of the continental United States (Morín, 2009; Perea, Delgado, Harris, and Wildman, 2007, 288; Stephanson 1995).

References:

- Horsman, Reginald. 1981. *Race and Manifest Destiny: The origins of American racial Anglo-Saxonism*. Cambridge Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Morín, José Luis. 2009. *Latino/a rights and justice in the United States: Perspectives and approaches*, 2nd ed. Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press.
- Perea, Juan, F., Richard Delgado, Angela P. Harris, Jean Stefancic, and Stephanie M. Wildman. 2007. *Race and races: Cases and Resouces for a diverse America*, 2nd ed. St. Paul, MN: Thompson/West.
- Stephanson, Anders. 1995. *Manifest destiny: American expansion and the empire of right*. New York: Hill and Wang.

Manifest Destiny and The Racialization of Latin Americans: Defining Latin Americans and U.S. Latinos as racially “other”

PUERTO RICANS

A racialized vision of Puerto Ricans proved central to the establishment of a framework for unequal treatment under U.S. law.

In a Congressional debate in 1900 about extending U.S. constitutional protections to Puerto Ricans, Puerto Ricans were characterized as being **“of the Latin race, and are of quick and excitable tempers”** (U.S. Senate 1900, 4875).

In 1901, the U.S. Supreme Court deemed it impossible to confer full constitutional rights to Puerto Ricans who are among the **“alien races”** who inhabit Spain’s former colonies and who thus were not ready for **“the blessings of a free government under the Constitution extended to them”** (*Downes v. Bidwell*, 182 U.S. 244, 286 (1901)). Justice Henry Billings Brown in the *Downes* case conceded that any other decision could **“be fatal to the development of...the American Empire”** (*Downes v. Bidwell*, 182 U.S. 244, 286 [1901]).

Today, although Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens, they do not have on their homeland equal rights as other U.S. citizens:

- Puerto Ricans cannot vote for the U.S. President but can be drafted to fight U.S. wars.
- Puerto Ricans do not have voting representation in the U.S. Congress, which passes laws that affect Puerto Rico.
- Puerto Ricans lack meaningful control over immigration, monetary policy, international trade and other major areas of their economy and politics.

Racialized and negative depictions of Latin Americans and other conquered peoples: 1898

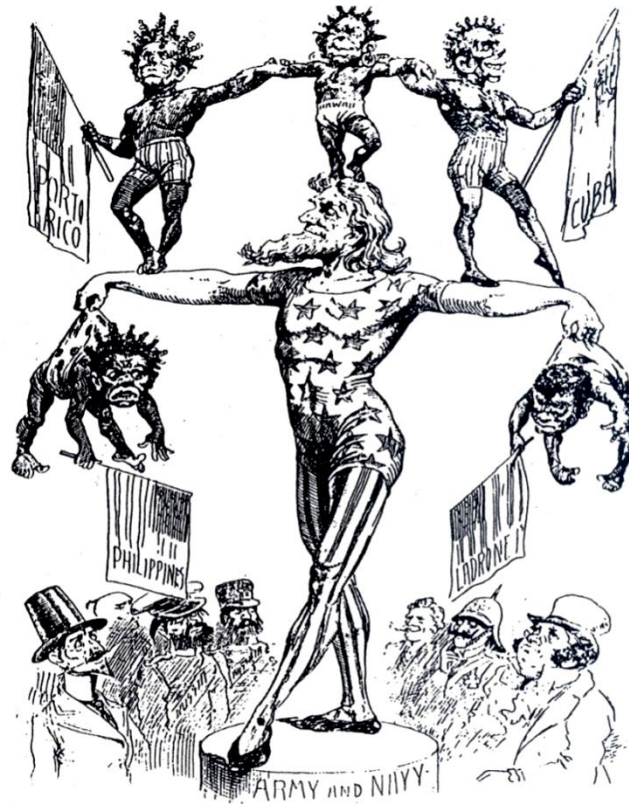


First class in "United States."—*Cincinnati Post*.

Primera clase en los "Estados Unidos".

Racially-negative depictions of Latin Americans and other conquered peoples:

1898



JOHN BULL: "It's really most extraordinary what training will do. Why, only the other day I thought that man unable to support himself." - *Philadelphia Inquirer*.

SOSTENIENDOLOS ARRIBA

John Bull - "Es realmente extraordinario lo que puede hacer el entrenamiento. Si el otro día yo pensaba que ese hombre no podía ni sostenerse a sí mismo."

Negative and racialized depictions of Puerto Ricans: 1898



WILL WEAR THE STARS AND STRIPES.
UNCLE SAM—"Here, sonny, put on these duds."
—*Minneapolis Journal*.

Race and Racialization in U.S. Law and Society:

Defining U.S. Latinos as Racially “Other”

“Greaser Act” of 1855

An anti-vagrancy law enacted in California that defined vagrants as “all persons who are commonly known as ‘Greasers’ or the issue [children] of Spanish and Indian blood” (Act of April 30, 1855, ch. 175, §2, 1855, Cal. Stat. 217)

De jure Segregation against Latinas/os

Segregation of public accommodations, such as restaurants, public pools and schools. See e.g., *Mendez v. Westminster School District of Orange County*, 64 F. Supp.544 (S.D. Cal. 1946), aff’d 161 F.2d 774 (9th Cir. 1947).

Lynching of Latinas/os

597 lynchings or more of Mexicans/Latinos occurred during the same period when black lynching were common in the United States. The motives for lynching were “similar [to African Americans]—acting ‘uppity,’ taking away jobs, making advances toward a white woman, cheating at cards, practicing ‘witchcraft,’ and refusing to leave land that Anglos coveted—with one exception. . . . acting ‘too Mexican’—speaking Spanish too loudly or reminding Anglos too defiantly of their Mexicanness. As with African Americans, Latino lynching went on with the knowledge and, in some cases, active participation of Anglo law enforcement authorities, especially the Texas Rangers” (Delgado 2009, 299).

Zoot suit riots of 1943

Mexican Americans in Los Angeles wearing zoot suits were stereotyped as criminals and targeted for abuse by police.

Reference:

Delgado, Richard. 2009. The law of the noose: A history of Latino lynching. *Harvard Civil Rights and Civil Liberties Review*, 44: 297-312.

Latina/os and the U.S. News Media Today

Dorfman and Schiraldi (2001, 13):

- 75 percent of the studies on local television news showed “minorities” as overrepresented as perpetrators of crime.
- “Hispanics were 14% more likely to be depicted as committing violent crime than nonviolent crime, whereas Hispanics were [only] 7% more likely to be arrested for a violent crime than a nonviolent crime.”
- In contrast, “Whites were 31% more likely to be depicted committing a nonviolent crime than a violent crime, whereas Whites were in fact only 7% more likely to be arrested for a nonviolent crime. Thus, while **Blacks and Hispanics were overrepresented as violent offenders, Whites were underrepresented as violent offenders on the evening news**” (15).

In 2003, National Association of Hispanic Journalists (NAHJ) reported that:

- 66 percent of network news stories about Latinos/as in 2002 focused exclusively on **three topics: crime, terrorism, or illegal immigration.**
- Suspected terrorist, José Padilla, suspected “dirty bomb” terrorist occupied “a central role in the coverage of Latinos . . . with 21 network stories or 18 percent of all stories aired on Latinos” (Méndez-Méndez and Alverio 2003, 3).

In its 2005 *Network Brownout Report*, NAHJ:

- Expressed frustration with the continuing absence of Latinas/os in news stories and the type of coverage rendered that year about Latinas/os by three major network evening newscasts, *ABC World News*, *CBS Evening News*, and *NBC Nightly News* (Montalvo 2006).
- The report notes that “Latinos make up 14.5 percent of the U.S. population but less than one percent of the stories on the network evening news” (5), and voices its dismay that “[i]n contrast to 2004, Latinos were more often portrayed in crime stories in 2005. For most of these stories, Latinos were the perpetrators, not the victims” (4).

Sources: Dorfman, L., & Schiraldi V. (2001). *Off balance: Youth, race and crime in the news*. Washington, D.C.: Building Blocks for Youth.

Méndez-Méndez, S., & Alverio, D. (2003). *Network brownout 2003: The portrayal of Latinos in network television news, 2002*. Washington, D.C.: National Association of Hispanic Journalists.

Montalvo, D. (2006). *Network brownout 2006: The portrayal of Latinos and Latino issues on network television news, 2005*. Washington, D.C.: National Association of Hispanic Journalists,.

Latinas/os Images in Film, Theater, and Television

The most popular and enduring images of Latinos have been the violent, pathological bandit (“bandito”), the switchblade-carrying juvenile delinquents, the ruthless drug-dealer and the gang member.

Examples:

Movies

- The Cowboy Baby (1910)
- Tony the Greaser (1911)
- Broncho Billy and the Greaser (1914)
- The Young Savages (1961)
- West Side Story (1961)
- Dirty Harry (1971)
- The French Connection (1971)
- Badge 373 (1973)
- The Seven-Ups (1973)
- Fort Apache: The Bronx (1974)
- The Exterminator (1980)
- Scarface (1983)
- Colors (1988)
- American Me (1992)
- Falling Down (1993)
- Carlito’s Way (1993)
- Traffic (2000)

Theater

- West Side Story
- Capeman

Television

- Cops
- American Undercover

Sources:

Berg, Charles Ramírez. 2002. *Latino images in film: Stereotypes, subversion, resistance*. Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press.
Gonzalez, Juan. 2011. *Harvest of Empire: A history of Latinos in America* (revised ed.). New York: Penguin Books.
Martínez, Jr., Ramiro. 2002. *Latino homicide: Immigration, violence and community*. New York: Routledge.

The Impact of Past and Present Misrepresentations and Misconceptions of Latina/os

- The long history of racialized, negative images and stereotypes form the foundation for present day misperceptions and myths about Latina/os.
- Misperceptions and myths are reinforced today by news media, movies and other sources.
- The persistence of negative images and stereotypes have a detrimental effect on how we view and treat Latina/os in many different settings—e.g., schools, housing, the criminal justice system and health care facilities.
- Negative images and stereotypes contribute to **disparities in treatment and outcomes**, and they **impede our ability to implement best practices and effective service delivery approaches**.

The Urgent Need to Address Health Disparities

The CDC reports that Latina/os, compared to Whites, have

- The highest percentages of households living in inadequate and unhealthy housing, along with African Americans
- Substantially higher uninsured rates compared to Whites
- Lower influenza vaccination rates compared to Whites
- High prevalence of obesity among Mexican American males age 20 and up
- Disproportionate rates of HIV diagnoses
- High incidents of preventable hospitalization
- Significant income and education disparities compared to Whites affecting health and wellbeing

Source:

CDC. 2011 CDC health disparities and inequalities report, www.cdc.gov/minorityhealth/population/REMP/hispanichtml

Cultural Competency: Moving beyond stereotypes and forging new ways to address health needs in a diverse society

“Cultural competence should be defined as a system’s, agency’s, or organization’s ability to have attitudes, behaviors, policies, practices, procedures, and fiscal and personnel resources that enable them to work effectively in cross-cultural situations.

It involves more than just translating documents and providing services in a person’s native language. Culturally competent services take into account cross-cultural factors and institutionalize such knowledge, adapting services to the communities they serve” (Arya, Villarruel, Villanueva, and Augarten 2009, 55).

Reference:

Arya, Neelum, Francisco Villarruel, Cassandra Villanueva, and Ian Augarten. 2009. America’s invisible children: Latino youth and the failure of justice. Washington, D.C.: Campaign for Youth Justice and National Council of La Raza. http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/documents/CFYJPB_InvisibleChildren.pdf

Cultural Competence: Five Basic Elements

- **“Valuing diversity;**
- **self-assessment** (the ability as an individual or agency to examine yourself and/or your organization);
- **the ability to manage the dynamics of difference** (being prepared with the awareness, knowledge, and skills to assist in smoothing out, negotiating, or navigating those differences);
- **institutionalizing cultural knowledge** (making sure that not just one person in your organization or on your staff has the knowledge or the skill to work with a particular cultural group or community, but ensuring that the organization is aware of this knowledge or skill and is making it a part of the organization’s knowledge and skill set); and
- **making adaptations to policies, service delivery, structures, attitudes, and behaviors.”** (Arya, Villarruel, Villanueva, and Augarten 2009, 55-56).

Reference:

Arya, Neelum, Francisco Villarruel, Cassandra Villanueva, and Ian Augarten. 2009. America’s invisible children: Latino youth and the failure of justice. Washington, D.C.: Campaign for Youth Justice and National Council of La Raza. http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/documents/CFYJPB_InvisibleChildren.pdf

Broadening Our Understanding to Better Serve All Populations

- Latina/os today comprise the largest “minority” group, according to the Census Bureau. Despite their long history in the United States, it is a population that is still poorly understood.
- Our society still falls short in having overcome longstanding myths, misconceptions and stereotypes.
- Expanding our knowledge and understanding of Latina/os and other groups is an important first step in being able to provide culturally competent services. In our increasingly diverse country, it will be essential to deepen our awareness and understanding if we truly desire to meet the health needs of all members of our society.



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