

NEXO

The Official Newsletter of The Julian Samora Research Institute
The Midwest's Premier Latino Research Center

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JSRI's mission is to generate, disseminate, and apply knowledge to serve the needs of Latino communities in the Midwest and across the nation.

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NEXO

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JSRI at Michigan State University is committed to the generation, transmission, and application of knowledge as it relates to Latinos and Latino communities throughout the Midwest and the nation.

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Rubén Martínez

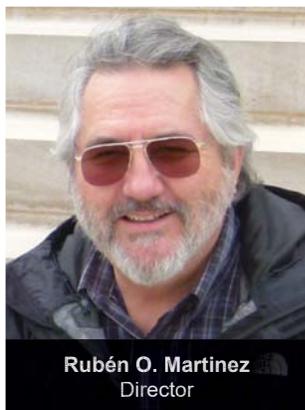
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Polarized America



Rubén O. Martínez
Director

How did the nation become so politically polarized that the U.S. Congress has been almost completely dysfunctional for several years, with partisan politics prevailing over the public good? This is a question that telejournalists ask rhetorically on national TV. When they attempt to answer the question, however, they frame it in terms of political personalities and present-day political issues, and by doing so they miss the mark, whether intentionally or not, and betray both the importance and profundity of the question.

The question is important because an accurate response has major implications for the content of public discourse and how people understand the current political and economic context. People want to know why this country is experiencing such deep political divisions, and they also want to know why the national economy continues to stagger along, with GDP increases well below those of 2013 and 2014, and why there is increasing poverty at a time when profits and wealth are also growing.

The question is profound because addressing it takes us to greater depths of understanding in terms of ideology, political movements, economic policies, and political conflict. The ideology is rooted in the ideas of Austrian economists who, in the 1920s, opposed the planned economies that arose in Europe at the turn of the 20th century. Their ideas took hold at the Walter Lippmann Colloquium held in Paris, France in 1938, where intellectuals from several countries met to discuss ways to oppose socialism and the philosophy of collectivism. It was at that meeting that the term “neoliberalism” was coined by Louis Rougier, the convener of the colloquium, as participants struggled to label their view of an alternative to socialism. Their efforts were interrupted by WWII, but their discussions were taken up in 1947, when Friedrich Hayek and others founded the Mont Pèlerin Society.

The aim of the Society, which is still in existence, is to preserve and improve free society through the free market. From its beginnings, the Society had anarchist influences, or what passes for libertarianism today. Members of the Society have been advisors to U.S. Presidents, especially to Reagan, who opened the doors to what today are called “neoliberals.” In 1988, Reagan awarded the Medal of Freedom to Milton Friedman, an American neoliberal economist, and in 1991, George H. W. Bush awarded it to Friedrich Hayek.

The ideas of neoliberalism gave rise to a political movement that has shaped policies in this country and abroad since the time of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher. According to Thatcher, “there is no alternative” to the imposition of neoliberal policies; a remarkable statement indeed. American neoliberalism was imposed through stealth mode, with propagandists using terms like “freedom” and “public choice” to garner support by members of the electorate. These are terms few would oppose, but they are surface terms that hide the ideas of free market fundamentalism, radical individualism, limited government, and flexible labor.

The reaction to government-sponsored economies was to promote their opposite: unregulated markets with minimal government intervention. An interesting perspective given that all markets are regulated to some degree. Accompanying

the notion of free market fundamentalism is the idea that people should take care of themselves and their families without relying on government for assistance, a view that promotes the elimination of government-sponsored social programs that help the poor, the young, and the elderly.

However, rather than challenging the continuation of such programs in the arena of public discourse, neoliberals pursued the strategy of reducing government revenues through anti-tax initiatives and demands for a balanced budget. “Starve the beast” was their call to arms, a strategy that continues to this day. Cut taxes, and government programs will have to be cut. This is one approach by which government is limited in providing for the common welfare. Another is more direct in its approach to achieve limited government: simply eliminate regulatory agencies so that corporations and businesses are free to pursue profits without government intervention on behalf of the public good. Never mind pollution of the environment and the many ways by which the lives of citizens are put at risk.

Finally, flexible labor may evoke an image of freedom on the part of workers to set their own schedules. That is hardly the case. The concept refers to the elimination of fixed labor costs for employers so that the impact of economic downturns is mitigated by their ability to determine the terms and conditions of employment. For example, labor union contracts and teacher and faculty tenure are viewed as fixed costs that limit the ability of employers to hire and fire employees during periods of economic recession. Is it any wonder that labor unions and teacher tenure have been and continue to be under attack?

In short, neoliberalism is a policy model that seeks to transfer control of economic factors in the public sector to the private sector, and its proponents pursue uncompromising positions, seeking not to serve the common welfare but to impose neoliberalism on society. Reagan promoted anti-government sentiments by calling government “the problem.” At the same time, Grover Norquist, founder of Americans for Tax Reform in 1986, opposed all tax increases, and demanded that Republicans sign the Taxpayer Protection Pledge. In 1994, Newt Gingrich promoted *The Contract with America*, which was signed by most Republicans in the U.S. Congress and further promoted neoliberal policies. Pledges became the vehicle by which congressional members were made to toe the neoliberal line or face political attacks and challenges for reelection.

These pledges ensured that legislators were not serving the public and the public good but the ideological and policy elements of a neoliberal movement. In addition, they gave rise to legislators who were blindly following the dictates of radical neoliberal ideologues. As our colleague Lawrence Busch points

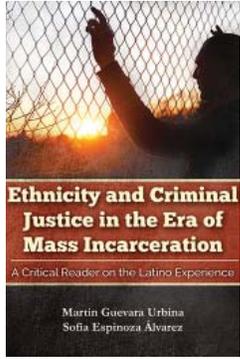
out, neoliberalism evolved from high to low forms, with the ideas of Hayek and other thinkers reflecting the high form, and today’s true believers reflecting the low form. It is not uncommon for the ideas of intellectual leaders to become distorted, mundane, and extreme. Remember, Karl Marx himself declared that he was not a Marxist.

The effects of neoliberalism are evident today throughout society. We have increasing poverty, increasing income and wealth inequality, failing school systems, school-to-prison pipelines for minority youths, the highest incarceration rates across the globe, inadequate social programs, increasing racial tensions, increasing college tuition, and many other negative outcomes. And, we just experienced the worst economic recession since the Great Depression. Neoliberals are against “wealth transfer,” or taxing the rich to provide social programs for the needy, but they don’t mind transferring public funds to private corporations, which we can think of as “wealthfare.” Today, there are calls for tax reform, but it occurs within the framework of “low neoliberalism,” which calls for tax cuts for the wealthy while reducing government revenues and leading to the continued elimination of government-sponsored social programs and further weakening government agencies to carry out their functions.

So how did America become so politically polarized? The principal division today is between those who hate government regulation of the economy and those who believe that government should promote the common welfare. Neoliberals believe that government is bad, except of course, when it benefits them. Those who believe in government for the people promote a social democratic perspective, one that holds that government should assist persons in need while maintaining the conditions for the accumulation of capital. The two perspectives are and have opposing views of a good society that are irreconcilable. One cannot condemn government as a societal institution and at the same time believe that it should promote the public good. Neoliberals have adopted the strategy of taking control of government to promote their policies at the same time that they work feverishly to dismantle government and transfer its functions to private corporations.

We now have three generations that have come of age under the view that government is bad, yet whenever a crisis occurs, people turn to government for help, including neoliberals. We must not forget that government maintains social order, promotes equality and civil rights, and maintains the conditions for the economy to function. It is not government that is bad, it is political regimes that are either good or bad. I, for one, support government for the people. 

Ethnicity and Criminal Justice in the Era of Mass Incarceration



by Martin Guevara Urbina & Sofía Espinoza Álvarez. 2017. Springfield, IL: Charles C Thomas • Publisher, LTD.

Reviewed by Marcelo Siles & Richard Davila

The United States was created by waves of immigrants who came from all over the world and brought their own languages and cultural practices. Native Americans living in this part of the world before the arrival of Europeans are considered the only non-immigrant people of the Americas. Since Cristóbal Colón's first trip to the Americas in 1492, intergroup conflict and discrimination has persisted between indigenous peoples and the newcomers from Europe. These tensions became complex when Europeans mixed with indigenous women creating a new ethnic group of "mestizos" which are part of the many subgroups called Latinos in the U.S.

The authors of the 14 chapters in this book focus on the discrimination and unfair legal practices that Latinos have faced historically in the U.S. up through the current day. The authors claim that the experiences of Latinos are less studied and documented in both the academic and public circles than those of Blacks and Whites. In fact, most studies have been conducted through the lens of the White-Black dichotomy. This is the case despite the fact that Latino cultures have been part of America long before the United States existed. Reviewed here are selected chapters to give readers a sense of what is included in this volume.

Chapters 1 through 5 of the book set the historical context for discriminatory treatment of Latinos in the criminal justice system. This discriminatory treatment of Latinos started as early as the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, which ended the U.S.-Mexico War and resulted in the loss of over 55 percent of Mexico's territory where more than 100,000 Mexicans lived and had their lands and other proper-

ties. Based on this Treaty, Mexicans who lived in the area became U.S. citizens, but later, due to legal chicanery, most of them were treated as second-class citizens and, during periods of American nativism, some were deported to Mexico, losing all their properties.

As David V. Baker notes in Chapter 3, legal discrimination against Mexicans escalated in the years following the Treaty. Repressive laws, such as the State of California's Vagrancy Act of 1855, known as the Greaser Act, were enforced primarily against Mexicans, Blacks, and Native Americans. The Act led to a high number of lynchings, burnings, and killings of Mexicans by Anglo mobs through 1916. Repressive practices against Mexicans in the Southwest resulted in executions, vigilantism, and mass expulsions. The establishment of the Texas Rangers marks a dark period in the institutionalization of discrimination by Whites against Mexican Americans. This military-type organization conducted numerous killings, lynching, and burnings and came to represent White domination for many Americans of color, especially for Mexican-Americans.

Although the Declaration of Independence states that "all men are created equal" and the judicial system is based on "equal justice under the law," the dynamics of the judicial process indicate differential treatment in favor of those with resources, money, power, or prestige. In Chapter 2, Urbina and Álvarez argue that "the U.S. has institutionalized savage inequalities by granting rights to some people, but not to other individuals, while oppressing, marginalizing, and silencing others" (p. 21). These inequalities are evident in how laws treat non-European immigrants: accepting and propagating the idea that the U.S. is a country of White immigrants in which the historical domination of Latinos, framed as non-White immigrants, persists. In this way, the Federal Government has created a new category of people: "illegal immigrants."

As Robert J. Durán discusses in Chapter 6, in recent decades federal and state governments, in efforts to control gangs, have passed numerous pieces of legislations that result in the profiling of Latinos based on their surnames and how they dress. Latinos have been targeted for being perceived as

violent, dangerous, or illegal; in this way they are subjected to strict social control and second-class treatment in the United States. Historically, in order to overcome this unfair treatment, Latinos created several organizations such as Union y Patria in Utah (1920), the Brown Berets in Los Angeles (1968), and the Crusade for Justice in Denver (1965). These grassroots organizations challenged unequal treatment and misconduct by law enforcement officials against Latinos.

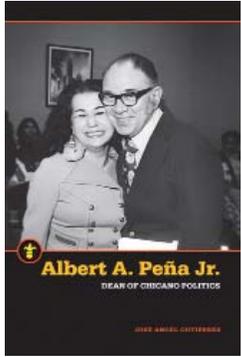
As an outcome of these laws, the number of people incarcerated, mostly persons of color, has grown exponentially: 2.3 million were imprisoned by the end of 2005, 4.2 million adults were on probation, almost 800,000 were on parole, 1 in 32 adults or 3.2 percent of the population, were under correctional control. That was at the high point of the incarceration trend. Still, in 2010, the incarceration rate per 100,000 adults for Latino men was 1,258; for Black men 3,074, and for White men 459 (p. 133). As a result, the U.S. not only has the largest prison population and the highest rate of imprisonment in the world, but the gap with other countries remains wide. Today, in the U.S. the most frequent encounter with the police and the courts seems to be distribution, possession, or usage of illegal drugs.

In Chapter 8, Álvarez identifies the six reasons why the inmate population is critically high. One is that the American public generally believes that inmates are serving shorter sentences than before despite the fact that the average prison stay increased by 36% over the last two decades (p. 143). Second, the public believes that "incarcerating more offenders and keeping more offenders under surveillance for longer periods of time will significantly reduce crime rates" (p. 143). Third, the public believes that rehabilitation no longer works, and inmates should be incarcerated for longer periods. Fourth, "political pressure for quick fixes" results in a growing prison industry. Fifth, public fear of crime contributes to the steady influx of new prisoners; and sixth, the potential for profit drives a shift toward increasingly punitive criminal justice policies.

In Chapter 9, Urbina further discusses the barriers that prevent the formerly incarcerated from successfully reentering

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Albert A. Peña Jr.: Dean of Chicano Politics



by José Angel Gutierrez. 2017. East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press.

Reviewed by
Juan D. Coronado

Access to the American political system has been limited for Chicanos and Latinos in general. Despite becoming the largest ethnic minority group in the United States, entry into political offices at the state and national level have not been reflective of the population growth rate by Latinos. José Angel Gutierrez' *Albert A. Peña Jr.: Dean of Chicano Politics* demonstrates the political savviness and ability to turn out the vote by one of the early Chicano political leaders in public office in a major urban center. Albert A. Peña Jr. rose to prominence in San Antonio, Texas and his leadership is demonstrative of the Chicano struggle for political inclusion in the United States. Reflective of the rise in popularity that biographies on significant Chicano leaders have commanded recently and given the intense political polarization the country faces today, this volume warrants attention and circulation in both Latino and non-Latino spheres.

Having been a chief figure in local, state, and national politics, Peña, in his efforts to organize and strategize focused his political efforts on coalition-building that transcended racial and ethnic lines. During the Chicano Movement, he established and led grassroots movements and organizations and nurtured them into features of today's political institutions. Through three aspects of Peña's life (biography, politics, and public leadership), Gutierrez reveals a blueprint for successful political organizing, an activity which has been a challenge for Latinos and other marginalized peoples. Gutierrez unveils Peña as a central figure in mainstream Chicano politics seeking to obtain political representation for Chicanos. These are activities that Gutiérrez himself

was involved in during the Civil Rights Movement, and which propelled him to prominence alongside Corky Gonzales, César Chavez, and Reies López Tijerina, albeit in a different sector of movement activity.

In seventeen well-substantiated chapters using archival materials, oral histories, secondary sources, and other resources, Gutiérrez provides long overdue attention not just to a Chicano icon, but to an incredible Chicano statesman. Peña, a native of San Antonio, grew up in a culturally rich Chicano community. Gutiérrez shares this detail about Peña's youth to demonstrate his ability to understand and respond to his constituents. Born into a middle-class family, Peña's father, Albert Sr. eventually earned a law degree and became one of the few Spanish-speaking lawyers in San Antonio, all the while exposing the younger Peña to broader horizons.

Before Albert Jr. could follow in his father's footsteps the attack on Pearl Harbor temporarily interrupted his life. Like the vast majority of his contemporaries, Peña, in response to Japan's aggression, joined the Navy and served valiantly in the Atlantic. After World War II Albert Jr. returned to San Antonio and completed his education, which culminated with a law degree. However, despite passing the bar exam, Peña saw needs in the Chicano community in San Antonio that attracted his attention. The nagging poll tax which limited voting rights, segregated schools, and lack of political representation all became causes that Peña would challenge. These issues prompted a greater vision within Peña to bring about change locally and nationally.

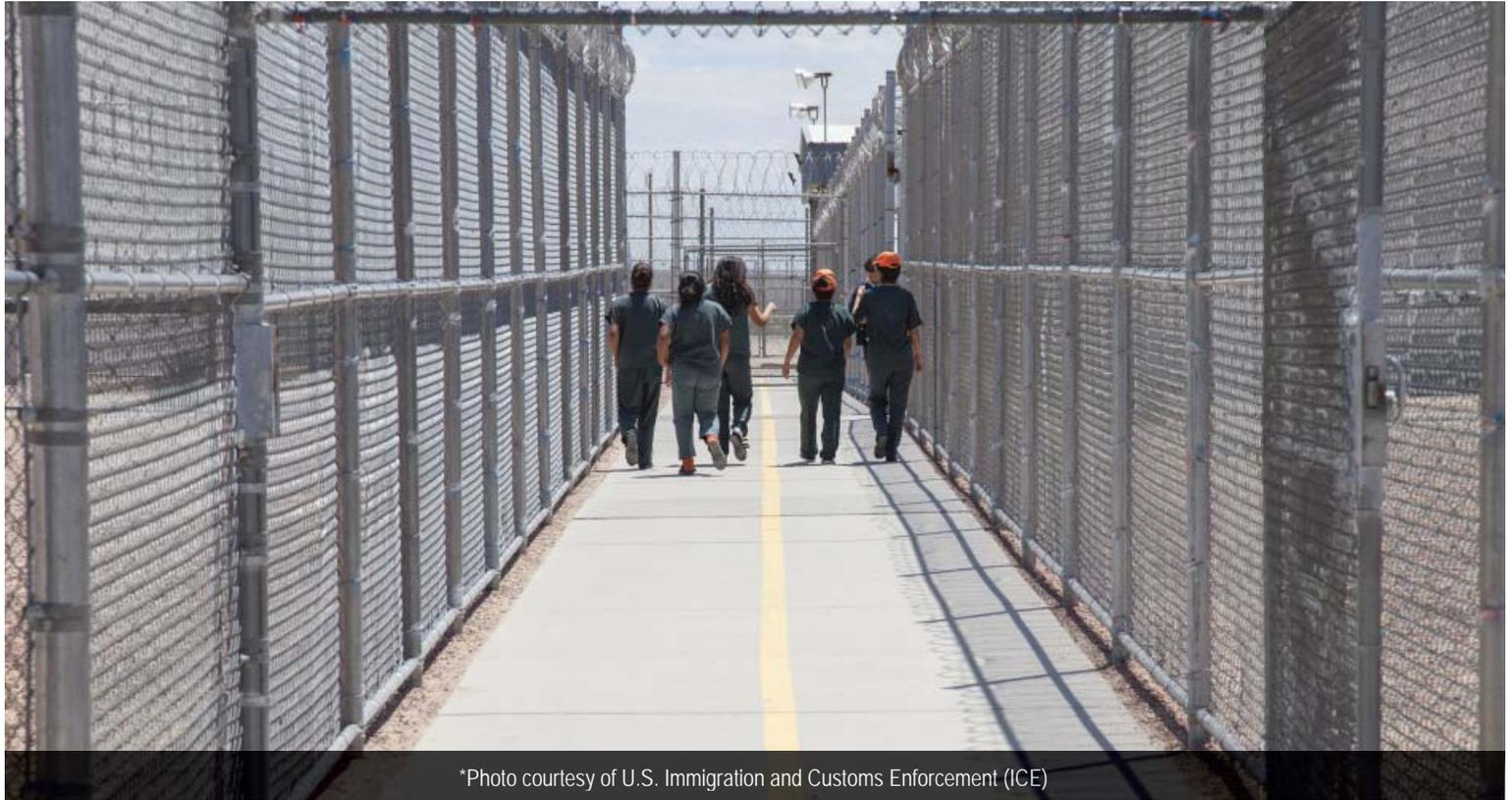
Peña knew that in order to have a strong national political presence he had to start small and have solid barrio support. However, in the early 1950s, many forces worked against the political representation of Chicanos, including traditional segregationists within the conservative Democratic Party of Texas, who became known as Dixiecrats and would eventually become Republicans. At that time Peña, along with Rubén Munguía, an influential local printer, became actively involved with the Loyal American Democrats (LAD), and later with the Political Association of Spanish

Speaking Organizations (PASO).

In 1952, Peña, Munguía, LAD, and other associates pledged their support to Democratic Presidential nominee Adlai Stevenson. The Stevenson campaign faced challenges by Democratic segregationists who pledged their support to Eisenhower. Stevenson, who needed all the support he could get, planned a campaign stop in San Antonio where Texas Democrats planned a rally at the Alamo. Peña appealed to the Stevenson campaign by proposing a rally near San Antonio's Westside. After initially agreeing to hold a rally near the Chicano barrio, Stevenson cancelled after pressure from the White contingency within the Democratic Party. Peña responded quickly by further organizing Chicanos, mobilizing prominent leaders such as Gus García and Chicanos from the Rio Grande Valley and making it impossible for Stevenson to back down. This was the first time a presidential nominee addressed a Latino electorate as the shouts of "Viva Stevenson" resonated in the streets of San Antonio (p. 58).

Peña set a precedent that would be respected by politicians seeking office at all levels as he mobilized and brokered the Latino electorate and vote. In return, he vouched for the interests of Latinos as he garnered political appointments for Chicanos. As a result, groups such as the Viva Kennedy Club emerged as Peña, along with other Chicanos, would elevate John F. Kennedy to the presidency. Personally, his political career flourished when he became county commissioner in Bexar County and later municipal judge. Gutierrez ends his study by shedding light on Peña's extraordinary long life and accomplishments.

The main strength of Gutierrez's work lies in the inclusion of many high-profiled Chicanos involved in the political realm between the 1950s and the 1970s while situating Albert Peña Jr.'s efforts at the center of the national political scene and linking major political players with the establishment. Gutierrez provides a genuine account of Peña's life along with an emphasis on his personal flaws and the blunders he committed during his career and life. In doing so, Gutierrez provides several key lessons fitting for current



*Photo courtesy of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)

"Can you please help me?": A Once Violent Arizona Town Regains its Deadly Reputation

Judith Perera¹

On October 13, 2004, the last Bush-Kerry presidential debate took place at Arizona State University in Tempe. The topic of the night was domestic affairs. Kerry said we absolutely must be safe and secure again. Bush replied we could if "we stay on the offense against the terrorists." On immigration, Bush wanted to increase border security with new equipment and a temporary worker card that allowed a "willing worker and a willing employer to mate up." And he obviously would not "reward illegal behavior." Kerry wanted to fix the "leaking" border, crack down on illegal hiring, and introduce an "earned-legalization program" for people who have "stayed out of trouble" (NA, 2004: Debate). Neither mentioned immigrant detention.

Yet, 60 miles southeast from the debate, José López-Lara sat in a cell inside an immigrant detention center. While not meant to be a prison, in it José was nevertheless surrounded by barbed wire fences and locked doors inside a 1,500-bed facility operated by the for-profit company, Corrections Corporation of America (CCA; today rebranded as CoreCivic). CCA had by then become an integral part of the small rural community where the facility was located. Just a few months before, CCA had teamed up with Home Depot and various community organizations to

host the annual "Christmas in April" project to revitalize two homes in the town. As one CCA official noted, the event was "proof that a community can come together for the betterment of its citizens" (Staff Reports, 2004). But it appeared the betterment was intended for "citizens" in the most literal sense. Because even though the detention center provided revenue and jobs to the community and was not supposed to be a jail (despite locals referring to it as a "prison"), José remained incarcerated. Most certainly, few in this rural community thought about coming together for his betterment. Seven days after the presidential debate in which the plight of those like him were ignored by both candidates, José turned 56. He was probably anxious to get home. But four days after his birthday, José was dead (ICE, 2017).

The last place where José was alive has a history of violence. Nestled in the Arizona Sun Corridor, approximately half way between the Valley of the Sun and the Old Pueblo, lies the small community of Eloy. Legend has it that a railroad porter alighting from a train almost stepped on a coiled rattlesnake and exclaimed, "Eloi!" (translated "My God!"). The later misspelled name stuck. Eloy, a town which lingered and almost died in the

early 1920s, developed a reputation by the mid-twentieth century as the "west's most western town" (Tarbox, 1952: 15). In the fall of 1948, for instance, a deputy sheriff, a postmaster, and at least two migrant workers were killed in gun battles within weeks.

Deputy Charles Newsome pointed out that people parked along a major street waiting for the gun battles to start (Arline, 1977). In response to the violence, the governor considered martial law. In 1950, Deputy Jim Slotter wrote that Eloy was the Tombstone of that time and was known nationally as the West's last frontier town (Slotter, c. 1950). Despite the violence, Eloy grew significantly after World War II as industrialized farming and the availability of labor enabled a cotton boom. King Cotton brought migrants and their families during the harvest season, business enterprises to attempt permanent residence, and millions of dollars to the Casa Grande Valley where the Cadillac became known as "an Eloy pickup" (Leach, 1952).

Against the backdrop of the majestic Sonoran Desert, the seasons changed, migrants came and went, cowboys played potshot, the Wild West took lives, and cotton became gold. Eloy came into its own at the start of WWII by producing cotton, along with carrots, potatoes, barley, and alfalfa. In 1951, a combination of an effective insect control program, the addition of fertilizer, the rotation of crops, and deep plowing all helped Eloy produce cotton yields greater than twice the national average. With millions of dollars coming in, Eloy boasted having no town tax and in 1952 paid more than half of a \$65,000 city-county building project with cash (NA, 1950). The automated cotton picker brought change in the 1950s by keeping much of the so-called troublemaking laborers out and Eloy began to shed its Wild West, lawless past.

By the early 1960s, the city had adopted a uniform building code and begun a demolition program to tear down unwanted structures that lined the streets and reminded locals of its violent past (Kempton, 1963). By the mid-1970s, Eloy boasted of paved, clean streets, good housing, some twenty churches, a medical clinic, an eight-officer police department, and a well-equipped 26-man volunteer fire department. It no longer was the "toughest town in the West." Only on occasion did one see flashes of the past, like the Saturday night when a police officer shot and killed Angel Villalva Nunez after he had allegedly threatened his girlfriend and wounded the officer. Shedding the reputation of violence was so important that in the late 1970s the mayor wanted to change Eloy's name to Santa Cruz, but Eloyans preferred the name and the change never occurred.

In 1960, Robert C. Stone boldly predicted that Eloy's reputation paralleled that of Tombstone in the 1890's, and that if the parallel persisted, Eloy could be memorialized on

TV programs as the final Western town symbolizing freedom and individualism (Stone, 1960). However, a tension within Eloy limited its ability to live up to the prediction, whatever the images the phrase "Western town" evoked. Perhaps the most appropriate image today is that of "Eloy, the prison town." In addition to the immigrant detention center, Eloy is also home to three other prisons that incarcerate people from Arizona, California, and Hawaii. While providing employment to area residents and embodying the expansion of the carceral landscape into rural areas eager for economic opportunities, Eloy provides a sense of freedom and individualism to a select few. For those employed in the carceral business and their families, there could be freedom in being able to live in a place that has long been home which negates the need to follow available jobs into more urban areas.

But their freedom has come at an incredible human cost magnified by the city's decades-long penchant for confinement. For those not trapped behind the barbed wire and prison cells far away from home, perhaps the imagery "Eloy" evokes remains ambiguous. For some, home. For others, family. For still others, memories of the past. However, for those experiencing incarceration and hearing and living with the stories from the immigrant detention center, there is little doubt that it is a prison town. Eloy's reputation within immigrant communities in Arizona today harkens back to its violent past. The city's immigrant detention center is the deadliest in the nation (González, 2016). Since 2003, the list of official deaths at Eloy Detention Center includes at least two persons who died of natural causes, seven of medical issues, and six of suicide. At least one of the suicides may have actually been a homicide. Western freedom and individualism is for a select few and at great human cost to many, which should compel us to reevaluate the entire enterprise of immigrant detention.

José died at the Maricopa Medical Center in Phoenix. His official cause of death is listed as cerebral infarction, an ischemic stroke caused by a reduction in the blood supply to an area of the brain (ICE, 2017). There is no way to know with certainty whether his death was preventable. Maybe better medical care could have made a difference. Maybe not. What is known with certainty is that José's death marked a grim beginning and brought notoriety to the former Wild West town in a way few could have anticipated. In the next thirteen years, fourteen others would lose their lives while held at the facility that would become a lifeblood of the town.

Deaths at Eloy

Maybe if José's death had remained isolated, the vastness

of the Sonoran Desert and the remoteness of Eloy may have allied to conceal the human cost of the city's lucrative facility. But four days after the New Year, death came for another at the detention center. Elias Lopez Ruelas, 54 years old, died after being taken to the RTA Hospice in Casa Grande. The official cause of death was cirrhosis of unclear etiology (ICE, 2017). While cirrhosis, or chronic liver damage, cannot be cured it can oftentimes be treated if diagnosed. Diagnosis often requires lab tests or imaging for detection. Like José, perhaps if Elias had received better care, he may not have died when he did.

The sons of Maya Nand are certain that would have been true of their father. Almost a month after Elias died, Maya suffered cardiac arrest while detained at the Eloy Detention Center. He was less than a month away from turning 57. Maya, a diabetic, had been frantically calling his family for more than 10 days after being abruptly arrested at the family home in Sacramento in mid-January. The last call Maya made to his family was the first time his sons ever heard their father cry. One son, Jay Ashis, later relayed that call: "He said, 'Son, if you don't get me out of here today, I'm going to die.'" Maya foretold his own fate. The day after the last call, Maya was taken to an emergency room in Casa Grande. After being diagnosed with congestive heart failure and later a heart attack, he was airlifted to St. Mary's Hospital in Tucson on life support. His family drove twelve hours to watch his heart fail. He died shackled to a hospital bed (Bernstein, 2008; ICE, 2017).

The lack of proper care inside immigrant detention centers has also had devastating consequences for those facing psychological symptoms. This is particularly true at Eloy Detention Center. Three days before Christmas 2005, *The Eloy Enterprise* ran a story titled "CCA death in cell" in the section "Of interest... In Brief." The story, totaling less than 60 words, told how guards at Eloy Detention Center had found a "detainee unresponsive in his cell." He was pronounced dead at 5:20 a.m. on December 14 of an "apparent suicide" (NA, 2005). No further details were provided. In a later investigation of 83 deaths of immigrant detainees between 2003 and 2008, *The Washington*

Post found 30 "questionable." Juan Salazar-Gomez's death that December morning at Eloy was listed as one of them (NA, 2008, May 10). Juan, who was 29 at the time he was found in his cell, never anticipated the grim precedent his death would set (ICE, 2017). Juan's death marked the beginning of a string of suicides that have since followed.

In early 2006, the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) decided not to renew its contract with Eloy Detention Center due to budget issues. Nearly 500 BOP inmates were to be moved out of the Center (Kelley, 2006). Prison jobs were on the line. Eloy Mayor Byron Jackson, a former corrections officer, wrote to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE),

'The city of Eloy has had discussions with CCA regarding the development of a Residential Services Agreement for the housing of detainees/inmates at the Eloy facility. Should [Immigration and Customs Enforcement] ICE have a need for detention space at this facility, the city would be happy to enter into discussions/negotiations with ICE.' CCA was attempting to find new jobs for its employees. In the meantime, employees at Eloy Detention Center were asked to sign non-disclosure agreements 'designed to limit their conversation with reporters and others' (Stark, 2006, February 2: 1).

While negotiations proceeded for the ICE contract, prison employees anxiously awaited their future. One corrections officer who went by "Mr. Ray" noted that 126 people had already been laid off. Ray argued that although cuts were by seniority, pay cuts would lead to the departure of senior officers (Stark, 2006, February 2). ICE eventually approved the intergovernmental service agreement with Eloy. The per diem rate per detainee was set at \$68.45 (ICE, 2006). Meanwhile, Jackson had little concern about Eloy taking on the label of a prison town. He explained, "I think people are comfortable with the environment... Heck, it's been 10 years now with very little problems whatsoever" (Kelley, 2006: B2). Despite four deaths, Eloy Detention Center would stay open for business.

Conditions at Eloy Detention Center remained the same and deaths continued. On New Year's Day 2006, José López-Gregorio had turned 32. The husband and father likely spent his birthday and the coming of a new year worrying about how to care for his family. They were going hungry and he had to make a choice. In mid-August, he had left his family with a month's supply of food and headed north. By the end of September, he



Photo courtesy of Judith Perera



Photo courtesy of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)

was held at Eloy Detention Center (NA, 2006, Suicide Autopsy). For twenty-one days after being incarcerated, José did not receive a physical examination. After he was finally examined, medical personnel ignored a sick call for seven days (Tovino, 2016). Guilt-ridden over leaving his family and unable to reunite with them, José contemplated ending his life.

On September 24, José was placed on suicide watch in isolation after fellow detainees reported he was voicing suicidal thoughts. A medical doctor met with him at 7 p.m. that night. The doctor reported his risk as low, discontinued suicide watch, and placed him on 15-minute checks. The next day, the doctor met with José. José was "very upset, sobbing, expressing much guilt." The doctor diagnosed José with Adjustment Disorder with Depressed Mood. As José was to leave the facility the next day, no further follow up was scheduled (NA, 2006, Suicide Autopsy). Four days later José, still at Eloy, was found in his cell with a bedsheet tied to the upper bunk. He was taken to Casa Grande Regional Medical Center and later pronounced dead (NA, 2006, Eloy Police Reports; ICE, 2017). ICE later stated after an investigation, "Medical care in this facility does not meet ICE standards" (Tovino, 2016: 174). Yet, the facility remained open.

As Eloy Detention Center continued to operate as if nothing was amiss, the death toll increased. In November 2006, a few months after José's death and less than a year after Juan's death, Mario Francisco Chavez-Torres turned 27. A month later he suffered headaches, dizziness, and vomiting at Eloy Detention Center while medical staff ignored his symptoms (Regan, 2016). Mario's sick call from solitary confinement was ignored for four days. When a nurse finally responded, it took her one hour to get to Mario, whose cell was a two-minute walk from the medical office. Once she got to his cell, she said she was not qualified to assess him and was "only a pill pusher." There is no evidence that a doctor ever saw Mario (Tovino, 2016).

A week later Mario collapsed in the shower. On December 13, 2006, he was found unconscious in an isolation cell after an "unwitnessed seizure" had left him brain dead. His official

cause of death is listed as a ruptured arteriovenous malformation midbrain (ICE, 2017). An ICE memo investigating Mario's death concluded he "should have been referred for outside treatment and that Eloy failed to protect [Mario]'s health, safety, and welfare" (Tovino, 2016: 175). *Failed to protect.* A later Department of Homeland Security (DHS) investigation found that Eloy Detention Center had "failed on multiple levels to perform basic supervision and provide for the safety and welfare of ICE detainees" (Tovino, 2016: 175). *Failed on multiple levels.* Still, the facility stayed open.

The brutality of immigrant detention at Eloy continued away from public scrutiny or legal remedy. Five days after Mario's death, Felix Franklin Rodriguez-Torres called his mother, María, in Queens, from Eloy Detention Center. Felix, a construction worker who loved to play soccer, told her that he had been sick from coughing and fever. He had developed swelling in his neck that his sister had noticed some time before, "most likely a sign that cancer was blocking his lymph system." Felix promised to call his mom again on Christmas. He never did. Two days after Christmas, Felix was taken to the emergency room at Maricopa Medical Center in Phoenix.

He had lain "pleading for medical help on the floor of his cell, unable to move." The mass in his neck had tripled in size and obstructed his breathing. He was too far gone for chemotherapy since his cancer had gone undiagnosed and untreated for too long. He was placed on life support. On January 12, 2007, the hospital gave notice to CCA that Felix had one week to live. The deportation officer refused to tell his family where he was hospitalized. The officer then offered to release Felix to his family if they paid for a plane ticket to New York. But Felix was too sick to travel. A nurse secretly lent Felix her phone so he could call his family. His parents finally came to his bedside once they heard from him. Felix's face lit up when he saw them. They spoke to him for a few hours before the visit was cut off by detention guards. The next morning, Felix was in a coma. On January 18, his family took him off life support. Felix died of a cancer treatable in a "vast majority of cases." He was 36. His mother later lamented, "I never want another immigrant to feel this pain" (Bernstein, 2009). Two months after Felix's death, Eloy underwent its annual review by DHS. It was assigned a final rating of "acceptable" (DHS, 2007).

It would be inaccurate to say that the detention center was completely inaccessible to public scrutiny. Four months after Felix's death and a month after the annual review, the then editor of *The Eloy Enterprise*, Lindsey Gemme, visited Eloy Detention Center for the first time. Maybe there was hope the town newspaper would finally shed light on the happenings inside the

detention center for the community and the world to see. But Gemme would not be the journalist to do so. After thanking CCA for “their time and hospitality,” Gemme detailed her introduction to the “prison system and its inner workings” (Gemme, 2007: 2). As she noted, prison is not just a place where “the rest of society hopes to lock away our undesirables and throw away the key” but also a place meant to “rehabilitate, teach, and maybe even heal people who have maybe made a few mistakes” (p. 2).

Someone should have informed Gemme that the detention center was not meant to be a prison since people are held there while their “administrative proceedings” are being adjudicated. But then again, considering the visual markers of barbed wire, locked doors, and armed security, she described what she saw. Regardless, such subtleties seem meaningless anyway in a “prison town.” Gemme found that detainees “were friendly, talkative, and not scary at all,” despite the barbed wire fencing. She highlighted that she believes “in forgiveness and second chances. Sometimes third and fourth chances.” She ended by hoping that the women she met can “get ‘back to a normal life’... as soon as they possibly can” (Gemme, 2007: 2). If only serving time at Eloy could have given hope to that possibility. A few months later, CCA’s Anytown Scholarship funded three Pinal County high school students to attend a leadership development camp. As a CCA official noted, “As one of the largest employers in Pinal County, it is vital for us to invest in our host communities” (NA, 2007: 1). As detainees kept losing their lives at Eloy Detention Center, there was little indication the community would raise any objections.

This was particularly true as time passed and the incarcerating entity and job provider became even more embedded in the community. On Valentine’s Day 2008, there was a company barbeque at Eloy Detention Center in celebration of CCA turning 25. John Ferguson, then president and CEO of CCA, attributed the company’s success to their “dedication in providing a safe and secure environment for the inmates in our care, our employees and the communities we serve” (NA, 2008, Corrections: 7). At the annual inspection of the facility later that month, the detention center would again be given a rating of “acceptable.” Five months later, Nail Yoursef Dawood, almost 42 years old, died at Eloy Detention Center. His official cause of death is listed as “natural/coronary artery vasculitis.” Less than three months after his death, Emmanuel Owusu’s life would end at the detention center. Emmanuel, a 62-year-old barber, had lived as a permanent resident for 33 years, mostly in Chicago. He was a diabetic with high blood pressure. He had been detained for two years at Eloy. He was found hanging weeks after he had lost his last appeal (Bernstein, 2010). He died at

Casa Grande Regional Hospital from “complications of acute cerebrovascular accident.”

As the detention center continued to operate, the rural community continued to seemingly benefit despite the graveyard created at the edge of town. In its February 2010 annual review, Eloy Detention Center got a final rating of “superior.” In July that year, representatives from the detention center donated “notebooks, pencils, paper, rulers, glue and much more” to the Eloy Elementary School District “just in time for the start of the new school year” (Gal, 2010: 5). In November, veterans employed at Eloy Detention Center received a “special commemorative pin that pays homage to their bravery and commitment to the country” (NA, 2010: 1). The annual review in February of 2011 stated that Eloy Detention Center met all standards.

Whatever guidelines this fictive narrative denoted, it did not mean an end to the reality of deaths. On October 5, 2011, Pablo Gracida-Conte submitted a call slip while held at Eloy that said, “Can you please help me?” Pablo had had no appetite for three weeks and threw up whenever he did manage to eat. A second call slip read, “my stomach hurts, unable to eat well, will vomit after eating. Pain in stomach” (DHS, 2012, Report: 6). Pablo only spoke his native dialect of Mixtec. He likely had someone write the call slips for him in English. At 3:30 p.m. three days later, a nurse at the clinic tried to use a Spanish interpreter but noted that “something was definitely lost when trying to communicate over a speaker phone.” The nurse recorded that Pablo was a “thin male, appears older than stated age” (DHS, 2012, Report: 8). At 10 a.m. on October 14, Pablo stated he had “not felt well for two months.” He had no appetite and a level of pain that did not “let him sleep” (DHS, 2012, Report: 10).

On October 22, Pablo was sent to the medical unit for shortness of breath. The nurse practitioner stated, “I’m not going to see him.” Instead, instructions were given to “increase fluids, continue his medications and refer to the primary [midlevel practitioner] for follow-up next week” (DHS, 2012, Report: 11).



Photo courtesy of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)

The next day, Pablo submitted another sick call in English that he wanted to stop taking the medications because the pills made him feel bad, they gave him heartburn, and made him feel dizzy. On October 24, Pablo stated he had not "been eating for two months and was even unable to recall his last meal." He said he "was going to court tomorrow and just wanted to go home" (DHS Report, 2012: 12-13). At 7 p.m. the next day, Pablo was admitted to Casa Grande Regional Medical Center. Three days later, he was airlifted to the University Medical Center in Tucson. In likely one of his last words, at 12:57 a.m. on October 30, he noted that he "can't take a deep breath" (DHS Report, 2012: 16). At 4:42 a.m. Pablo passed away. The Medical Compliance Review later repeatedly noted that various individuals had "failed" to respond to his requests for medical care (DHS Report, 2012). A few months later in early 2012, DHS conducted a performance-based national detention standards inspection of the Eloy Detention Center. Eloy received a final rating of "Meets Standards" (DHS, 2012, Performance: 99).

One might think that once deaths in a single detention center had risen to double digits, something would have been done. In a seemingly natural indication of how this nation has long cast off individuals deemed the "other," nothing was in fact done. A community had jobs, a company made money, the detention center stayed open, and tragic deaths continued. On January 12, 2012, Manuel Cota-Domingo turned 34 years of age. We can only guess whether he made plans then for his travels north. By early December of that year, he had made his way to Sasabe, Arizona (DHS, 2013, June 10). On December 12, he was held at Eloy Detention Center. Manuel had been carrying a "bag of meds" that was taken from him once he got to Eloy because it was "non-allowable property." The next day, Manuel signed a form indicating he wanted to tell the consulate he was detained. For the next 10 days, Manuel would suffer a series of medical symptoms. They started with congestion and a cough. Manuel verbally denied he had any serious medical conditions. As a registered nurse later explained, "some detainees are afraid to disclose medical conditions because they fear it will either cause them to be held in detention longer, or speed up their removal" (DHS, 2013, June 10: 12). His cellmate confirmed later that Manuel was "worried he would have to pay for medical care which he could not afford." So, Manuel suffered in silence.

A week after being at Eloy Detention Center, Manuel was medically cleared "to be removed" and scheduled for deportation via ICE Air the day after Christmas. At 11 p.m. on December 19, his cellmate heard Manuel having "very labored breathing." His cellmate banged on the cell door and yelled "CO" and "sick." A CO responded at 2 a.m. Manuel was evaluated by a registered



Photo courtesy of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)

nurse at 4:30 a.m. Manuel talked about "his family and seemed distressed about not being able to reach them." The nurse thought he was having "an anxiety attack" (DHS, 2013, June 10: 20). After 5 a.m. it was recommended that Manuel be taken to the hospital. But no ambulance was called. Instead, Manuel was restrained in irons and then driven to Florence Anthem Hospital in a van. On the way, one officer commented how bad Manuel's breath smelled. Officers noted that his "breathing became noticeably more labored during the trip" and he had "started out sitting upright, but gradually slouched down in his seat until he was laying [sic] down" (DHS, 2013, June 10: 23). Hours after arriving at the hospital, Manuel was shocked with a defibrillator. He remained unresponsive the next day. On December 22, he was transferred to St. Joseph's Hospital in Phoenix. Fifty-seven minutes after midnight on December 23, Manuel was declared dead. A later Medical Compliance Review found that Eloy Detention Center was not fully compliant with ICE standards for medical care (DHS, 2013, June 10). Yet, the detention center stayed open.

It would be inaccurate to say nothing was ever done after lives were lost. In their final days, Elsa Guadalupe-Gonzales and Jorge Garcia-Maldonado lived almost parallel lives. Although by different means, they both found themselves at Eloy Detention Center in March 2013. Elsa was 24. Jorge had just turned 40. They both had significant others and children. After being booked, they were both allowed to take their shoes inside the facility as "allowable property." They were both deemed to be in good mental health during initial intakes. They were both given a pamphlet on managing stress (DHS, 2013, September 25; DHS, 2013, October 7). Three days apart, they both met with their assigned deportation officers. Elsa's officer later said that "he did not specifically remember" her. Jorge's officer later said that "he did not have any recollection" of him. They both went to Christian religious services several times although their paths did not cross. The Chaplain who was interviewed later said she did not "specifically remember" either of them.

Vigil Presents at JSRI Symposium Series

Ernesto Vigil, resident community scholar at JSRI during June, made a presentation on June 7, 2017, titled "Identity as a Social Construction: 'Indigeneity' for Box-checkers and Miscellaneous Comments on Identity Politics." Vigil addressed the variety and complexity of current social "identities" frequently categorized as race/ethnicity and gender/gender preference as tallied by figurative "boxes" that are "checked" by institutions concerned with documenting "diversity" or allocating affirmative action "benefits." In addition, he featured a slide show of photographs he took of sites in northern New Mexico.



The church and post office at San Jose, Nuevo Mexico
Photo courtesy of Ernesto B. Vigil



Chapel (capilla) in Talpa, Nuevo Mexico
Photo courtesy of Ernesto B. Vigil

The photos capture architectural styles of churches and buildings in the region before the American takeover and during the territorial period. They were shown with commentary on the need to give consideration to the historical context. That is, to demonstrate the social and political context of a region that is often overlooked or misinterpreted. The complexity of the Catholic Church's role in Mexico, and therefore in New Mexico (USA), was noted since the Church was a tool and beneficiary of conquest and maintains the oldest archive of historical documents in the region regarding birth, marriage, and death.

Paper records, according to Vigil, were about the elites - church, military, landowners, merchants - but what of the region's oral and indigenous history, which is even longer but less known? The presentation was intended to raise questions rather than to address them. During the discussion that followed it was noted that President Trump insists on building a wall to deny entry to "foreigners," "illegal aliens," and "bad hombres," thereby adding more boxes to check! And more questions to ask! How are race and identity shaping White House policy? Is it true that "illegal aliens" in Flint, Michigan did not have a right to bottled water in the middle of a lead water crisis? "Can I see your papers, please?" 🇺🇸



Interior of the church at San Miguel del Vado
Photo courtesy of Ernesto B. Vigil

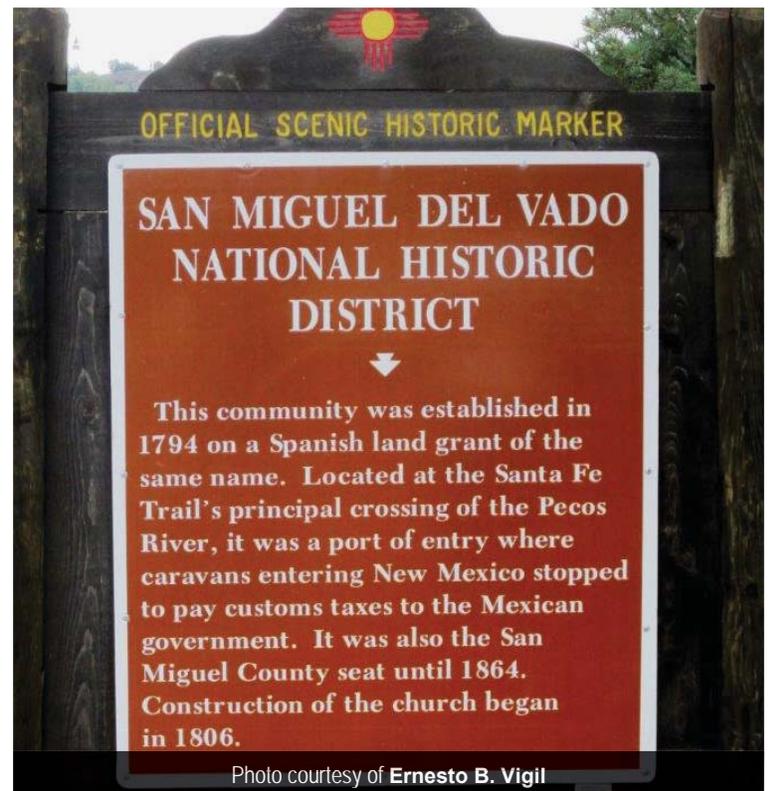


Photo courtesy of Ernesto B. Vigil

Gutierrez Presents on FBI Surveillance of Cesar E. Chavez

On June 21, 2017, José Angel Gutierrez, Professor Emeritus from the University of Texas-Arlington, delivered a presentation to the Michigan State University (MSU) and Greater Lansing communities. Gutierrez' presentation was based on the findings of his forthcoming book through MSU Press on the FBI's surveillance of Cesar E. Chavez, leader of the United Farm Workers Union. The topic also overlaps with a project under development at JSRI and MSU Library which is collecting surveillance files on Chicano Movement leaders.

Gutierrez started with a brief biography of Chavez, a native of Yuma, Arizona, who served in the Navy during World War II. After the war, Chavez became active in community organizing with the Community Service Organization (CSO). He went on to establish the National Farm Workers Association, which later became the United Farm Workers of America (UFW). With the help of Dolores Huerta and other associates, Chavez became the face of the UFW and led the efforts to improve working conditions and wages for farm workers. His determination to organize farm workers faced a powerful backlash by growers and farm owners threatened directly by his efforts.

At the time, the United States was amid the Cold War and iron-fisted FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover despised communists and those he accused of being communists. As Chavez and the UFW challenged the status quo they attracted considerable attention from local law enforcement agencies and from the FBI. Under the guise that Chavez was a communist agent, Hoover kept close surveillance of him and the UFW. Steps were taken by the nation's top law enforcement agency to infiltrate the UFW by undercover agents posing as members. The FBI's unwarranted surveillance caused Chavez tremendous mental anguish and, as suggested by Gutierrez, irreversible effects to his health from living in a stressful state.

Organizing farm workers in California brought Chavez and the UFW face-to-face with California's growers who were closely allied with conservative Californian politicians such Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan. Subsequently, both Nixon and Reagan saw Chavez and the UFW as enemies to their political interests and supporters. Thus, they became blind to the desperate social-economic and labor conditions that confronted farmworkers.

Gutierrez shared with audience members the desperate measures the FBI took in undermining Chavez' efforts to promote the labor rights of farm workers. At the same time, Chavez' life was threatened numerous times and the UFW offices bombed,



Antonio (Tony) Benavides, Cesar Chavez, and Carmen Benavides during one of Chavez' visits to Lansing, MI
Photo courtesy of Saturnino Rodriguez

yet the FBI took little interest in identifying and arresting the culprits. For Chicanos and minorities alike this has been the criminal justice system they have confronted many times.

Gutierrez concluded his presentation by pointing out the physical and mental toll that surveillance took on Chavez. Mental stress and Chavez' famous hunger strikes severely weakened him and may have contributed to his early death at the age of 66. In 1993, he was the first of the four most prominent Chicano civil rights leaders to pass away; Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales followed in 2005 at the age of 76, Reies Lopez Tijerina followed in 2015 at the age of 88, and José Angel Gutierrez, the youngest of the four, remains living at the age of 73. Chavez's legacy lives on. Through his efforts in labor organizing he sought to make the United States a more democratic country while bringing improvements to farmworkers. In Michigan, where labor unions produced at one point the highest paid blue-collar worker on the planet, Chavez should be recognized and celebrated.

In remembering Cesar E. Chavez, we must recall not only his non-violent approach to organizing farmworkers, but his non-violent responses to the violence he and the UFW faced in attempting to improve the lives of farmworkers in the United States. His selfless efforts are a symbol of the sacrifices patriotic Americans have dedicated to making this country representative of the people rather than special interests. Regardless, of color, creed, or gender those struggles must continue as we are confronted with similar issues today. It is also important to acknowledge the significance of farmworkers, as their contributions to the nation are essential and of great significance. Chavez is an American hero deserving of honor and broad recognition. Viva Chavez! 🇺🇸

JSRI Launches Diversity Leadership Program

In August 2016, JSRI launched its 10-month-long, certificate diversity leadership program, Diversity Assessment and Engagement Program (DAEP), designed for mid- and senior-level administrators. With an emphasis on organizational transformation, DAEP goes beyond the usual interactional focus of diversity leadership programs. Participants learn to examine the historical, cultural, and structural features of their own organizations. They learn about the elements of leadership and the distinctiveness of diversity leadership, how power and privilege function within organizations, different models and stages of organizational change, the various forms of resistance to organizational change and how to effectively manage them, and strategies for sustaining organizational change.



As a capstone project, participants assess their organization relative to diversity and develop a strategic diversity plan as a way of applying the lessons learned. Throughout the program participants work in small groups to design their respective assessments and garner input on developing their plans. The program concludes with participants presenting their diversity plans and addressing comments by their peers. Participants appreciate the sharing of views that occurs, and learn that there are many commonalities in their experiences and how others address challenges to achieving diversity-competent organizations.

The program will be offered again beginning August 2018. This time it will be offered in cooperation with Detroit Public Television, located at 1 Clover Ct., in Wixom, MI. Further information will be made available on JSRI's webpage (www.jsri.msu.edu) early in 2018, with applications due by May 1, 2018, and admissions decisions made by mid-June. 

New Faces



Dr. Richard Cruz Davila joined JSRI as a researcher in August of 2017. He recently completed a PhD in Media Studies at the University of Western Ontario. His dissertation, titled *No hay Sólo un Idioma, No hay Sólo una Voz: A Revisionist History of Chicana/os and Latina/os in Punk*, traces the history of Chicana/os and Latina/os in punk scenes in Los Angeles and Chicago.

His research interests include race and ethnicity, Chicana/o expressive cultures, and popular music. 



Jocelyn Janicek (re)joined JSRI in August 2017. She is originally from Corunna, MI and currently resides with her family in Laingsburg, MI. Since graduating from Corunna High School in 2011, Jocelyn has been attending Lansing Community College working toward her Associate in Business Degree for Business Administration and plans to transfer to Michigan State

University's Eli Broad College of Business to complete her Bachelor of Arts Degree. 

JSRI Scholarship Recipients 2017-2018



Drewzella "Drew" Andrade is a senior at Michigan State University majoring in Global and International Studies, with minors in Chicano/Latino Studies and Leadership and Integrated Studies. After graduation, she plans to serve on the Disaster team of the AmeriCorps program. She also plans to establish her own non-profit organization to help impoverished Latino communities. On

campus, she spends her time being an active sister of Kappa Delta Chi Sorority Incorporated and Chief-of-Staff of Rotaract Rotary International where she proudly volunteers at different organizations across the Lansing area. 🌱



Rochelle Rivera is a senior in the Bachelor of Social Work program with a second major in International Development, as well as minors in Portuguese and Latin American Studies. She is a Puerto Rican-born Latina committed to social justice and equity within Latino communities. After obtaining her Bachelor's degree she plans to earn the Master's degree, after

which she plans to deliver services to low-income Latino communities here and abroad. She currently organizes volunteer groups to Villa El Salvador, Peru where she engages in community development and volunteer work. 🌱

JSRI Researchers Present at Farmworker Conference

On September 20, Barry Lewis, a graduate student researcher at JSRI, co-presented with Juan Coronado and Rubén Martínez at the 27th Midwest Stream Forum for Agricultural Worker Health. The conference was organized by the National Center for Farmworker Health at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel in Grand Rapids. Their paper, titled "Food Insecurity and Farmworker Families and their Children," focused on the plight of farmworkers, poor nutritional diets, and the dimensions of food insecurity among many farmworker families. Food insecurity refers to an economic and social condition of households in which members have limited or inconsistent access to adequate food. Food insecurity relates to inadequate diets in terms of quality, variety and desirability. The presentation complemented the conference theme, "Sowing Seeds of Health, Equity, and Hope."

While 21.7% of Latino households experience food insecurity, only 11.9% of the general population faces this problem. Several studies have shown that close to two-thirds of migrant seasonal farmworker families experience food insecurity. This is both counterintuitive and shocking since farmworkers help produce and harvest the crops that feed the nation, yet these very foods often do not reach their own tables. The overall objective of the presentation was to bring awareness to this issue. Food insecurity was discussed within the context of other issues linked to the socio-economic conditions of farmworkers.

A brief overview of the history of Latino farmworkers in



the U.S. set the stage for Lewis, Coronado, and Martínez to frame the current status of Latino farmworkers. Also addressed were key labor conditions and their lasting effects on Latino farmworkers and their children. The information presented resonated with the audience members; the presentation affirmed their own experiences working with and providing services to farmworkers. The session and the conference in general attracted diverse participants, and simultaneous Spanish translation was provided to non-English speakers. This was the first time the conference was held in Michigan, bringing attention to the thousands of migrant farmworkers who make the journey every season to work in the fields of this major agricultural producing state. A brief summary of the session, along with a session on legal aid for farmworkers, appeared in the *Grand Rapids Legal News*, which featured the services provided by Farmworker legal services. 🌱



Latinos in the United States Economy

Marcelo Siles

In recent months, controversy has renewed about Latino immigration and the role that these new immigrants play within the national economy. In the past, similar controversies emerged when influxes of European immigrants came to the U.S. in pursuit of the “American Dream” for themselves and their families. Western European, and later Eastern European, immigrants settled into growing communities and flourished as the economy expanded with the Industrial Revolution and in the years following WWII. At the same time, a cycle began with Mexican workers that brought them here when needed to perform low-wage labor and deported them when they were no longer needed. The current controversy has its roots in that cycle as well as in the stagnating economy brought about by free market fundamentalist policies and multilateral trade agreements.

At the turn of this century, Latinos became the largest ethnic minority group in the United States and their numbers are continuing to increase. According to the 2010 Census, there were close to 50.8 million Latinos, representing 16.4 percent of the total US population; by 2015 this number had increased to 54.2 million, representing a net increase of 3.5 million people and accounting for 16.9 percent of the total US population (see Tables 1 and 2). This increase, which is not only due to

new immigrants but to natural increase, reflects a 6.9 percent increase in five years and is one of the largest increases among all major population groups. Today, the Latino population is estimated at 58 million, comprising approximately 18 percent of the total population.

Table 1. U.S. Population by Race and Ethnicity in 2010

POPULATION	Total	Whites	Blacks	Asian	Latinos
Total	308,745,538	241,937,061	40,213,173	15,159,516	50,729,570
Males	151,781,326	119,698,920	19,205,040	7,218,477	25,722,550
Females	156,964,212	122,238,141	21,045,595	7,941,039	25,007,020
Percent Total	100.0%	78.4%	13.0%	4.9%	16.4%
Percent Males	49.2%	49.5%	47.7%	47.6%	50.7%
Percent Females	50.8%	50.5%	52.3%	52.4%	49.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Summary file 3 (SF-3) – Sample Data.

Table 2. Males and Females in U.S. Population by Race and Ethnicity in 2015

POPULATION	Total	Whites	Blacks	Asian	Latinos
Total	321,418,821	248,067,530	43,213,173	17,676,507	54,232,205
Males	158,167,834	122,716,053	20,632,690	8,468,047	27,444,307
Females	163,250,987	125,351,477	22,580,483	9,208,460	26,787,898
Percent Total	100.0%	77.2%	13.4%	5.5%	16.9%
Percent Males	49.2%	49.5%	47.7%	47.9%	50.6%
Percent Females	50.8%	50.5%	52.3%	52.1%	49.4%
Pct. Increase Total	4.1%	2.5%	7.4%	16.6%	6.9%
Pct. Increase Males	4.2%	2.5%	7.4%	17.3%	6.7%
Pct. Increase Females	4.0%	2.5%	7.3%	16.0%	7.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates.

Table 2 shows larger numbers of females than males for all races except for Latinos, although the percentage increase for Latinas was larger than the corresponding increase for Latino males during five years (2010 – 2015). In addition, Latinos have the highest fertility rates and the lowest median age among all racial and ethnic groups, which will allow them to keep increasing at a high rate in years to come, reaching a projected 30 percent of the total US population by 2050 (see Tables 3 and 4).

Table 3. Total Fertility Rate for Population Estimates and Projections, by Race-Latino Origin and Generations: 1965-1970, 2015-2020, and 2060-2065

Race-Ethnicity	Total			First Generation			Second Generation			Third and Higher Generation		
	1965-1970	2010-2015	2060-2065	1965-1970	2010-2015	2060-2065	1965-1970	2010-2015	2060-2065	1965-1970	2010-2015	2060-2065
Total	2.48	1.89	1.90	2.59	2.58	2.06	2.59	1.84	1.88	2.47	1.76	1.85
White	2.37	1.71	1.88	2.31	1.76	2.00	2.43	1.75	1.90	2.37	1.70	1.86
Black	2.94	1.91	1.90	(z)	1.90	2.10	(z)	1.83	1.89	2.93	1.90	1.85
Asian	2.37	1.66	1.88	2.30	1.70	1.90	2.66	1.59	1.90	2.28	1.61	1.75
Latino	3.10	2.53	1.94	3.13	3.35	2.30	3.33	2.01	1.90	3.05	1.98	1.85

Source: Pew Research Center – Hispanic Trends
(z) – Population too small to compute reliable rate.

The rapid and constant growth of the Latino population in the last decades has many implications for the U.S. economy. A larger population, mainly comprised of young people, has a direct impact on the education system from K-12, to technical training, college, and graduate education. More Latinos entering the labor force demands the creation of new jobs in several industrial sectors. Others are starting new businesses, which demand larger sums of money as start-up funds, and banks are looking for these businesses and Latino customers to increase their customer base. In addition, a larger population and new businesses are considerably increasing the spending and purchasing powers of Latinos with a direct impact on the national, state, and local economies.

Table 4. Median Age in Years, by Sex, Race and Ethnicity: 2013

Race-Ethnicity	All	Male	Female
Total	37	36	38
White	42	41	44
Black	33	31	35
Asian	36	35	37
Other	23	22	24
Latino	28	27	28
U.S. Born	19	18	19
Foreign Born	40	39	41

Source: Pew Research Center tabulations of 2013.

American Community Survey (1% IPUMS).

“Other” includes persons reporting single races not listed separately and persons reporting more than one race.

Despite the rapid growth of the Latino population at all levels, they lag behind all other major racial groups in educational attainment. In the last few years Latino educational attainment has improved mainly for females, suggesting there is still much

work to do in promoting the benefits of education within the Latino community. Table 5 shows the important progress made by the Latino community at all levels of education during a 15-year period from 2000 to 2015.

Table 5. Educational Attainment by race and Ethnicity, 2000, 2010, and 2015: For Population 25 years and Over (Percentages)

Educational Attainment	TOTAL		LATINOS		WHITES		ASIANS		BLACKS	
	2000	2015	2000	2015	2000	2015	2000	2015	2000	2015
Less than 9 th grade	7.5	5.5	27.8	20.2	4.6	4.5	10.7	8.2	7.9	4.3
9 th to 12 th grade no diploma	12.1	7.3	19.8	13.8	10.0	6.4	8.9	5.3	19.8	10.9
High School diploma includes equivalency	28.6	27.6	22.1	27.6	30.0	27.9	15.8	15.5	29.8	31.5
Some College no degree	21.0	20.7	15.6	17.6	21.9	20.9	14.0	12.1	22.5	24.8
Associate degree	6.3	8.2	4.3	6.0	6.6	8.5	6.6	6.6	5.8	8.2
Bachelor's degree	15.5	19.0	6.7	10.2	17.2	19.9	26.7	30.0	9.5	12.8
Graduate or Professional degree	8.9	11.6	3.8	4.6	9.8	12.0	17.4	22.3	4.8	7.5
Total College degree*	24.4	30.6	10.5	14.8	27.0	31.9	44.1	52.3	14.3	20.3

Source: American Community Survey 1-year Estimates.

*Includes all college graduates from 4-year colleges and up.

The percentage of Latinos with a high school degree increased by 5.5 percent, while that for Blacks increased by 1.7, and Whites decreased by 2.1 percent and Asians by 0.3 percent. At the Associate degree level the increases were slightly lower, with an increase of 1.7 for Latinos, 2.4 percent for Blacks and 1.9 for Whites, and Asians did not change. Latinos led the increases at the Bachelor's level with 3.5 percent in the 15-year period, followed by Blacks and Asians with 3.3 percent, and Whites with 2.7 percent. At the Graduate and Professional level, Latinos fell well behind the other groups with only a 0.8 percent increase during the 15-year period; Asians were ahead of all groups with a 4.9 percent increase, followed by Blacks and Whites with 2.7 and 2.2 percent, respectively. Finally, at the Total College level, Asians had the most significant increase with 8.2 percent, trailed by Blacks with 6.0 percent and Whites with 4.9 percent. Latinos had only a 4.3 percent increase during this 15-year period.

Despite the recent low levels of educational attainment among Latinos, their participation in the labor market is



significant. Both Latino males and females have high rates of participation in the labor force (See Table 6). In 2014, for example, Latino men had a participation rate 6.3 percentage points higher than Whites, 3.7 points higher than Asians, and 12.5 percentage points higher than Blacks. Latinas have been making important increases in their participation in the labor force; in 2014, their rate (56 percent) was similar to that for White women and Asians, but lower than for Black Women.

Table 6. Civilian Labor Force Participation Rate by Race, Gender, and Ethnicity, 16 years and older

Group	1994	2004	2014
Total	66.6	66.0	62.9
Men	75.1	73.3	69.2
Women	58.8	59.2	57.0
Latino	66.1	68.6	66.1
Men	79.2	80.4	76.1
Women	52.9	56.1	56.0
White	67.1	66.3	63.1
Men	75.9	74.1	69.8
Women	58.9	58.9	56.7
Asian	65.3	65.9	63.6
Men	74.3	75.0	72.4
Women	56.9	57.6	55.8
Black	63.4	63.8	61.2
Men	69.1	66.7	63.6
Women	58.7	61.5	59.2

Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics

Table 7 presents the real median household income by race and ethnicity for 2000 and 2015. In general, median household incomes were flat during this period with minor variations for each of the racial groups and Latinos. Latinos' median household income declined by \$446 during the 15-year period, representing about a 1.0 percent decrease; Whites saw their median household income decline by \$3,018 or 4.81 percent, and Blacks experienced a decline equal to \$4,238 or 10.4 percent. Asians were the only group with an increase in their median household income, \$4,985, which represents a 7.2 percent increase during the 15-year period, reflecting a 0.48 percent annual increase.

Table 7. Real Median Household Income, by Race and Ethnicity; 2000 and 2015

RACE AND ETHNICITY	2000	2015
Latino	\$45,594	\$45,148
Asian*	\$69,260	\$74,245
White, non-Latino	\$62,716	\$59,698
Black	\$40,782	\$36,544

Source: Economic Policy Institute, based on U.S. Census Data.

* Data for 2002, not available for previous years.

Another important issue to consider is the persistent income gap between the top earners and the lowest earners. Asians were the top earners in 2015, with the median income of Whites approximately 80% that of Asians, the median income of Latinos 61% that for Asians, and the median income of Blacks 49% that

for Asians. When considering these gaps with respect to the median income of Whites, Latinos make approximately 76%, while Blacks make 61%. Finally, the median income of Blacks is approximately 81% that of Latinos. The gap between White and Latino incomes has declined in the last 15 years due to the decline in Whites' income, while income for Latinos remained relatively flat, but the gap between White and Black incomes increased during this period.

Table 8 shows that the three industry areas with the largest concentrations of Latino workers (Construction, Agriculture, and Leisure and Hospitality) yield the lowest median weekly earnings and the three occupations with the lowest percentage of Latino workers (Financial Activities, Education and Health Services, and Information) yield the highest. In addition, large numbers of Latinas work as maids and in housekeeping occupations, which pay on average \$441 per week, one of the lowest among all occupations. These low earnings are one of the reasons for high poverty rates among Latinos.

Table 8. Median Weekly Earnings of Full-time Wages and Salary Workers by Detailed Occupation in 2016

OCCUPATION	Median Weekly Earnings
Construction	\$784
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting	\$520
Leisure and Hospitality	\$596
Other Services	\$736
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	N.A.*
Transportation and Utilities	\$662
Wholesale and Retail Trade	\$744 - \$623
Professional and Business services	\$1,188
Manufacturing	\$1,047
Public Administration	\$679
Financial Activities	\$1,423
Education and Health Services	\$984 - \$1,104
Information	\$1,166

Source: Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey

* Non-Available

One of the basic characteristics of the Latino community is the relatively larger number of persons that live in their households, which include immediate and extended family members (grandparents, uncles, and other close relatives). In addition, Latino families tend to have more children (3 or more), differing from White families which have on average no more than 2 children per family. According to Table 9, Latinos had the largest number of persons per household among all racial and ethnic groups in 2014. There were 1.15 more Latinos than Whites, 0.86 more than Blacks, and 0.47 more than Asians per household. The average number of persons living in a Latino household (4.22), and their lower household incomes are related to their higher rates of poverty. Latino households often have several earners who contribute to the general expenses and these multiple contributions to household expenses ameliorate the financial hardships.

Table 9. Average Number of Persons per Household by Race and Ethnicity, 2000 and 2014

RACE AND ETHNICITY	2000	2014
Total	2.59	3.36
Latino	3.62	4.22
White, Non-Latino	2.48	3.07
Black	2.74	3.36
Asian	3.11	3.75

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2014 (5-year file), Census 2000 Summary File SF-1, 100% count.

Poverty rates have increased in the country during the 15-year period and are presented in Table 10. For the population in general this increase was equal to 2.4 percent. Only Whites and Latinos had minor declines of 0.5 percent, while Asians and Blacks had increases of 0.9 and 1.5 percent respectively. The increase in poverty rates at the national level could be explained in part by the deep economic recession the country experienced from 2007 to 2009. During this period and in the years that followed there was a sharp surge in unemployment due to a huge reduction of economic activities.

Table 10. Poverty Rates by Race and Ethnicity; 2000 and 2015

RACE AND ETHNICITY	2000	2015
Total	11.3	13.7
Latino	21.5	21.0
White	9.5	9.0
Asian	9.9	10.8
Black	22.5	24.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

In 2010 the unemployment rate in the U.S. reached 9.6 percent; disaggregated by race and ethnicity the unemployment rate for Blacks was 16.0 percent, for Latinos 12.5 percent, Whites 8.7 percent and for Asians 7.5 percent. The sectors in which Latinos are mostly likely to be found (Construction, Agriculture, and Leisure and Hospitality) tend to have the highest levels of economic contraction and are among the first to lay off their workers during an economic recession.

Table 11 shows that the poverty rate for families rose from 8.7 percent in 2000 to 10.4 in 2015, reflecting a net increase of 1.7 percent. During the same period, Blacks had an increase of 2.9 percent, Whites 1.3 percent, Latinos 1.2 percent, and Asians 0.3 percent. The poverty rate for married couples was considerably lower, reaching 6.4 percent in 2015, 4.0 percent less than for families in general. Latino married couples had the highest poverty rate among all groups with 1 in 6.8 families (14.6 percent) in poverty, followed by Black married couples with 8.8 percent, and a net increase of 2.5 percent during the 15-year period. White and Asian married couples had lower increases in their poverty rates with 0.8 and 1.0 percent, respectively. White married couples had the lowest poverty rate in 2015, equal to 4.0 percent.

Table 11. Persons in Poverty by Race and Ethnicity by Type of Families

RACE AND ETHNICITY	2000	2015
Families		
Total	8.7	10.4
Latino	19.2	20.4
White	5.4	6.7
Black	19.3	22.2
Asian	7.8	8.1
Married Couple		
Total	4.7	6.4
Latino	14.2	14.6
White	3.2	4.0
Black	6.3	8.8
Asian	5.9	6.9
Female Householder no husband present		
Total	25.4	28.2
Latino	36.4	37.1
White	17.8	22.8
Black	34.3	35.7
Asian	22.2	15.5

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

The poverty rates for households headed by a single female are 4.4 times higher than those for married couples and are the highest among all types of households (28.2 percent). For Latino female-headed households the poverty rate was 37.1 percent, with 1 in 2.7 households in poverty; for Black households the ratio is 1 in 2.8, for Whites 1 in 4.4 and, finally, for Asians, who had the lowest rate (15.5 percent), the ratio is 1 in 6.5 households in poverty.

A study by Robison and Siles (1999) shows a high correlation between households headed by a single female and high teen pregnancy rates, high school dropout rates, high crime rates, and lower labor force participation rates. The study also found that this type of household contributes to income inequality in the country since on average they have incomes that are equal to a third of what married couples earn annually. In 2014 these figures were \$81,025 for married couples and \$26,673 for female-headed households.

In the last few years the Latino community has been making important economic and financial strides to increase their wealth and influence within the U.S. economy. According to the summary report of the conference *Increasing Wealth in the Latino Community* organized by the Tomás Rivera Policy Institute, there is a growing middle-class of Latinos comprised of either foreign-born persons who have been in the U.S. many years, or are first- and second-generation native-born. These persons started businesses and are the new entrepreneurial class. Their businesses form the foundation of family and community stability. The report argues that:

Near the far end of this economic continuum are those considered to be affluent Latinos. Research shows that this is yet another fast-

growing group, comprised of Latino households earning more than \$100,000 per year. [...] Finally, there are Latinos who can be considered truly wealthy with a net worth in the millions. This group is primarily self-made.[...] They are manufacturers and large-scale construction contractors, own chains of Hispanic-related grocery stores or have significant real estate holdings in the U.S. and possibly in their home country. As a group, they are typically an equal mix of first- and second-generation Latinos. They also are well-organized, with a business plan to guide how the business will evolve in the next several years. And although they are open to receiving business advice, their cultural loyalty carries a tendency to seek it from other Latinos or people they know (Tomás Rivera Policy Institute, 2007, pp. 11).

According to Table 12, Latinos in 2013 had a total spending power of more than \$600 billion, 9.7 percent of the total spending power of the U.S. population, denoting a daily spending power (disposable income) of \$1.66 billion. Recent Latino immigrants had \$287.6 billion of spending power during the same year with a daily amount of \$788 million.

Table 12. National Estimates for the Spending Power of Latino Households, 2013

Population	Spending Power (in billions)
All Latinos	\$605.4
Foreign-born Latinos	\$287.6
Total U.S. Population	\$6,261.5

Source: Partnership for a New American Economy.¹

A study by Rebecca Riffkin and Frank Newport from GALLUP shows that “Hispanic adults in the U.S. in 2014 reported spending more money on a daily basis, on average, than is typical for the U.S. adult population” (see Tables 13 and 14).

Table 13. Average Daily Spending by Race and Ethnicity, 2014

Race and Ethnicity	Average Daily Spending
All U.S. Adults	\$90
Latinos	\$96
Non-Latino Whites	\$88
Non-Latino Blacks	\$87
Asians	\$95

Source: Riffkin and Newport, 2014.

According to Table 14, Latinos spend on average \$96 on a daily basis, 6.7 percent more than the average daily spending of \$90 for the entire U.S. population. Compared to the spending

amount of \$87 for Blacks, which is the lowest among all racial and ethnic groups, Latinos spend 10.3 percent more on a daily basis. A more detailed analysis by the same authors shows daily spending differences when considering having children under 18 years old. Table 14 shows that Latinos have the largest percentage of families with children under 18, with 1 in 2 families falling in this category, 51.5 percent more than families for all adults in the U.S and 72.4 percent more than White families with children under 18, the lowest percentage among all racial groups.

Table 14. Average Daily Consumer Spending Affected by Having Children under 18 Years Old

Race and Ethnicity	Percent of families with children under 18	Average daily spending, those without children under 18	Average daily spending, those with children under 18
All U.S. Adults	33	\$79	\$111
Latinos	50	\$76	\$116
Non-Latino White	29	\$79	\$108
Non-Latino Black	39	\$72	\$111
Asians	36	\$82	\$119

Source: Riffkin and Newport, 2014.

Among families with no children under 18 years of ages, Latino families have one of the lowest averages of daily spending (\$76), 3.9 percent lower than all U.S. adults (\$79), and 7.9 percent lower than Asians (\$82), who have the highest average daily spending. When considering families with children under 18, the average daily spending of Latinos jumps to \$116 and is the second highest among all racial and ethnic groups. The daily spending for Latino families is 4.5 percent higher than for U.S. families and 7.4 percent higher than Whites' average daily spending, which is the lowest among all groups. Latino families trail Asian families by only 2.6 percent (\$119) in their daily spending. All these figures show the significant spending power that Latino families, including recent immigrants, have at the national level with a direct impact on the economic well-being of the country.

Another important contribution of Latinos to national and state economies is the amount of taxes they pay on an annual basis. UnidosUS, formerly the National Council of La Raza, reports that: “In 2013, Latino households paid almost \$124 billion in federal taxes, including individual and corporate income taxes, payroll taxes, and excise taxes, and almost \$67 billion in state and local taxes” (2015: para. 5). Further, “Tax contributions from Latino households also play a critical role in funding Social Security and Medicare. In 2013, Latino households contributed about \$98 billion to Social Security and \$23 billion to Medicare through payroll taxes” (para. 5).

Furthermore, the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy provides data that confirm, “Collectively, undocumented



immigrants in the United States pay an estimated total of \$11.74 billion in state and local taxes a year. This includes more than \$7 billion in sales and excise taxes, \$3.6 billion in property taxes, and \$1.1 billion in personal income taxes” (Gee, et al., 2017: 3). The total annual contribution of Latino households, including recent immigrants, to national and local economies through taxes and their payments to Social Security and Medicare is estimated at just under \$340 billion. As stated above, Latinos have the largest number of persons under 18 years old, so Latino youth could become key supporters of the Social Security and Medicare programs in the near future.

Another key economic variable that shows the importance of Latino households within the national economy is their purchasing power. Several studies estimate that in 2015 the purchasing power of Latino households was \$1.5 trillion, and this year it is expected to reach \$1.7 trillion.

According to Table 15, the purchasing power of Latino consumers has increased by \$1.49 trillion since 1990, representing a 709.5 percent increase in 27 years, with a 26.3 percent yearly increase. Since 2010 the purchasing power of Latinos increased by \$700 billion, a 70 percent increase with a yearly increase of 10 percent.

Table 15. Purchasing Power of Latino Consumers in the United States from 1990 to 2017

YEAR	PURCHASING POWER In Trillions of Dollars
2017	\$1.7
2015	\$1.5
2012	\$1.2
2010	\$1.0
2000	\$0.49
1990	\$0.21

Source: Hispanic Retail 360; University of Georgia.

At the national level, the purchasing power of American consumers in 2017 reached \$11.7 trillion. Latino consumers’ purchasing power of \$1.7 trillion thus represents 14.5 percent of the national purchasing power. This figure is generally in line with the size of the Latino population as a percentage of the total U.S. population (16.9% currently).

Finally, it is important to consider the role that Latino-owned

businesses play in the national economy. According to the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce there are currently more than 4.2 million Latino-owned businesses in the country. These businesses support over 4.0 million jobs. Since 2012 the number of Latino-owned businesses has grown by 900,000, representing a net increase of 27.3 percent in 5 years.

According to the economic census of 2012, the three sectors with the largest numbers of Latino-owned businesses are Other services (except Public Administration) with 550,000, Administrative and Support services with 520,000, and Construction with 480,000 businesses. The three sectors with the lowest numbers of Latino-owned businesses are Manufacturing with 40,000, Educational Services with 50,000, and Finance and Insurance with 55,000.

The Other Service and Construction sectors are also characterized by their relatively high number of Latino workers, which suggests that Latino business owners hire Latino workers. On the other hand, the sectors with the lowest numbers of Latino-owned businesses, Manufacturing, Educational Services, and Finance and Insurance require specialized knowledge to operate, high start-up costs, advanced levels of education, and highly qualified workers.

A report from Geoscape shows that the revenue of Latino-owned businesses increased by 88.3 percent from 2007 to 2015, reaching a projected \$661 billion in 2015, and if the growth rate remains the same, the projected figure for 2017 could reach \$787 billion. A high percentage of this revenue is used to support the daily operations of these firms and most of the generated profits are reinvested to allow the firms to keep growing.

Latino-owned businesses were the fastest growing among minority-owned businesses between 2007 and 2012, according to the Census Bureau’s latest economic and businesses survey (see Table 16). They grew by 46.3 percent during this period, followed by Native Hawaiian & Pacific Islander, African American, Asian, and American Indian-owned businesses. It is expected that this trend will continue when the results of the current (2017) businesses survey are published.

Table 16. Minority Business Growth, 2007-2012

RACE AND ETHNICITY	PERCENT GROWTH
Latino	46.3%
Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander	45.3%
Black	34.5%
Asian	23.8%
American Indian and Alaska Native	15.3%

Source: Census Bureau, Survey of Business Owners, 2012.

The Economics and Statistics Administration report, *Deep Dive into Hispanic Ownership*, indicates that, “While men owned over 56 percent of Hispanic businesses in 2012, women drove



the growth in this category. Between 2007 and 2012, the number of female Hispanic-owned businesses grew by an incredible 87 percent, from 800,000 to 1.5 million firms” (2016, para. 2).

In summary, Latino-owned businesses are growing in numbers at a fast rate; they are creating thousands of jobs, and the annual revenue that they generate is rapidly approaching \$1.0 trillion. These figures show the significant role that Latino-owned businesses play within national and state economies and, what is more important, the impact of these businesses will continue growing in the coming years.

Conclusion

For many years anti-immigrant sentiments have been mounting, with Latinos being one of the major targets of American hostility. Some people view Latinos as a heavy load that the American government has to sustain, and believe that the vast majority are undocumented, use public services without contributing their fair share, and do not pay any taxes or contribute to national social programs.

This article discusses the important contributions that Latinos make to the nation’s social and economic fabric. We started by showing the rapid growth of the Latino population during the last decades, fueled in part by an influx of undocumented immigrants, but this flow has leveled in the last few years, making domestic Latinos and their relatively larger families the main source for the population growth.

Although Latinos, both males and females, participate in the labor force at high rates, due to their low educational attainment (one of the lowest among all race and ethnic groups), they mainly work for sectors that pay on average the lowest weekly wages. Since Latinos have the largest number of persons per family, these two figures--low wages, large families—in part help explain their higher poverty rates compared to Whites.

For many years, the community has been working to overcome these negative figures. Some progress has been made in reducing the educational gap with other racial groups, and an increasing percentage of Latinos with high educational

attainment, especially women, are already working for sectors that pay very good weekly salaries and benefits.

At the same time, Latinos have become key players within the U.S. economy, with their spending and purchasing powers continually increasing in recent years. Further, Latinos have become the subpopulation group with the highest daily spending. Latinos, including recent immigrants, contribute to the U.S. economy by paying large amounts of federal and state taxes and make significant contributions to the Social Security and Medicare programs. Since the number of Latinos under 18 years of age is the largest among all the other racial/ethnic groups, young Latinos will become key contributors to these social programs.

In addition, for many years Latino entrepreneurs, mainly females, have been creating new businesses at a very fast pace. Recent numbers show that currently there are over 4.2 million Latino-owned businesses in the country, which supported over 4.0 million jobs and generated an estimated revenue in 2017 close to \$800 billion.

In summary, the Latino community has been gaining social and economic influence at the national level. They increasingly become key contributors to the nation’s economy, diversity and social fabric. In recent months, political leaders and segments of the population, especially in states where there are voices that are trying to undermine the advancement made by Latinos, have challenged this progress. This article shows that the vast majority of Latinos are supporters of national and state economies and their influence within the country is increasing every day. 🌐

Endnotes

¹To quantify the spending power of Latinos, the study by the Partnership for a New American Economy looks at Latinos’ annual income and subtracts the taxes they pay at the federal, state, and local levels.

²*Hispanics’ Daily Spending Well Above U.S. Average*

³Purchasing power is the value of a currency expressed in terms of the amount of goods or services that one unit of money can buy. Purchasing power is important because, all else being equal, inflation decreases the amount of goods or services you would be able to purchase. Spending power is the degree to which people have money to buy products and services: The growth in employment and wages gives consumers some spending power to absorb the higher cost of energy.

⁴Source: Trading Economics: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.

⁵Hispanic Businesses & Entrepreneurs Drive Growth in the New Economy, 3rd Annual Report 2015.

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Albert A. Peña Jr.: Dean of Chicano Politics

Continued from page 4

and future Chicanos and Latinos interested in providing political leadership.

Today, with the U.S. political system in disarray due to gerrymandering and attacks to the democratic process with the rise of voter I.D. requirements, the ingenious political practices exhibited by Albert Peña Jr. remain relevant. As Americans strive to preserve democracy while resisting tyrannical forces from within that have further widened the economic gap in this country, it is important to look at the political victories of yesteryears and learn from the effectiveness of strong leadership and organizational skills. *Albert A. Peña Jr.: Dean of Chicano Politics* provides numerous lessons to anyone interested in the U.S. political system and any aspiring politician. This book is useful for students of Chicano and minority politics, and should be used in ethnic studies, political science, and Chicano/Latino studies and many other courses. 

Ethnicity and Criminal Justice in the Era of Mass Incarceration

Continued from page 4

communities upon release. He presents recent statistics that show that more than 50,000 people leave prison every month, and more than 650,000 inmates are released from state and federal prisons every year, but about 75% of the released inmates return to prison. Since the 1980s, overcrowding of prisons and tough-on-crime policies have reduced the possibilities for rehabilitation offered to inmates. This means that those exiting the prison system often carry not only the liabilities with which they entered the prison system (limited education, lack of marketable skills, etc.), but they also carry new liabilities such as damaged relationships, the stigma of having been incarcerated, and lack of shelter.

In Chapter 13, Álvarez and Urbina discuss the ways by which processes of globalization exacerbate incarceration inequities through three main areas of law enforcement: a) the globalization of the war on drugs; b) the globalization of the illegal alien ideology, and c) the globalization of national security efforts. A major outcome of these policies has been a sharp increase in incarceration rates, especially among minorities. For example, because of the War on Drugs, on any given day, 32% of Blacks (21 – 29 years of age) and 12% of Latinos are in prison or jail, or on probation or parole, compared to only 6.7% of Whites.

As an outcome of these laws, the number of people incarcerated, mostly persons of color, has grown exponentially: 2.3 million were imprisoned by the end of 2005, 4.2 million adults were on probation, almost 800,000 were on parole, 1 in 32 adults or 3.2 percent of the population, were under correctional control.

In summary, in the nearly 170 years since the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, the American justice system has issued many laws that initially targeted Mexicans and today target Latinos and result in high incarceration rates and longer periods in jail. The imbalanced rates for incarceration and probation between Whites and Latinos show the skewed treatment of how the criminal justice system deals with minorities.

In addition, the lack of appropriate quality training programs to facilitate the reincorporation of inmates into civil society contributes to high rates of recidivism for Latinos. With its detailed analyses of issues faced by Latinos in the criminal justice system, this is a very informative book for scholars engaged in the study of the U.S. criminal justice system and its uneven treatment of minority groups, especially in regard to Latinos. It is also a valuable resource for students of ethnic studies, criminal justice and sociology courses. 

"Can you please help me?"

Continued from page 13

Although the circumstances of their deaths were different their lives ended the same way. On April 28, Elsa waited for others in her unit to leave for dinner. She then "shut her cell door while still inside, and smiled through the window in her cell, at the detainees in the dayroom" (DHS, 2013, September 25: 11). She was found hanging from the top bunk with her shoelaces around her neck. Two days later, Jorge placed a towel to cover the cell door's window. He was found hanging from the top bunk with a shoestrapping around his neck (DHS, 2013, October 7). On May 10, 2013, Eloy Detention Center employees received an email stating that "all shoelaces have been taken from all detainees and are now considered contraband" (DHS, 2013, September 25: 22). Finally, something was done about the deaths at the detention center, although it cannot be said to be significant.

By this time, the City of Eloy had gained prominence among official detention circles and the summer of 2014 provided an opportunity for it to showcase itself as a well-connected prison city. Central American refugees were overwhelming border patrol. There was a need for a place to house mothers and children. All eyes were on CCA to take the lead. CCA had a place in Dilley, Texas that they called the "South Texas Family Residential Center." If opened, it would be the largest immigrant detention facility in the country. But contracts had to be written and negotiated, a process that takes time. The City of Eloy stepped in to save the day and avoid bureaucratic delays. On September 25, 2014, the town newspaper ran the breaking story, "City takes on \$290M deal with ICE." At CCA's request, the City agreed to modify the terms of its already-existing contract with ICE but only after the City Council successfully negotiated for twice the fee offered by CCA, which sought to pay 25 cents per day per detainee. The City Council wanted \$1 a day per detainee. They settled for 50 cents. Eloy would net \$438,000 per year from the family detention center in Dilley.

Money was the only point of contention. No efforts were made to address standards of care nor did the City reference the conditions inside its own detention center. As City Manager Harvey Krauss stated, "This is a business deal for the city – it is not about immigration" (Neu, 2014: 1). Before the vote was taken, Mayor Joseph Nagy stated, "It's the council's opinion that we should participate in some of the rewards of working with CCA and the government" (Neu, 2014: 1). After the vote, Nagy noted, "The citizens won" (Neu, 2014: 6). It would matter little who lost.

Of course, the money coming in to the City of Eloy had no impact on the rising death toll. In fiscal year 2015-16, the City adopted a tentative budget of more than \$39 million, which included large sums of pass-through money that filled CCA coffers. Despite the large sums of money circulated, little changed inside the detention center. For Elisa Deniz this would mean unbearable heartache. Elisa last saw her son, José de Jesús Deniz-Sahagun, when they celebrated his birthday on May 13, 2015 at the family home in Jalisco, Mexico. The occasion was bittersweet as José was heading north to join his three young children in Las Vegas. Two days later, José encountered border patrol agents in Douglas, Arizona. He was "hysterical and visibly emotional" and "expressed fear that someone was going to kill him" (DHS, 2015: 1).

On May 17, José was taken to Banner University Medical Center in Tucson after "twice jumping from a concrete bench in a Border Patrol hold room and landing on his head." He was later discharged into Border Patrol custody and listed as "stable" (DHS, 2015: 2). After being booked at the Eloy Detention Center on May 18, José told a registered nurse during his intake that he had been taken to the hospital the day before after "throwing himself off a table to try to kill himself. He stated he wanted to break his neck and die because his life was threatened, and he would rather kill himself than allow someone else to do it" (DHS, 2015: 3-4). The registered nurse later said José at that time was not "suicidal, symptomatic, or urgent," and described him as appearing "stable" (DHS, 2015: 3-4). José spoke to his sister on the phone one time (Bishop, 2016). She never heard from him again.

Records indicate José reacted to his incarceration on four separate occasions in a single day. Each time he was met with force. On May 19 around 9:30 a.m., two CCA employees attempted to interview him. José refused to answer any questions and insisted his attorney be present. When the employees gave up and returned him to his cell, José attempted to run out the main door. An officer pointed pepper spray at him and ordered him to face the wall and place his hands behind



Photo courtesy of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)

his back. José complied. After being handcuffed, José again attempted for the door. Two officers then took him down and one later described the take-down maneuver as "one of the easiest he has seen in his ten years in corrections" (DHS, 2015: 7). The officers described José as "completely uncompliant, uncooperative, and aggressive" during the incident (DHS, 2015: 7). Camera footage of the incident remains less than useful because "there was bright sunlight... obscuring clear view" and "some of the incident took place in a blind spot" (DHS, 2015: 8).

Incident #1. While José was on the floor, handheld video footage shows him surrounded by staff and "he is crying out and screaming." José refused to comply with the medical exam and repeatedly stated, "This is brutality. I need my lawyer." A registered nurse later recalled that he was "verbally combative, agitated, not making sense, and demanding his lawyer be called" (DHS, 2015: 9). She was only able to determine that he had "no visible signs of bleeding." José was again held face-down on the floor in the medical unit to "control his movements." José screamed in English and Spanish, "Help me," "Call my lawyer," "This is brutality" (DHS, 2015: 9).

Incident #2. After 14 minutes at the clinic, José was placed in a wheelchair to be taken back to his cell. José refused to cooperate and tried to slide out of the wheelchair. A CCA employee applied a pressure point technique to the base of his neck for five seconds and a second pressure point to his hypoglossal nerve for two seconds. Upon release of the pressure points, José stopped resisting. Four officers, one holding each of his limbs, carried him face down back to his cell. José was sobbing (DHS, 2015).

Incident #3. José was then placed on suicide watch and had to be moved to a different location. A "five-person cell extraction team was assembled" (DHS, 2015: 12-13). José was taken on a gurney. Once he got to the new cell, he refused to get off the stretcher and the staff had to carry him inside.

Incident #4. On May 20, José saw a doctor who wrote that José was "embarrassed about the events of yesterday" and that he has already written CCA staff a letter of apology. A later report found that because he was on suicide watch, José did not have access to "implements necessary to write an apology letter," there is no evidence they were given, and no apology letter was ever found (DHS, 2015: 16).

The doctor then changed José's status from suicide watch to mental health observation because "he believed the detainee was no longer a danger to himself" (DHS, 2015: 17). At 5:28 p.m. a medical emergency was called after an officer checked in on José. Ten minutes later 911 was called. Paramedics got to José at 5:52 p.m. José was pronounced dead at 6:09 p.m. The

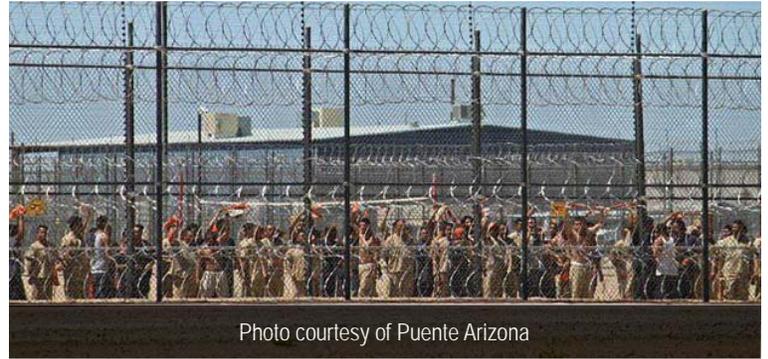


Photo courtesy of Puente Arizona

autopsy found that an orange sock stuck in his esophagus had caused him to asphyxiate (DHS, 2015). A later interview noted that the "nurses seemed preoccupied with taking the detainee's blood pressure instead of initiating the 'ABCs' of CPR: Airway, Breathing, and Circulation... the nurses seemed to have limited awareness of the contents of the emergency bag" (DHS, 2015: 25-26). The Security and Healthcare Review later found that Eloy Detention Center had not fully complied with ICE standards for medical care, significant self-harm and suicide prevention and intervention, special management units, and use of force and restraints (DHS, 2015). The Review further noted that even though there have been five suicides since 2005, Eloy Detention Center has not yet developed a suicide prevention plan (DHS, 2015). Clearly, the change of policy behind shoelaces did not amount to having a suicide prevention plan.

Thirty-six-year-old Raquel Calderon de Hildago, who had no criminal history, spent Thanksgiving 2016 incarcerated at Eloy Detention Center. She had been suffering a series of seizures that went untreated. That weekend, she was rushed by ambulance to the Banner Casa Grande Medical Center where she died (Planas, 2016). An autopsy later found that Raquel had died of blood clots in her right lung that had traveled from her leg upward after a leg injury. One story reported that it "remains unclear whether Calderon's death was preventable" (González, 2017). Perhaps clarity could come from accounts from inside the detention center. Those accounts seem to indicate that Raquel fell to the ground as she suffered seizures and was in great pain. The guards ignored her, thought she was faking it, and yelled at her to get back up. When she did not respond to their demands, they finally called for the medical cart. The medical cart was locked in a room some distance away. People held inside had repeatedly expressed concerns to the guards that the medical cart should not be locked in cases of emergencies. They had been ignored. The medical cart was finally brought and Raquel was transported to the hospital suffering continual seizures along the way. Whether she was "rushed" there does not seem as relevant. By then it was too late. The day after Raquel died, the

room with the medical cart was apparently unlocked.

Conclusion

Outside the last place Raquel was alive, unpicked cotton was swaying in the fall breeze. A few weeks later, chilly winter nights set in and then a New Year. The next fall will bring harvest time. The cotton will bloom again. Many detainees will be “voluntarily” or forcibly deported. The winter will come. The unpicked cotton will wither away. Someone may end up dead and the sun will rise and set on Eloy. While home to the nation’s deadliest detention center, the city has come to evoke fear in immigrant communities facing the violent threat of arbitrary arrest, detention, and deportation. If the detention center at Eloy expands to incarcerate more people, as indicated by many persons connected with the facility, more lives will be put at risk through a combination of inadequate medical care, arbitrary use of solitary confinement, and a record of violent deaths.

However, it would be misguided to use the story of Eloy and the private detention center to simply challenge conditions in immigrant detention centers today. While that is certainly a point worth noting, a much wider issue is at the forefront. The story of Eloy should compel us to consider not the ways in which immigrant detention should or could be reformed but rather how the practice of detaining immigrants should be abolished altogether so that a town, a state, and ultimately a nation could begin to redeem themselves from their own violent pasts. 

Endnotes

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JSRI and LASSO at Cooper Street Correctional Facility

Juan D. Coronado

Last Fall, the president of the Latin American Spanish Speaking Organization (LASSO) at the Cooper Street Correctional Facility in Jackson, Michigan reached out to JSRI in hopes of establishing a relationship that would yield learning opportunities for inmates. JSRI answered the call and applied for volunteer status. After clearing background checks in January, Juan Coronado and Barry Lewis began to meet twice a month with the inmates.

LASSO members expressed interest in learning more about their Latino heritage. They asked for lectures on Latino history and on current issues that impact Latinos and inmates alike. Barry Lewis, a graduate student in Social Work and a Research Assistant at JSRI, has been designing a tool-kit that will provide helpful resources for LASSO members to use upon being released.

On average, between 35-60 inmates gather for each meeting and respectfully listen to the lectures and ask questions. It has been probably the most appreciative audience I have ever had as each of them thanks us and shakes our hand upon the conclusion of each meeting. The highlight in the Spring was the Cinco de Mayo celebration LASSO held on the evening of Saturday, May 6. The group held games, enjoyed live music, listened to a guest speaker, and engaged in other activities. On that visit I gave a short talk on the history and significance of Cinco de Mayo to a group of about 150 inmates from different ethnic backgrounds.

The program is continuing this Fall and has been uplifting to the men by providing them something to look forward to each month. This is important outreach to a population often overlooked in today's punitive society. With the budget cuts experienced at all levels of government due to the impact of neoliberal policies, correctional facilities and prisoners are in dire need of positive interactions that can contribute to the rehabilitation of prisoners. The goal is to educate and deepen participants' understanding of their rich Latino heritage, and how it contributes to and shapes the larger society. By better understanding their heritage, it is expected that program participants will have a greater purpose in life and pursue successful re-entry into the larger society upon release from prison. 

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