The Official 2018 Theme

SOCIAL LABELING AND THE EFFECTS OF DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY INTERVENTION POLICIES AND ACTIONS THROUGHOUT THE LATINO WORLD

When President Lyndon Baines Johnson introduced his War on Poverty initiatives\textsuperscript{1}, it was intended to draw public attention to the plights and real, human challenges faced by particular sectors of the United States community who were in dire poverty. During this era, a family in poverty was defined as a family of four making less than $4,800 a year. Mexican-Americans, alongside Puerto Ricans, Native Americans, and African-Americans, were made part of a protected class\textsuperscript{2} of people who were to receive special attention and services. Over half of these population groups had incomes that were well below the established poverty line.

By this time in the mid-1960s, global scholars had taken to referring to most, if not all, of Latin America as part of the “third world.”\textsuperscript{3} Hundreds of families in poverty fled Puerto Rico in the 1950s at the end of the Second World War, seeking employment and opportunity as well as a means to “cash in” on their newly affirmed\textsuperscript{4} U.S. citizenship. (In New York, to cite a prevalent example of where this took place, Puerto Ricans now make up nearly 9 percent of the city’s population.) Waves of Cubans started migrating to the United States upon the Fidel Castro-led revolution in 1959. This period reigned in an era of decades of U.S. military and political intervention\textsuperscript{5} in Latin America, which led to more instability and less progress for the Americas. As the world entered the 1960s, various Latin American nations were plagued by violent military conflicts. Countries started fighting for stability and survival amidst skirmishes between liberation theologian clergy, communist and social militia groups, armed indigenous tribes, military juntas, and an oligarchy trying to protect their hold on land, titles, and political power.

In the U.S., federal economic classifications and other social labels entered the American lexicon. Mexican-Americans were labeled as minorities, at-risk, disadvantaged, and special needs populations.

\textsuperscript{1} Examples of these initiatives - Community Action Program, Job Corps, Head Start, Medicare, Medicaid, Food Stamp Act, Title I Funding for Schools, Bilingual Education, Migrant Education

\textsuperscript{2} Protected class - The groups protected from the employment discrimination by law. These groups include men and women on the basis of sex; any group which shares a common race, religion, color, or national origin; people over 40; and people with physical or mental handicaps. Every U.S. citizen is a member of some protected class, and is entitled to the benefits of EEO law. However, the EEO laws were passed to correct a history of unfavorable treatment of women and minority group members. https://www.archives.gov/eeo/terminology.html

\textsuperscript{3} Third world - definitions spanning [1] nations that were not aligned neither with the capitalist West (U.S., U.K., France) or the community Eastern nations (USSR, China) as well as [2] underdeveloped or poor nations (parts of Africa, Latin America), or [3] minority groups within a nation or predominant culture http://www.dictionary.com/browse/third-world

\textsuperscript{4} In 1952 the U.S. approved Puerto Rico’s Constitution was ratified affirming U.S. citizenship and allowing for partial self-governance as a “commonwealth” or “estado libre asociado”

\textsuperscript{5} Military interventions in Latin America - Guatemalan military coup 1954; Brazilian coup 1964; Chilean coup 1973; Bay of Pigs, Cuba 1961; Dominican invasion 1965
thus demanding different forms of intervention. In today’s world, these population identifiers remain in place, and have further been identified as “people of color” and part of the nation’s “rainbow coalition movement.”

Towards the latter part of the 20th century, third world nations, now called developing nations, saw multinational corporations seek opportunities to maximize profits by relocating to Latin America under a mission of economic development and strategic foreign investment. Amidst turmoil, a prevalent view of need and dependence on U.S. foreign investors and even U.S. charity was adopted as an economic strategy throughout Latin America.

Today, the question that needs answering is whether or not the assignment of these social identifiers - at-risk, third world, developing, need-based, minority - have also caused serious damage to the modern day global Latino identity. Have these types of terms, concepts, and policy approaches imparted negative, long-term social effects extending beyond the original intent of U.S. domestic civil rights and Latin American foreign policy legislation of the late 20th century and early 21st century? The question is whether or not this federal legislative and executive action of 50 plus years ago which lead to social labeling has resulted in Latinos adopting a “needs view of themselves” as a population. Has this simultaneously caused majority population Americans to view Latinos as deficient, underdeveloped, or backwards? If so, is the continuation and promotion of this world view beneficial or detrimental to future Latino communities, particularly the view adopted by future leaders? If so, what replacement world view should be considered and what policy changes should be considered to alter the perceptions Latinos have about themselves and their own communities?

In the 2018 NHI leadership programs, discussions will revolve around these questions. Ninth grade Great Debate students will conduct a critical examination of the issues surrounding current practices in social labeling to determine whether or not any social harm and injury are being fostered in the thinking of Latinos that would constitute grounds for change. Tenth grade LDZ students will deliberate the benefits and consequences of social labeling with the intent of submitting modern-day proposals that alter existing social narratives from the perspective of a “community that needs” to a “community that invests” mentality. Eleventh grade students will apply inquiry based methods to identify various community options for the use of social labeling with the intent of identifying the best alternatives possible that provide Latinos a healthier view of themselves as a collective.

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6 Plan Colombia; War on Drugs; Creation of the Department of Education; Merida Initiative; Bracero Program; Marielitos; Falklands War; CAFTA; NAFTA; Pink Tide