

- Oldham, G., & Fried, Y. (1987). Employee reactions to workspace characteristics. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 72, 75-80.
- Strange, C. C. (1991). Managing college environments: Theory and practice. In T. K. Miller and R. B. Winston, Jr. (Eds.), *Administration and leadership in student affairs* (pp. 159-198). Muncie: Accelerated Development.
- Structure of the environment. (1984). *The Campus Ecologist*, 2(2) 2-3.
- Thelin, J. R., & Yankovich, J. (1987). Bricks and mortar: Architecture and the study of higher education. In J. Smart (Ed.), *Higher education: Handbook of theory and research*. Vol. III (pp. 57-83). New York: Agathon.
- Walsh, W. B. (1973). *Theories of person-environment interaction: Implications for the college student*. Iowa City, IA: American College Testing Program.
- Wicker, A. W. (1979). *An introduction to ecological psychology*. Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Kristen Lane Lettington is a second-year master's student in College Student Personnel Administration. She received a B.A. in Philosophy from Carleton College in 1988. With a background in residence life, Kristen currently works as a Career Counselor at the Career Development Center. Her future plans include getting a Ph.D. and a BIG DOG.

Charles Wilder Puls is a second-year master's student in College Student Personnel Administration. He received a B.S. in Marketing and Management from the University of Delaware in 1991. He has worked as a counselor in the offices of Student Financial Assistance, Student Ethics, and Arts and Sciences Placement. He hopes to return to community theatre on the East coast, after starting his career in student affairs.

Heather Dawn Wallace will complete her degree in College Student Personnel Administration in May. She received a B.S. in Marketing from the Indiana University School of Business in 1985. While pursuing her master's degree, she has worked in the Student Activities Office, served as a student government representative, and worked as an instructor and counselor at the Career Development Center.

The Hispanic Population: Assumptions and Realities

Allison B. Block

Introduction

By the year 2000, the Hispanic population in the United States will constitute the largest minority majority in the Southwest, certain Midwestern states, and regions of New York and the mid-Atlantic; in California, Hispanics will likely outnumber whites (Estrada, 1988). The presence of Hispanic students on college campuses is expected to reflect this phenomenal population growth. Unfortunately, many college administrators have experienced little interaction with this population. Assumptions about Hispanic students, whether formed through exposure to literature, the news media, or other information sources, inevitably surface; many of these suppositions are laden with stereotypes.

Student affairs professionals can transcend these assumptions and effectively address student needs only by confronting and examining the concerns of the Hispanic population. The following paper is a personal exploration that begins by revealing the author's assumptions about Hispanic people. These suppositions are followed by an account of the author's interaction with a member of this population and a literature review exploring the significant issues affecting the Hispanic population at colleges and universities nationwide.

It's early morning in the southern California town of La Mesa, 25 miles or so from the Mexican border. A man with skin the color of copper leans against a chain-linked fence; he rubs his eyes, then rummages through his breast pocket for a cigarette. He lights up, takes a drag, exhales, and turns his eyes away from the unrelenting heat of the August sun. Soon he is joined by five or six of his friends, ranging in age from 15 to 45 years old. All illegal immigrants, they've come to know each other through this morning ritual--hoping to be shuttled off to a day's work by an employer looking for cheap labor, before the state authorities arrive and shoo them away like flies.

Although the men speak in Spanish, even to a non-speaker the licentious nature of their conversation is clear. A bare-breasted man with tattered jeans gyrates his hips and howls; they all cackle in unison. One of the younger boys takes a swig of warm beer. When an attractive woman walks by, every pair of eyes follows her until she disappears from view. The men whoop and holler and stomp their feet. A man with a crimson scar carved into his right cheek clenches the fence and, like a caged animal, begins to shake it. A sadistic grin spreads across his wizened face, exposing a gap where his front teeth used to be.

A truck appears at the end of the dusty road; the leader of the group calls for quiet as he approaches the vehicle. Good news: work for the day. Picking strawberries for less than minimum wage. Without a moment's thought, the men pile into the bed of the truck. It's dirty, cramped, and smells of manure, but none

of them seems to care. They chatter loudly and pat each other on the back. After all, a day's work means money, and without money, they are nothing. The cash that will be in their hands that afternoon symbolizes survival; it means they've made it through another day.

As a child growing up in a predominantly white, middle-class suburb in southern California, this was the only image of Hispanic people I ever knew. Though separated by only a few miles, my world and their world were as opposite as two could be. I spoke English. They spoke Spanish. While my father worked in an office and wore a neatly pressed business suit, they worked out in the fields or in the home; their clothing was often soiled and disheveled. In my neighborhood, few families had more than three children. Hispanic families always seemed to have more children in tow than they could manage and many of the women were pregnant. Most of the American men I knew were respectful of women. Hispanic men, however, seemed macho and lascivious; they stared, snarled, or spit at women who crossed their path. The small number of Hispanic students in my school were always tardy and frequently absent; when they did show up, they usually caused trouble.

These early childhood observations led me to assume that Hispanic people were base and unrefined, with a cultural orientation that focused on the body rather than the mind, the carnal rather than the spiritual. I knew many had come to America to escape an oppressed life, to gain freedom and ultimately acquire material possessions--in short, to pursue the American dream. I never faulted them for that. But to me, they seemed to be opportunists, even parasites of a sort, eager to capitalize on all America had to give, but not reciprocate in any way. They turned their back on their provider, refusing to speak the language, to fit in. I never for a moment believed they had the same life aspirations as I did--to go to college, to become professionals. I never gave them credit for wanting more than what money could buy. Until I enrolled at Berkeley and met a young man named Jose Gamez.

Although the campus of the University of California, Berkeley may only be a brief airplane ride from the suburb in which I grew up, the two milieus are galaxies apart. In fact, Berkeley is so ethnically diverse, that as a white person, I often perceived myself among the minority. Making my daily trek across Sproul Plaza, the nerve center of the campus, the sea of faces of people of color--African-Americans, Native-Americans, Hispanic-Americans--often took me aback. As a writing tutor in Berkeley's Student Learning Center, I had the opportunity to work with many of these populations. Jose was my first student--and he quite literally changed my life. A native of Mexico, Jose had lived in the States less than five years. While his command of the English language was excellent, his writing skills were not up to Berkeley's standards. In fact, he had failed the basic composition requirement twice; one more unsuccessful attempt and he would be dismissed from the institution without a hope of returning.

As the time approached for my first meeting with Jose, I felt a combination of excitement and dread. I looked forward to helping a student in need, but at the same time, knew I would be unable to shed my assumptions. I assumed that Jose, like many Hispanic men I had seen, would be macho; he would see me as a sexual being, someone to be conquered. Our relationship would undoubtedly be adversarial. I was skeptical of his academic abilities as well, convinced he would justify my worst suspicions about affirmative action, that he hadn't truly earned the right to be a student at Berkeley.

Jose was not what I expected. He was congenial, polite, and honest about his shortcomings; we quickly became friends. To be honest, I scarcely noticed the color of his skin. Jose talked about how his difficulties with writing really didn't interfere with his major--electrical engineering (one of Berkeley's toughest)--but that if university regulations demanded that he pass freshman composition in order to stay, that's what he would do. "I haven't come this far for nothing," he would say with conviction. Jose passed the writing requirement that year and went on to graduate. While I may have helped him with his writing, he taught me a much more important lesson about the invidious nature of assumptions. They can preclude you from experiencing some of life's most gratifying moments.

The success of a student like Jose Gamez is as inspiring as it is rare. Research has long revealed that the American educational system is unfriendly turf for Hispanics, frequently challenging them to abandon their indigenous culture and language and adopt American ways in order to succeed, or in many cases, just survive. Of the numerous obstacles confronting Hispanic students, issues surrounding language are perhaps the most forbidding (Fields, 1988). Unlike Jose, who had a basic mastery of English, many Hispanic children don't hear spoken English until they enter the classroom, a predicament that can cause them to fall behind their normal grade levels almost immediately. A chain reaction of failure is set in motion, evidence of which can be detected as early as kindergarten. Census data reveals that in grades one through four, 28% of Hispanic students are behind; by ninth and tenth grades, the figure rises to 43% (Fields, 1988). "The educational pipeline for Hispanic-Americans is hardly a continuous conduit taking people at age five and delivering them at age 18 or 22 or 25 with the educational tickets for entry into the nation's mainstream" (Fields, 1988). Instead, it is a passageway plagued by gaps: "a leaky funnel" (p. 20).

Indeed, many Hispanic-Americans are fortunate to make it as far as high school. In 1988, the national high school dropout rate for Hispanic youths was 45% (Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities Annual Report, 1990). For those students who persevere, a four-year institution is seldom their first stop. For reasons ranging from proximity to their home to the need for remedial work, Hispanic students are six times more likely to enroll in community colleges with the goal of transferring to a four-year school (Estrada, 1988). But the statistics on transfers are sobering: studies suggest that fewer than 10% of

Hispanic students enrolled in community colleges actually move on to a four-year school. Alas, the ultimate goal of earning a bachelor's degree from an institution of higher education remains beyond the reach of many Hispanic students. According to the 1990 Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities Annual Report, in 1987, Hispanics earned just 2.7% of all bachelor's degrees awarded.

Although no simple remedy exists for the underrepresentation of Hispanics in higher education, many scholars argue that bilingual education, or lack thereof, is at the very core of this issue (King, 1976). How can a student with little or no exposure to English be expected to learn at the same rate as a native speaker? In California, where the Hispanic population is experiencing exponential growth, a bill designed to reinstate the traditional bilingual approach--teaching students who lack English fluency academic subjects in their native language while they build English skills--is currently before the governor (Merl, 1992). Benjamin Lopez, a lobbyist for California Rural Legal Assistance, echoes the danger of the "leaky funnel" syndrome, remarking that by ignoring this large and rapidly growing population, "their future progress will lead to dropping out, to an unsuccessful job search and to a difficult adult life" (Merl, 1992, p.A4). Although the institution of a bilingual program will not solve all problems--many critics believe it actually delays English acquisition--it appears to be one of the most effective means for Hispanics to simultaneously increase their chances for success in school and cling to the culture that is vital to their very existence.

The academic deficiencies resulting from language barriers are not solely to blame for the Hispanic population's disappointing performance in higher education; a number of other obstacles hinder their pursuit. In a culture where the family is of utmost importance and financial situations are often precarious, the need to go to work to support the family can override the highest of academic aspirations. As Fields (1988) reports, Hispanic students are raised to do things for the good of the family, making it difficult for them to put themselves first, even as adults. For many Hispanic college students, family bonds are so strong that the loneliness experienced away at school is completely debilitating. Administrators often speak of the number of dropouts resulting from homesickness (Fiske, 1988). Yet another stumbling block for students is the absence of college-educated Hispanic role models. One female student lamented that prior to her arrival at college, she had never encountered a Mexican-American in a position in which she aspired to be in ten years (Fiske, 1988).

Perhaps one of the greatest hardships faced by Hispanic students once they arrive at college (and something that many non-Hispanics are unlikely to consider) is the daily predicament of straddling two different cultures. An American education--viewed by many Hispanics as a ticket out--comes with a price. Fiske (1988) recalls one student's assessment of the need to hold onto his culture while maintaining a status in American culture: "That's a big pressure...You lose your culture. You get branded as a sellout" (p.31). A large number of students, unwilling to tow the line, drop out of school entirely. Many, says Fiske, are able to balance participation in two cultures. Some join Hispanic

social or political groups and affirm their heritage as overtly as possible; others become 'coconuts'--brown on the outside, white on the inside--an action that often leads to charges of selling out. In order to better cope with this cultural dichotomy, Hispanic students cite the need for more comprehensive support systems on college campuses. Ethnic organizations like Indiana University's Latinos Unidos and academic programs such as Wayne State's Chicano-Boricua Studies can offer students a home away from home and shelter from an often inclement ethnic climate.

Despite enjoying unprecedented growth, the Hispanic population's rate of retention and academic achievement in the nation's schools and community colleges continues to lag behind its white counterparts (Rendon & Nora, 1987-88). Recent research, however, provides more than a glimmer of hope. Studies reveal that while only 21% of legal immigrants entering the United States between 1980 and 1985 were high school graduates, newer immigrant waves are substantially more urban, literate, and skilled (Estrada, 1988). The future brings with it the promise of a generation that champions education at all levels. Furthermore, there is proof that pre-college intervention strategies--those that increase the number of students who are motivated and prepared to enroll and succeed in college--do indeed work (DeNecochea, 1988). At California State University, Long Beach, a summer residential program for educationally disadvantaged minority students that offers orientation, basic study skills, intensive writing and math instruction, academic advising, and exposure to some of the interpersonal dynamics of the first year of college, has resulted in minority retention rates that surpass those of whites (Ramirez, 1987). Halcon (1988) identifies similar programs at institutions nationwide, including the Early Awareness Project at the University of Texas, the University of Colorado's Pre-Collegiate Development program and Notre Dame's National Consortium for Graduate Degrees for Minorities in Engineering.

For the Hispanic population to achieve greater academic success in the future, patching up the "leaky funnel"--developing backward linkages from post-secondary schools to secondary schools and community college systems to school systems at the most primary levels--may be the most significant directive. But for student affairs professionals, it is only the beginning; they must pledge themselves to support Hispanic college students from the moment they set foot on campus to the day they graduate. Only through the persistent advocacy of academic support services, peer advising, faculty mentorship programs and career counseling, can student affairs professionals hope to topple the academic barriers and feelings of personal and cultural alienation that so often impede Hispanic students' success. With such dedication comes the hope that the Hispanic population's existing chain reaction of failure within the American educational system can be replaced by a sequence of success, in which Hispanic students become college graduates who inspire future generations.

References

- DeNecochea, G. (1988). Expanding the Hispanic college pool: Pre-college strategies that work. *Change*, 20, 60-62.

- Estrada, L. F. (1988). Anticipating the demographic future. Change, 20, 14-19.
- Fields, C. (1988). The Hispanic pipeline: Narrow, leaking and needing repair. Change, 20, 20-27.
- Fiske, E. B. (1988). The undergraduate Hispanic experience: A case of juggling two cultures. Change, 20, 29-33.
- Halcon, J. J. (1988). Exemplary programs for college-bound minority students. Paper presented at the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, Boulder, CO.
- Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities Annual Report (1990). San Antonio, Texas: Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities.
- King, L. M. (1976). The Spanish-speaking American. In H.A. Johnson (Ed.), Ethnic American Minorities (pp. 189-239). New York and London: R. R. Bowker Company.
- Merl, J. (1992, September 21). Students at center of bilingual debate. Los Angeles Times, p. A4.
- Ramirez, G. M. (1987). Retention of the Latino university student: Student affirmative action at CSULB. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Association for Bilingual Education, Denver, CO.
- Rendon, L. I., & Nora, A. (1988). Hispanic students: Stopping the leaks in the pipeline. Educational Record, 68, 79-85.

Allison Block is a first-year graduate student pursuing dual master's degrees in the Schools of Education and Journalism. After earning a B.A. in English from the University of California, Berkeley in 1986, she split six years between the East and West coasts, working as a public relations executive in Hollywood and Boston and as a writer and editor at Harvard University and the University of California, Berkeley. Allison hopes to complete her degrees by the turn of the century, at which time she will pursue a career in university publications or public relations. She is co-editor of the 1992-93 IUSPA Journal.

Meeting Institutional Goals Through Coeducational Living

Cherie Blankenbuehler
Michael Covert
Michael Dean
Patricia Wolfe

A considerable amount of research has been conducted on the impact of college living environments on student development. Students who live in residence halls are more satisfied with their institution, more involved in campus activities, and earn better grades than their off-campus counterparts (Kuh, 1981). On-campus living fosters increased social interaction, enhanced self-concept, and a broadened political viewpoint; it also encourages higher academic goals (Moos & Otto, 1975). It is perhaps surprising, therefore, that relatively few studies have dealt specifically with the effects of coeducational living within the residence halls (Corbett & Sommer, 1972; Moss & Otto, 1975).

The purpose of this study was to compare the Indiana University Department of Residence Life and the Halls of Residence's goals for the coeducational living unit, Teter-Thompson-Four, with the behaviors and perceptions of the students who live there.

This paper will first provide a brief background of the coeducational living unit in Teter Quadrangle. Second, a review of the literature concerning coeducational arrangements will be presented. Third, the methods for gathering and analyzing the data are described. Finally, a discussion of results and a series of recommendations will be provided.

At the time of this study, coeducational floors were in their second year of existence on the Indiana University-Bloomington campus. It was also the second year for the coeducational floor in Teter Quadrangle. Only three other coeducational floors in the undergraduate halls existed and, like Teter Quadrangle, all housed upperclass students. The research team believed this was an appropriate time to conduct a comparison study between the institutional goals and the student behaviors and perceptions of this pilot environment. The group hypothesized there would be a very close match as a result of the influence of the environment on behavior and perceptions.

The Department of Residence Life and Halls of Residence determine the policies and procedures to be followed in housing units which students occupy. The Department of Residence Life deals mainly with student life issues, while Halls of Residence handles facilities management and maintenance of the buildings. Their combined goals, described in this paper, were designed to facilitate the development of communities which complement and support the academic mission of the institution. The goals were campus-wide and enforcement of policies was expected in all residence halls. Students may influence policies through unit agreements, community councils, and hall