Gill-Lebovic Center for Community Health in the Caribbean & Latin America

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

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To Latinx or not to Latinx?

Gender neutrality does not equal gender inclusivity

The best way to know is by asking people how they self-identify

It’s political – as an identity and as an example of colonizing language
Arkansas Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders is banning 'Latinx' from state documents

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AYANA ARCHIE

Some Republicans Want to Ban ‘Latinx.’ These Latino Democrats Agree.

In Connecticut, some Democratic lawmakers want to prohibit the use of the gender-neutral term in official government documents. The Republican governor of Arkansas does too.
Definition of the population: As recommended by (del Rio-González, 2021) we use “Latina/x/o” when referring to the community at large and “Latino” when referring to cisgender men, “Latina” when referring to cisgender women.
Latino is not a homogenous group
• Colorism plays a significant role in the health outcomes of dark-skinned Puerto Ricans in Puerto Rico, and skin color is a better health predictor than the OMB ethno-racial categories.

• Results indicate that Puerto Ricans with the lightest skin tone have better general health than Puerto Ricans who self-described as being of the darkest skin tones.
Colonialism is a socio-structural determinant of health
Figure. The Impact of Colonialism as a Sociostructural Determinant of Health
“Although it has become a liberal sport to insist on how different Trump is from everything and everyone that preceded him, the president’s response to the hurricane is consistent with American colonial history.”

Negrón-Muntaner, 2017
Community resistance

When a community responds to and withstands an adverse situation without any or very limited resources available.

Community resistance also acknowledges communities’ power in determining what resources are needed and how to make them available to those in need.
Risk for COVID-19 infection and death among Latinos in the United States: examining heterogeneity in transmission dynamics

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Rates of COVID-19 cases

- COVID-19 cases were greater in Latino counties with:
  - greater proportion of monolingual Spanish speakers
  - lower unemployment rates
  - less social distancing

Rodríguez-Díaz, et al., 2020
Rates of COVID-19 deaths

- COVID-19 deaths were greater in:
  - Latino counties with:
    - crowded living conditions
    - elevated air pollution
    - employment

Rodríguez-Díaz, et al., 2020
"We are in this together – and we will get through this, together."

UN Secretary-General António Guterres
We are not in this together
As we collectively delve into historically oppressive systems with colonial antecedents, we must be ready to challenge these systems and replace them with collaborative models.

Rodríguez-Díaz, et al., 2021
Anti-racism for a culture of health

• Avoid “health equity tourism”; An approach in which the community is **us** rather than **them** is more effective.

• Build capacity in the communities.

• Invest in the pipeline – we need more people like us working with us and for us.

• Stay away from the health equity discourse if unwilling to take a political stand.
Understand your privilege and then use that to disrupt your privilege.
Thank you! ¡Gracias!

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