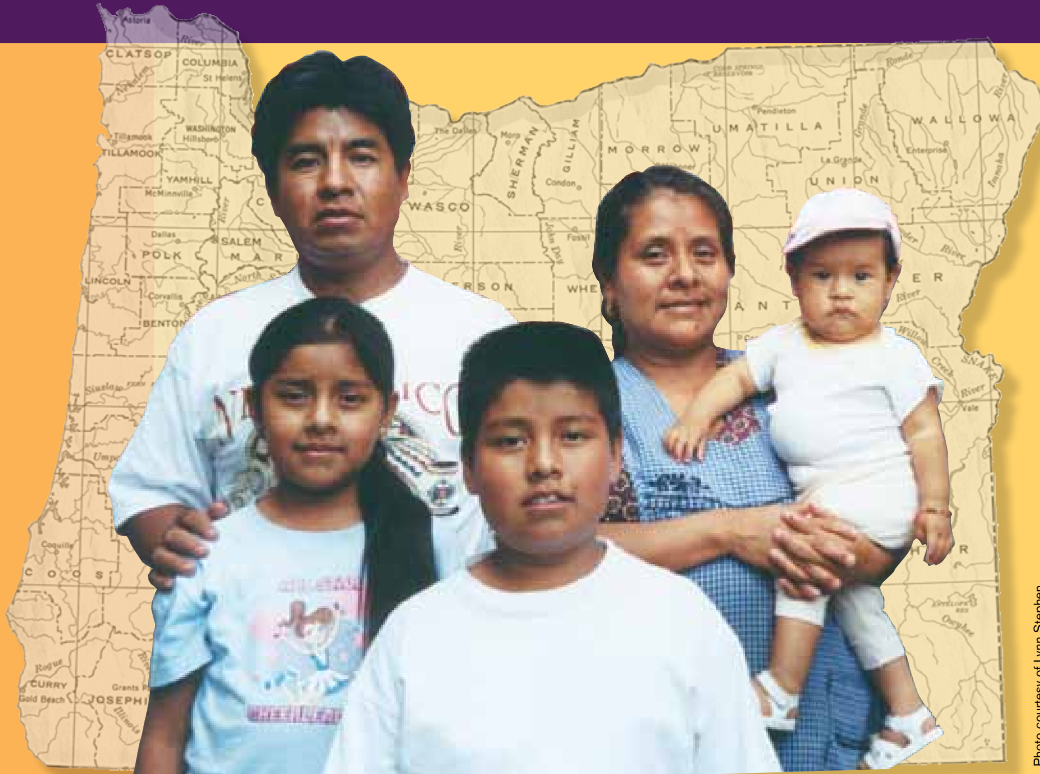

Photo courtesy of Lynn Stephen

Gender, Families, and Latino Immigration in Oregon

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

May 22–23, 2008

Edited by Marcela Mendoza and Lynn Stephen
Translation by Marcela Mendoza

Género, Familias e Inmigración Latina de Oregón

ACTAS DEL CONGRESO

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

Center for the Study of Women in Society (CSWS)

The Center for the Study of Women in Society is a multidisciplinary research center founded at the University of Oregon in 1983. CSWS generates, supports, and disseminates research on gender and on all aspects of women's lives. The center provides highly competitive research grants to University of Oregon faculty members and graduate students and supports collaborative research interest groups.

El Centro de Estudios de la Mujer en Sociedad es un centro de investigación multidisciplinaria de la Universidad de Oregón fundado en 1983. CSWS produce, apoya y distribuye investigación sobre temas de género y sobre todos los aspectos de la vida de las mujeres. El centro proporciona subsidios de investigación muy competitivos para profesores y estudiantes de la Universidad de Oregón y también brinda apoyo a grupos de investigación que colaboran para estudiar temas de interés compartido.

The proposed Center for Latino/a and Latin American Studies (CLLAS)

The proposed Center for Latino/a and Latin American Studies (CLLAS) at the University of Oregon provides an interdisciplinary intellectual space for putting Latino, Latina, and Latin American studies in conversation with one another. The primary purpose of CLLAS is to facilitate collaborative research, scholarship, intellectual community, and community outreach focused on Latin America and U.S. Latino and Latina populations.

Propuesto

El Centro de Estudios Latinos y Latinoamericanos (CLLAS) de la Universidad de Oregón proporciona un espacio interdisciplinario que ponga los estudios latinos y latinoamericanos en conversación mutua. El propósito primario de CLLAS es facilitar una comunidad intelectual, la investigación colaborativa, y difusión en comunidades latinoamericanas y de latinos en los Estados Unidos.

For more information about CSWS or to order copies of this report contact:
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Gender, Families, and Latino Immigration in Oregon
Conference Proceedings

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Actas del Congreso

Edited by Marcela Mendoza and Lynn Stephen
Translation by Marcela Mendoza

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GENDER, FAMILIES, AND LATINO IMMIGRATION IN OREGON

PROCEEDINGS OF A CONFERENCE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OREGON ON MAY 22-23, 2008

OVERVIEW

By the year 2006, the population of the state of Oregon was over 10 percent Latino as a result of Latin American immigration, primarily from Mexico. While Latin American immigration to Oregon has been occurring since the 19th century, the growth in the Latino population has been greatest since the 1990s. Latino immigrants have settled throughout the state and make contributions in many cities and towns. Latino children were about 15 percent of the state's population under age 18 in 2006, and Latino births were 20 percent of the total births in Oregon. At the current growth rate, the Oregon Department of Education projects that 28 percent of student enrollment in the state will be Latino by the year 2020.

At a time when debates about immigration and citizenship are at a high point in the state and the nation, this conference paid special attention to Latino immigrant communities in Oregon from a gendered and generational perspective. Held in the Knight Law Building at the University of Oregon on May 22-23, 2008, the conference featured panels on youth and education issues; challenges for immigrant men and women; labor issues; changes in Latino immigrant family dynamics; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer issues in immigrant families; immigrant indigenous women's organizing and leadership; and access to services for immigrants. The conference also featured an opening community forum on "Myths and Facts about Immigration: Gender, Youth, and Family Perspectives," a plenary on "Building Alliances for Immigrant Rights," and a keynote presentation on "Lessons on Gender and Families Issues among Latino Immigrant Populations in California and Oregon." This conference was completely bilingual: simultaneous professional interpretation in English and Spanish was offered for all the panels, the program was printed in English and Spanish side by side, and the advertisement leading to the conference was also printed in both languages. The conference closed with a reception and a cultural event featuring a presentation by Arturo Arias (Department of Spanish and Portuguese, University of Texas at Austin), and Millers in Da' Mix, a Latino hip-hop group of musicians and dancers from Springfield High School. A photo exhibit prepared by the Community Alliance of Lane County was on display during the conference. More than two hundred people attended this two-day event.

Thirty community leaders and advocates for immigrants' rights participated in the conference. They were members of more than twenty organizations from Eugene, Springfield, Salem, Woodburn,

Portland, Scappoose, Medford, Los Angeles, and Oaxaca, Mexico. Faculty, graduate students, and researchers from the University of California (Santa Cruz and Santa Barbara), Oregon Health and Science University, Oregon State University, University of Oregon, and the Oregon Social Learning Center (OSLC) also participated in this conference.

This conference was noteworthy in that the organizers used its planning as a means of reaching out to Latino communities throughout the state, a process that resulted in community leaders and advocates committed to playing an active role in this event. The key issues discussed in the panels were identified during a process of community consultation coordinated by a community advisory board. Over the previous eighteen months, the organizers conducted a series of public events that drew a diverse public including Latino immigrant students and families, immigrant rights advocates and community leaders, health care providers, human service providers, educators, participants in the justice system, academics, students, and others who work with immigrant populations.

"We provided a unique forum on immigration by focusing specifically on how immigration politics and policies affect Latino immigrant women, men, families, and youth," commented Lynn Stephen, Distinguished Professor of Anthropology, who led the conference planning team and advisory board. "In addition, we were interested in exploring how these issues could provide opportunities for alliance building for immigrant rights."

Community Forum

MYTHS AND FACTS ABOUT IMMIGRATION: GENDER, YOUTH, AND FAMILY PERSPECTIVES

Santiago Ventura (Oregon Law Center, Woodburn)
Patricia Cortez (Juventud FACETA, Eugene)
Odilia Romero (Frente Indígena de Organizaciones Binacionales, FIOB, Los Angeles)
Edward M. Olivos (University of Oregon, Eugene)

This community forum provided an opportunity for activists and scholars to address substantive issues concerning immigrant legal and mental health services, labor organizing, and public education. The speakers, who were first and second generation Latino immigrants, related those topics to their personal experiences. Santiago Ventura, a Mixtec community outreach worker for the Oregon Law Center, addressed the need for interpreting services for immigrant workers, particularly those who speak indigenous languages, otherwise these workers will be unable to understand their labor rights, receive safety training, and obtain legal and health care services. Ventura stated that in his native state of Oaxaca, community governance and citizen rights and responsibilities are different from in the United States. There, a shared system of citizen responsibility requires everyone to take on volunteer jobs in running city government such as city counselor, firemen, and more. In the United States, legal and social services are conducted in a different manner, as is governance. These differences in how access to services, lack of linguistic interpretation in many offices for indigenous people who speak their native languages, and fear are all factors that limit indigenous immigrant access to many services that they have a right to expect. Ventura noted that Oaxaca has sixteen different indigenous languages and that many of them are spoken in Oregon.

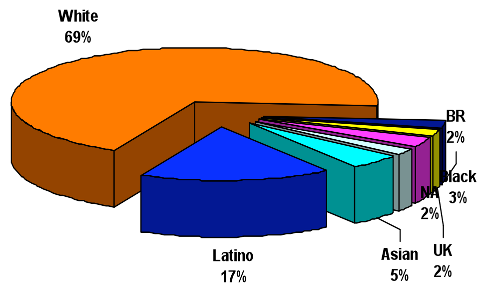
Both Santiago Ventura and Odilia Romero, a Zapotec activist with the Indigenous Frente Indígena de Organizaciones Binacionales (Indigenous Front of Binational Organizations-FIOB), noted the role of members of immigrant communities in helping and supporting one another. Indigenous people in diaspora reconstruct their communities outside of their original locations to remain connected with friends and relatives in the country of origin and to maintain language, cultural traditions, and forms of mutual assistance, and governance. These communities often exist in many different sites spread between Mexico and the United States. Romero also noted that there are political reasons for migration to the United States as well as economic and personal ones. The recent violence and political repression in Oaxaca, Mexico, has caused some to leave and come to the United States for protection. In a few cases, people have applied to receive political asylum.

> *"The fact about immigration is it is not effortless and beautiful. It's an experience that breaks you—emotionally, physically, and legally. On a daily basis we are criminalized because we are immigrants, and we lose our indigenous legacies, our language, and traditions." Odilia Romero, FIOB.*

Latino immigrants have to simultaneously adjust to life in the United States while also contributing to the well-being of their families and communities. Patricia Cortez, the coordinator of Juventud FACETA, a Eugene-based group for Latino immigrant youth, emphasized the lack of affordable mental health services for Latino immigrants, particularly services that are welcoming and understanding of cultural differences. For example, school personnel may advise Latino students and families to take advantage of mental health counseling, but they often fail to indicate how low-income families may actually gain access to that type of service in a manner that is affordable and culturally sensitive. The many challenges immigrants face in adjusting is often complicated by either a lack of access or a hostile environment when they try to use social services they have a right to access.

Edward M. Olivos, assistant professor at the University of Oregon in the Department of Teacher Education in the College of Education, pointed to the unprecedented growth of immigrant student enrollment in the nation's public schools between 1995 and 2005. "What is happening in Oregon is not a new trend nor is it exclusive to our state. Our entire country is diversifying culturally, ethnically, linguistically, and economically," he said. This process is best reflected in the public schools. While immigrant families can choose not to use social services because of hostile environments or out of fear of being reported to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), if they are undocumented, they cannot avoid sending their children to school. Public schools are one of the main points of contact with larger society for Latino families in Oregon and elsewhere. "The schools are where you see the largest impact of immigration," said Olivos. "By the same token, children are not left out of the equation when it comes to attacking immigrants. There are past and current pieces of anti-immigrant legislation in a number of states that target not only the male workers who come to the United States, but also take aim at the whole family, including the children." Olivos emphasized that the future of the Unites States depends, to some extent, on Latino immigrant children becoming literate and completing their high school education. The number of immigrant students enrolled in schools has increased significantly in the past decade, rising from 6.8 percent in 1995 to 16.8 percent during the 2007-2008 academic year.

Oregon Public School Student Demographic Profile 2007-2008



Source: Oregon Department of Education

Audience members in a morning session.

PRESENTATION OF THE LABOR EDUCATION RESEARCH CENTER'S (LERC) REPORT ON THE IMMIGRANT EXPERIENCE IN OREGON

Understanding the Immigrant Experience in Oregon: Research, Analysis, and Recommendations from University of Oregon Scholars

Robert Bussel and Marcela Mendoza

As immigrants and refugees from many different parts of the world continue to settle in Oregon, it is imperative for policymakers, communities, and the general public to understand more about the experiences and aspirations of these newest Oregonians. "Understanding the Immigrant Experience in Oregon" is the result of a two-year collaboration by scholars from the University of Oregon. In an effort to enhance public awareness about important trends and developments concerning immigration, it addresses the following questions:

- What has been the history of immigration in Oregon? How has it evolved over time?
- Why have so many immigrants and refugees settled in Oregon in recent years?
- Where have immigrants settled, and how are they faring in school, workplace, and community settings?
- How are communities and social institutions responding to the presence of newcomers in their midst?

The report offers a concise overview of many aspects of the immigrant experience in Oregon and focuses special attention on the experiences of Latino immigrants, who represent the largest segment of newcomers to Oregon over the last fifteen years.

To obtain a PDF of this report in English go to:
http://www.uoregon.edu/~lerc/pdfs/immigrationenglish.pdf

To obtain a PDF of this report in Spanish go to:
http://www.uoregon.edu/~lerc/pdfs/immigrationespanol.pdf

PLENARY PANEL

Building Alliances for Immigrant Rights

Ramon Ramirez (Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Nordoeste, PCUN/CAUSA, Woodburn)
Jonathan Fox (UC Santa Cruz)
Marcy Westerling (Rural Organizing Project, Scappoose)

Marcy Westerling, Ramon Ramirez, and Jonathan Fox provided insights into the challenges of pursuing a long-term movement for immigrant rights in the United States. They discussed shifts in political participation since the massive marches organized by immigrants and their supporters in 2006, and noted that state and local issues will often motivate people to participate politically more than national issues. For example, the issue of whether or not to allow undocumented immigrants to have drivers' licenses in Oregon has generated widespread interest. The speakers advocated for a nationwide strategy to encourage naturalization of immigrants who are eligible to become citizens (for example, lowering the application fees, making the tests easier), and for a pathway to citizenship for those who have "followed the rules."

Marcy Westerling explained that the Rural Organizing Project (ROP) was born as a consequence of an intergenerational dialogue focused on challenging Oregon's 1992 anti-gay Ballot Measure 9. The Oregon Citizen's Alliance (the group that sponsored the 1992 Ballot Measure 9) defined gay rights as "special rights." Opponents of the ballot measure, including ROP, Basic Rights Oregon, PCUN, CAUSA, and others identified it as a larger threat to individual freedoms. The participants of the intergenerational dialogue analyzed the origins of political exclusivity, the gains of the civil rights movement, fears of homosexuality, and racism's role in challenging people's constitutional rights. Through this dialogue they were inspired to form an alliance with a range of organizations including several Latino organizations. ROP started to use race as a cultural lens to look at political issues. "A huge part of ROP is white folks talking to white folks," Westerling said. To learn more about how racism played out in the state of Oregon, ROP started to look into the work of Pineros and Campesinos del Noroeste (PCUN), and CAUSA (Oregon's Immigrant Rights Coalition) and asked how their group could support PCUN's and CAUSA's work while also educating their members about racism. ROP was dedicated to a network of small town, predominantly white folks who could work as allies with Latino and other organizations. The focus of ROP's alliance with PCUN and CAUSA is creating a network of people who realize that race-based stripping of rights threatens the value of democracy for everyone.

> *"To build an alliance it has to be okay to make mistakes and then correct them; this is often not a nice and neat process." Marcy Westerling, Rural Organizing Project.*

Ramon Ramirez of PCUN and Marcy Westerling of ROP catch up during a break in the conference.

Ramon Ramirez shared the history of PCUN, Oregon's only farmworker union. PCUN founders began organizing in 1977, starting with undocumented workers who did not understand English and had a lot of fear. PCUN became an official union in 1985 and today it has 5500 registered members. From the beginning, PCUN members learned that they would not be able to change their labor conditions by themselves, but had to build alliances with supporters to nourish and sustain the farmworker movement.

"If farm workers are going to be able to change the conditions of their work, it is of vital importance to build alliances," Ramirez stated.

In 1992, the LGBTQ communities (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer communities) asked PCUN to join forces with them to combat Oregon Ballot Measure 9. Ramirez told PCUN members at the time that if Measure 9 passed and the rights of the LBGTQ community were undercut, that immigrant rights would be next.

PCUN members and representatives from the LGBTQ community met to discuss their differences. They discussed topics such as homophobia in the Latino community, according to Ramirez. Building a long-term relationship with LGBTQ communities created a sense of uneasiness in PCUN, but it provided necessary information for PCUN members to recognize the rights of all peoples, not only those of Latino immigrant workers.

Ramirez suggested how the PCUN leadership learned from observing what happened when Proposition 187 passed in California. Proposition 187 was a 1994 ballot initiative designed to deny undocumented immigrants access to social services, health care, and public education. Proposition 187 passed in California, but was later declared unconstitutional by the California Supreme Court. In observing the organizing process against 187, Ramirez and other PCUN leaders felt that those in opposition to 187 did not have a solid political strategy for responding to it. Oregon LGBTQ organizers had been more effective in defeating Measure 9 in Oregon. When anti-immigrant ballot measures in Oregon appeared on the ballot in 1996 and 1997, PCUN made deliberate alliances with LBGTQ organizers. During the same period, national legislation led first by Oregon senator Ron Wyden and then by Oregon Senator Gordon Smith threatened to reproduce the problematic Bracero Program of the 1940s. According to Ramirez, alliances created with ROP and other organizations were critical for putting pressure on Smith and Wyden in Oregon and other representatives in Washington that eventually resulted in President Clinton strongly opposing the legislation and making clear that if it passed, he

would veto it. Continued pressure on Smith and Wyden by PCUN, CAUSA, and a range of allies resulted in a piece of legislation laying out a path to citizenship for farmworkers that by the fall of 2001 appeared to have the support of major immigrant rights and farmworker organizations as well as growers. After September 11, 2001, this and other immigration reform legislation remained off the table for several years. The alliances that PCUN and CAUSA forged with the LGBTQ community, ROP, and others, however, continued to function and be effective in defending immigrant rights. PCUN, Ramirez recalled, learned that there are no easy shortcuts for building alliances. Trust has to be built, and it usually has to be done on a small level through "old-fashioned organizing," and establishing personal relations between local organizations.

> *"Organizations can't just be talking among themselves or only with people who already share the same perspectives. Building alliances challenges people to think differently." Ramon Ramirez, Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Nordoeste (PCUN) and CAUSA.*

Jonathan Fox of UC Santa Cruz shared his thoughts about "coalitions of movements and movements of coalitions" in light of the alliance forged between CAUSA, PCUN, and ROP, previously discussed. Fox discussed the challenges of building long-term political coalitions. He noted how difficult it is for these kinds of alliances to be built. Although it is intuitively obvious that coalitions and alliances are goal-oriented partnerships that involve efforts to change the balance of power, coalitions and alliances may not be synonyms after all. Some are based on convenience and self-interest while others are based on conviction and common interest.

A coalition, according to Fox, is a temporary alliance formed to pursue self-interest, and an alliance is an agreement made by two or more parties to advance common goals and interests. For example, the passing of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) prompted many cross-border partnerships, networks, and coalitions among public interest groups in the United States and Mexico. Two kinds of partnerships formed to deal with the challenge of top-down North American integration: one set reached across sectors involving labor, environmentalists, human rights groups, civil rights organizations and trade policy advocacy groups; the other set of partnerships reached across borders as groups tried to find counterparts in the other country. However, these were mostly instrumental, short-term relations that lapsed when the NAFTA debate appeared to lose momentum.

Fox examined coalitions and alliances that have lasted versus those which have not. His study disentangled cross-sectoral partnerships, networks, and movements. Fox stated that neither the term network nor the term coalition seems to deal with the kind of horizontal dialogue that we see between the rank and file of ROP and PCUN, a relationship between counterparts. A movement can be much larger than a coalition or a network. For example, in the spring of 2006, an immigrant-led civic mobilization put comprehensive immigration reform on the national agenda. Different coalitions of Latino organizations, unions, workers' centers, hometown associations, etc. formed part of this mobilization. More than 3.5 million people marched between March and May 2006 in Chicago, Los Angeles, San Diego, San Jose, Fresno, Dallas, Las Vegas, Denver, Phoenix, Fort Myers, and Walla Walla.

Spanish language media and Catholic churches were crucial in reaching out far beyond the already organized, convincing so many people that this was the time to take the risk inherent in coming out in the public sphere. Yet the net political effect of the mobilization was ambiguous because it energized both pro- and anti-immigrant sides, and the backlash is still underway.

Since then, those coalitions shifted their focus from mass civic action in the streets to mobilizing documented immigrants and permanent residents to participate in the political process. They have also worked to mobilize the 8 million permanent residents who are already eligible for citizenship without having to wait for federal immigration reform. One of the slogans of the marches was "*Hoy marchamos, mañana votamos.*" (Today we march, tomorrow we vote.) Yet at the time it was not so clear whether that slogan was a prediction, wishful thinking, or maybe even an empty threat. After all, the undocumented who marched were not going to be voters until after the political battle for immigration reform was won, so the issue became how to turn this enormous amount of civic energy into raw political power that could actually bolster the clout of pro-immigration legislators in Washington, D.C.

Fox told the audience that the response of the government was to increase the fees to apply for citizenship, make the naturalization test harder, and increase the rejection rate for applicants. Coalitions need to create common ground among citizens, residents, and undocumented immigrants to encourage the undocumented to become documented, the residents to become citizens, and the citizens to participate actively in the political process. Important questions raised by the audience were: Why don't people who are eligible to become citizens naturalize? How could we encourage Latinos to vote?

> *"We speak shorthand about the immigrant rights movement, but in practice we are referring to people with different sets of rights: those who have legal standing and can vote; those who are eligible for those rights but lack them; and those who are currently excluded from any pathway to gain standing. It creates different groups of people, even though many are in the same families." Jonathan Fox, University of California, Santa Cruz.*

Cross-sectoral Partnerships: Disentangling Networks, Coalitions, and Movements

Shared Characteristics	*Cross-sectoral Networks*	*Cross-sectoral Coalitions*	*Cross-sectoral Movements*
Exchange of information and experiences	*Yes*	*Yes*	*Yes*
Organized social base	*Sometimes more, sometimes less or none*	*Sometimes more, sometimes less or none*	*Yes*
Mutual support	*Sometimes from afar and possibly strictly discursive*	*Yes*	*Yes*
Joint actions and campaigns	*Sometimes loose coordination*	*Yes, based on mutually agreed minimum goals, often short-term, tactical*	*Yes, based on shared long-term strategy*
Shared worldviews	*Not necessarily*	*Not necessarily*	*Generally yes*
Shared political cultures	*often not*	*often not*	*shared political values, styles and identities*

Adapted from: Jonathan Fox, Lessons from Mexico-US Civil Society Coalitions, in David Brooks and Jonathan Fox (eds.), *Cross-Border Dialogues: US-Mexico Social Movement Networking*. La Jolla: University of California, San Diego, Center for US-Mexican Studies, 2002.

Part of the Community Alliance of Lane County Photo Exhibit at the conference.

Presentation of "Building Alliances: Collaboration between CAUSA and the Rural Organizing Project (ROP)," a collaborative ethnography

Written by Lynn Stephen, in collaboration with Jan Lanier, Ramon Ramirez, and Marcy Westerling

Overview
This ethnography highlights collaboration between two important progressive statewide organizations in Oregon. These two organizations—CAUSA (an immigrant rights coalition in Oregon) and the Rural Organizing Project (ROP)—have logged significant successes in stopping national, state, and local efforts to limit the rights of Latino immigrants, gay and lesbian citizens, and those who are working for economic and social justice. Shared underlying social values and political strategies are crucial elements in how and why ROP and CAUSA have been able to learn how to be effective allies for one another. Through the voices of the ROP and CAUSA participants, "Building Alliances" presents the challenges the two organizations face in their collaborations based on the social, cultural, and economic differences of their constituents and the way they frame and conceptualize each other's struggles. To demonstrate the dynamics of successful collaboration, two specific cases are looked at in depth. The first involved the defeat of a national piece of legislation to introduce a guestworker program know by activists as "The New Bracero program" in 1998 that would have limited the rights of already-present immigrant farmworkers. The second was a statewide initiative in 2000 to prohibit public school teachers and employees from teaching about, promoting or recognizing homosexuality in public schools. The conclusions analyze the risks and benefits of collaboration, ways to continue to nurture such collaborations, and the ways that such collaborations can develop political power for changing political scenarios in Oregon and in the United States as a whole.

English Available at: http://www.leadershipforchange.org/insights/research/files/ROPsummary.pdf
English Practitioners Guide available at:
http://wnw.uoregon.edu/pdf_imm/Building%20Alliances%20pgs%201-24_comp.pdf
Spanish Practitioners Guide available at:
http://wagner.nyu.edu/leadership/reports/files/Final_FormacionDeAlianzas.pdf

Youth and Education

Charles Martinez, Jr. (UO School of Education, Institutional Equity and Diversity, Eugene)
Carmen Urbina (4 J School System, Eugene)
Victor Becerra (LEAD and Juventud FACETA, Eugene)
Elizabeth Sampedro (Juventud FACETA, Eugene)

Carmen Urbina kicked off the panel by presenting data to illustrate how the community and the educational system view the achievement gap of Latino students. Through the eyes of the school system, Eugene 4J School District administrators realized that the number of Latino students has grown 110 percent in the last seven years, but only 43 percent of the English Language Learners (ELL) among Latino students in the 10th grade pass or exceed statewide assessments. The statistics show that Latino students are struggling within the current system. Their achievement drops drastically throughout the twelve years of schooling, and similar data is available throughout the state. However, this data reflects only ELL students. Schools use a deficit model to explain this achievement gap, referring to economic disadvantage, limited English proficiency, and placement in special education. Through the eyes of the *familias* (families) of these Latino students, "I see a tremendous fight over immigration," said Urbina. "I see parents that are doing everything so their children can succeed. Immigrant parents want retention of culture and retention of language for their children. Parents feel that the educational system kills the spirit of their children and makes it harder for them to connect with their families. Pulling ELL students out of classrooms only gives them social language, not academic language; and they internalize thoughts of failure. In a consultation with Latino parents in the Eugene 4J District, the number one issue raised by parents was the need to learn the skills to teach their children how to escape racism and harassment," concluded Urbina.

> *"If anything, what I have to say about the achievement gap is that we all have a responsibility. This is a crisis and we all must take action." Carmen Urbina, Eugene 4J School District.*

Elizabeth Sampedro, the recipient of a 2007 Governor's Student Award and cofounder of *Nuestro Lugar*/Our Place, a teen center in Eugene, talked about her experience as a first generation immigrant in high school. "When we are in school," Sampedro said, "we talk to each other in Spanish and we love it, but we hear a lot of students who say 'I don't even know why I'm trying to succeed because I don't have [immigration] papers.'" Sampedro reminded the audience that an immigrant

student may have A's in all her classes but in the end it does not matter because if she is not a legal resident then she cannot go to college without paying out-of-state tuition and must attend as a "foreign student." She stated that it is hard to listen to students who are undocumented and want to give up. So many bright people need an opportunity to succeed; something like the proposed DREAM Act would bring relief to these students, she suggested. The DREAM Act (The Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act) is a proposed piece of federal legislation that would permit high achieving undocumented high school students to obtain permanent residence. To obtain legal residency, students must be planning to attend college or serve in the military.

> *"Being a first generation immigrant student in high school, when you are in a classroom and see other students who look like you, automatically you want to be with them." Elizabeth Sampedro, Juventud FACETA and Nuestro Lugar, LEAD.*

Victor Becerra received his GED in 2007. Becerra shared with the audience how being an English language learner affects first generation immigrant students. "When I first came to the United States," he said, "I was 10 years old and didn't know any English, but my teacher helped me." Becerra was told that to be able to start in the sixth grade he would have to attend summer school. "But the teachers there don't teach you what you need to know," he said. So Becerra continued with ELL classes and English classes at the same time up to the ninth grade, which was very confusing for him. Some of his friends would like to get into college but those who have an undocumented immigration status cannot get any scholarships. Many students who have an undocumented status graduate from high school every year but then they cannot continue on to college, he shared.

Charles Martinez Jr. wrapped up the session by discussing the situation of Latino immigrant families in Oregon, a presentation based on his work with the Latino Research Team at the Oregon Social Learning Center. Martinez described many challenges that Latino families face during the process of immigrating to Oregon. He discussed changes in the immigration patterns that have occurred in the past decade. Most new Latino immigrants, for example, come from small rural communities in Mexico. Some may speak indigenous languages as their first language, then learn Spanish, and finally acquire English language skills to help them survive the immigration process.

Martinez shared other important statistics to provide context for the situation of Latino immigrant families. Among the 47 million Latinos in the United States, some 55 percent are citizens and about half (45 percent) of the remaining non-citizens are legal residents. He noted that, while the political debate about immigration often boils down to simple questions about legal vs. illegal immigration, the legal status process often unfolds in much more complex ways for families. In Oregon, Martinez told the

audience, the majority of the adult population of Latinos is composed by first generation immigrants, but over half of all the Latino youth in Oregon are born in the United States. He discussed the variation among immigration patterns in communities throughout the state. For example, while a majority of Latino adults living in Oregon have lived here for ten years or less, there are places such as Woodburn where the generational history is much deeper and longer.

Finally he addressed the economic situation of Latino immigration families. In Oregon, he stated, many Latino families earn much less than families in other population groups. This per capita income disparity does not include the remittances that many send home to their countries of origin. The economic pressure and stress on Latino immigrant families may contribute to greater vulnerability for negative health outcomes. Immigrant children tend to acculturate very quickly, Martinez suggested, in part based on socialization pressures from the school, peer group, and media. However, Latino parents tend to acculturate at a much slower pace. Studies show that this "acculturation gap" can add stress to family lives and increase the risk for problems for some Latino youth. Yet, Latino families have much culturally based strength (such as *familismo*, which promotes a strong bond and shared responsibility within families) that can help protect families from negative outcomes as they move through the acculturation process. These culture-based strengths need to be supported and emphasized in efforts aimed at prevention and intervention with Latino families.

> *"At what point do we stop talking about the data and start acting? When do we say enough is enough and we act?" Charles Martinez Jr., University of Oregon and OSLC.*

Millerz in Da' Mix, a dance group from Springfield High School, delighted conference participants with their hip-hop dancing and smooth moves.

Challenges for Immigrant Men and Women

Beatriz Martinez (Welcome Center, Springfield)
Jorge Navarro (Centro Latino Americano, Eugene)
Raul de la O (Emergence, Eugene)

Jorge Navarro is the director of Centro Latino Americano, a social service agency that has served the Latino population in Eugene, Oregon, since 1972. Navarro opened this panel by emphasizing the challenges that Latino families face. Navarro pointed out that immigrant adults may take six years to learn a new language but the children learn it in one year. This ability puts them in a position of having to interpret for their parents, which highlights the difficulties of interpreting and communicating emotionally charged issues between parents and children. "In general, Americans are individualistic, materialistic, and democratic," Navarro said, "while Latinos are family-centered, community oriented, and autocratic, in the sense that they respect authority." In the new country, the role of the father is reversed, and the father may feel resentment towards the children, Navarro stated. The children face challenges to their identity in school, in public, and at home. They start questioning who they are. The main issues in families continue to be language difficulties and defining roles of authority, Navarro suggested. The families work in minimum wage jobs and the children are left by themselves during most of the day. Some women are victims of domestic partner abuse. "At Centro Latino Americano we focus our limited resources on intervention for women, families, and children—in that order," Navarro said. "It is necessary to create avenues and opportunities to overcome racism, classism, sexism, and domestic partner abuse in Latino communities."

> *"The family, the very gift that our Latino community has to offer, is threatened." Jorge Navarro, Centro Latino Americano*

Beatriz Martinez of the Welcome Center in Springfield explained that she works in the school system but what she can do with families is very limited because many new immigrants are afraid to go to the physician's office or to the stores. "I teach English classes three times a week," Martinez said, "and all those who come are women. Although they can speak English in class, they don't do it when they go out." "I tell them," she continued, "that people are people no matter what color they are and what language they speak; you have to overcome your fear." Martinez advises immigrant parents to go to their children's school and ask questions of teachers and administrators. "The teacher will pay attention to your questions as much as you pay attention to what the teacher says," she said. Parents have as much power as the educators have, although she emphasized that Latino families are uncomfortable confronting authorities. "A teacher, a priest, everyone who has power over us deserves

respect," explained Martinez, "so we do not tell them 'I have a question.' We do not disagree with what they say."

She stated that the children of many Latino families do not receive services they qualify for such as the Oregon Health Plan and other programs for medical attention and dental and vision services for which the children may qualify. The challenge is to get the families to admit that they need help and to encourage them to access the services. Martinez has found that parents often do not have the time to learn English because of their work schedules and feel that they are losing authority over their family as their children acculturate. The children feel that they need to fit in with their peers. Immigrant Latino children, she stated, are concerned about looking the right way, such as having the correct color of eyes and hair, and having the right clothes. Martinez concluded that there are ways to adjust to living in the United States without losing identity, such as embracing the idea of being bicultural and bilingual.

> *"We can embrace our fellow Americans and still be who we are. It took a long time for me to realize that I don't have to become different, that I can be bicultural and be who I am." Beatriz Martinez, Springfield Welcome Center*

Raul de la O of Emergence focused on the challenges immigrant families face and the kind of cultural resources they have to draw on as strengths. He proposed that people look at the larger context immigrants live in once they are in the U.S. He explained that immigrants, like all people, want to follow the money and fulfill their dream. When they arrive in a new country, however, they experience an identity crisis: "You are dark, you do not speak the language, your culture is different, and this creates a domino effect," said Raul. For immigrant males the issue is to find a meaningful job—one that is not denigrating, since much of the work that immigrants end up doing is demeaning. Many immigrants come to the United States with skills and education that make them significantly overqualified for most of the positions that are available to them. The barriers that they encounter such as discrimination, poor English skills, and assumptions about low skill levels affect their family life. All family members suffer the consequences. Increasingly, he stated, women are coming alone initially as well as men.

> *"Women immigrants are now taking the same risks that formerly only men would take." Raul de la O, Emergence, Eugene.*

Raul de la O asked the question: "Why is it so hard for a Latino immigrant to learn the new language and learn to live the way we live in this country?" He answered in a personal manner:

“Because in doing it, I was left with a sentiment of emptiness.” Then, he referred to five characteristics of Latino culture that define Latino identity and affect the process of acculturation: (a) familialism: the emphasis on families as sources of social support; (b) sympathy: the capacity to share feelings, be respectful and polite to others; (c) personalism: preference for personal relations, attraction to those who reflect warm attitudes; (d) machismo: showing traits that are regarded as male, like physical strength and courage, supporting the idea that men have to be in control, and; (e) marianism: the lone suffering of women, who stay at home and care for the husband and the children. He stated that he missed out on these characteristics in his own process of adjusting to the United States. He emphasized that the Latino family is a protective factor for immigrants and can be a site for developing cultural strengths. De la O sees the job of service organizations as creating options for families and empowering them to take a role in their children’s education, in handling their finances, and in eliminating domestic abuse, among other things.

Labor

Ignacio Paramo (VOZ, Workers' Rights Education Project, Portland)
Marcelina Martinez & **Julie Samples** (Oregon Law Center, Woodburn & Hillsboro)
Nimfa Lopez, (HERE, Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union, Eugene)
Dagoberto Morales (UNETE, Center for Farmworker Advocacy, Medford)

Ignacio Paramo of the VOZ Workers Rights Education Project of Portland discussed his work with Latino immigrants who are day laborers—manual workers hired and paid on a day-to-day basis. Between 100 and 200 *jornaleros* (day laborers) gather daily in the streets of Portland waiting for an employer to take them to work. Business and neighbors became concerned. Paramo's organization managed to communicate with them and work with the police to figure out a plan. The goal is to educate the workers about their legal rights, because they are vulnerable to abuse and the violation of their labor rights. Employers would often hire them for a month or a week without telling them how much they would be paid. Paramo's organization set up an office for day laborers—a center where workers who are searching for temporary jobs can go, feel more protected, and get training to prepare them for jobs.

Panel participants (left to right) Dagoberto Morales, Ignacio Paramo, Marcelina Martinez, Julie Samples, Ninfa Lopez, and panel organizer Lise Nelson listen to the English translation of their discussion. The conference was completely bilingual.

Marcelina Martinez and Julie Samples explained the services offered to farmworkers by the Oregon Law Center offices in Woodburn and Hillsboro. Currently the Center has two projects focused on indigenous farmworkers: one on health and safety and another on preventing sexual harassment in the fields. The Center translates information about health and safety issues**,** sexual harassment**,** workers'

rights, and human rights into indigenous languages of Mexico and Central America and provides CDs with that information.

The project against sexual harassment is directed towards workers in the fields, particularly those who speak indigenous languages. Marcelina Martinez, who speaks Spanish and Mixteco and works for the Oregon Law Center in Hillsboro, talked about her personal experiences working in the fields, discussed the discrimination that she encountered, and explained significant issues for indigenous farmworkers such as language barriers, experiences with health care, the lack of knowledge of legal rights, and other issues.

Ninfa Lopez talked about her experience as a hotel worker in Eugene. During six years, Lopez and other Latina hotel workers experienced abuse and labor violations by their employer. For example, they would work seven days a week without a break, and were given tasks that were too heavy for them. When they complained, the manager would say that there were always other workers to fill their jobs, frightening them into keeping silent. Employers suggested that if women workers did speak up, they would be punished by taking hours away from them. Little by little a few of these women started to awaken and now they are fighting for their rights. They have joined a labor union and have greatly improved their work situation. "*La union hace la fuerza!* The Union gives us power," Lopez said.

Dagoberto Morales shared information about his work with immigrant workers in southern Oregon. UNETE works with issues of housing and transportation for immigrant workers. Organizers strive to motivate youth who do not have the opportunity to attend college by encouraging them to take technical jobs after graduating from high school. UNETE also educates youth about their cultural roots. Morales explained that if youth ignore who they are and where they come from, they cannot adapt and gain confidence. UNETE also has a program called *La Persona de Maiz/The Person of Corn* that teaches children and teenagers about what it takes to produce food. The youth learn to make tortillas, atole, tamales — foods prepared with maize. The organization has become allied with Native Americans because "we are the same people," Morales said, "but European colonization has divided us. After 500 years there is still an idea of separation, there is still much discrimination for indigenous peoples." Morales is indigenous, a member of the Purepecha of the state of Michoacan, Mexico.

Indigenous Immigrant Women's Organizing and Leadership

Odilia Romero (FIOB, Frente Indigena de Organizaciones Binacionales , Los Angeles)
Reina Vasquez (Amigos Multicultural Services, Juventud FACETA, Eugene)
Centolia Maldonado (FIOB, Frente Indigena de Organizaciones Binacionales, Juxtlahuaca)

This panel opened with the screening of "Sueños Binacionales/Binational Dreams," a 30-minute documentary directed by Yolanda Cruz. The film follows two groups of Oaxacan indigenous immigrants—Mixtecos who have been migrating to California for more than three decades, and Chatinos who have been going to North Carolina for the past ten years. This film captures the enormous

sacrifices made by the immigrants, telling stories such as that of a young mother who leaves behind her village, culture, and even her child to work as a hotel maid. It also shows that there is little economic opportunity in the home towns of indigenous immigrants, where most of the work is subsistence farming and storefront shops that generate too little income to support a family. The film underscores how immigration leaves the villages almost empty, and emphasizes how difficult the choices are for those who journey to *el norte*. One of the featured leaders in the film is Centolia Maldonado who is the coordinator of the Mixtec region of Oaxaca for the Frente Indigena de Organizaciones Binacionales/Indigenous Front of Binational Organizations (FIOB). Unable to attend the conference due to a family medical emergency that required her as a caretaker, Maldonado sent the following message to conference participants:

> *All women are leaders in their homes. We have just developed our leadership in a different way. In order to be a woman leader you have to build alliances. These alliances can be with men as well as with women. I was not able to go to the university to study because I didn't have the money to pay tuition, as I was working in my home. I didn't earn a salary there. But the FIOB, my organization, has provided me with opportunities to take advantage of scholarships that permitted me to go to places like the University of Santa Cruz, where I was able to develop a wider view of our local problems and now I am able to do my work much better. As a leader I feel I will only stop learning when I die. Our communities are an ongoing school for me.*

Reina Vasquez spoke about her work for immigrant rights in Eugene, Oregon, and her experience as a Zapotec immigrant from Oaxaca who is not ashamed of speaking her language. Vasquez started working in the fields with her parents in Oaxaca when she was six or seven years old and studied at night. Her mother did not have the chance to go to school and wanted her daughter to learn to read and write. Most of the women in her hometown cannot read or speak in Spanish, and do not go to school. However, one day her mother told her that she couldn't continue attending school because she needed to work to help out her family. Vasquez eventually decided to migrate to the United States and her life changed significantly. When she first arrived, she worked in the fields and found other jobs although it was difficult because she did not speak English. She worked in restaurants, but was prohibited from speaking Spanish on the job. In 2003, Vasquez became a member of Juventud FACETA, a local group for Latino immigrant youth. There she developed social skills and evolved as a person, learning to value herself, her Zapotec culture, and the cultures of others in the group. She learned about human rights and about immigrant rights. Now she has a job and continues to study while providing for her one-year old child and helping her parents back in Mexico. She concluded by commenting that in Oaxaca, women who are single mothers as she is are seen as "bad women," because they are not married and their children do not have fathers. Here, she said, "I am both mother and father to my son. That is hard but not impossible."

Odilia Romero of the FIOB spoke about her personal experiences as a Zapotec indigenous woman from Oaxaca who migrated to Los Angeles. Romero was married at the age of 15, had a daughter, and went to school. Her mother wanted her to get an education so she might avoid the humiliation of illiteracy. In the United States, Romero left her husband and provided for her daughter as a single mother. Romero became a leader of FIOB, an organization in Los Angeles with links to Oaxaca

that empowers indigenous workers by upholding their culture and values. Indigenous women immigrants confront many obstacles, Romero related, such as ethnic discrimination and a lack of gender equality. Communicating with other workers and sharing experiences through the work of the FIOB helps to alleviate those obstacles. See Appendix II for a complete copy of Romero's remarks.

Negotiating Family Dynamics

Erlinda Gonzalez Berry (Ethnic Studies Department, Oregon State University, Corvallis)
Mario Magana (4-H Youth Development Education, Oregon State University, Corvallis)
Judith Salas Rocha (Springfield High School)
Ruth Vargas-Forman (Oregon Health Sciences University, OHSU and Siempre Amigos, Eugene)

Erlinda Gonzalez-Berry discussed some of the significant challenges within immigrant families; for example, parenting skills that immigrant parents learned in their home countries may be discouraged or found not to be useful in the new destination. Physical punishment as a tool for discipline, unquestioned respect for fathers and authority figures, and the importance of community gossip as a way of enforcing conformity in immigrants' home communities are very different techniques than the forms of parenting and socializing the immigrant families experience in the United States. Here, immigrant youth wish to be independent and behave like their peers, but they have to respond to both mandates, that of their parents' culture and that of their new environment.

Gonzalez-Berry noted that peer pressure replaces parental guidance for adolescents, which often results in rebellion among Latino immigrant teens since they sometimes feel ashamed of their parents. This causes greater tension and rigidity in the parents and the youth are caught in a cycle of conflict, greater control by their parents, and rebellion. Gonzalez-Berry described young Latino immigrants as cultural brokers, particularly when their parents have little experience and limited language and outreach skills. An inversion of roles may result when the children have to translate for their parents. Since immigrant parents have not yet integrated into the new culture, their children are often the ones who socialize them instead of the parents socializing the children. This gives children a sense of authority and many take advantage of this situation, according to Gonzalez-Berry. Immigrant parents need a support system that respects their culture and values. Integration requires acceptance of both cultures, a process that results in greater success for everyone involved—instead of downward assimilation.

Gonzalez-Berry concluded by stating that women become more independent because of wage labor, and some men resist their wives' newfound freedom, which may alter family dynamics, providing women with more decision-making power. However, when men and women reach an agreement, the family has the potential to offer solace and protection from hostility in the host society. Older children,

particularly those who are first generation immigrants, often make personal sacrifices to ensure the success of their younger siblings.

Mario A. Magana is OSU Associate Professor and OSU Extension Service Regional Educator for the 4-H Youth Development Educational Program where he creates and implements educational programs and activities focused on Latino youth and families. In this work he uses his personal experience as a Mexican farm worker, as a college student, as a professional with strong knowledge and skills learned in higher education, and now as professor.

When he was a child in Mexico, Magana barely finished elementary school and was not able to continue his middle school education because his parents could not provide financial support for additional education. When he was 20, relatives in his hometown told him about the work opportunities and also the fun activities available in the United States. This convinced him that the United States was a good place to work and earn and save money and have lots of fun; so he decided to cross the border. Magana quickly found that life in the United States was actually very difficult because he was away from his family of 14 siblings and worked longer hours in the United States than in Mexico. "My life as a farm worker in the state of Washington was worse than in Mexico. I worked 14 hours each day here."

In 1986, Magana migrated to the state of Washington with his wife, and in 1990 he heard about the HEP Program at Washington State University where he could get his GED. He passed the exams in Spanish. At the time, Magana did not know any English, but a counselor told him about the College Migrant Assistant Program (CAMP) at Oregon State University (OSU) in Corvallis, Oregon, where he could learn English and receive a college education. Magana hesitated at first, but then decided to attend OSU. He left the family behind in the state of Washington for six months and later moved his family to Corvallis, Oregon, where he completed both a bachelor's and master's degree. Now he works for the 4-H Youth Development Education Program at Oregon State University in Corvallis, where he helps people whose situations are similar, or even worse, than his was.

"We do not believe in ourselves; we don't know what to do because we don't know the system; we need advice." Mario Magana (OSU)

Judy Salas-Rocha is a social worker at Springfield High School who works primarily with Latino families. Salas-Rocha talked about the importance of getting to know the entire family in order to work with them successfully. She emphasized the importance of finding out who is in charge because mothers are usually the ones who protect youth at home. The members of Mexican families relate through strong family ties, interdependence, mutual trust, and loyalty. Siblings are expected to be helpful, which can cause them to miss school to help a family member, which, in turn, may affect their academic performance. Immigrant families feel the challenge of the new language, different laws, and a new way of parenting their children. The youth acquire English faster by speaking to their peers at school, but the parents do not have that pressure and assimilate much slower. Even though Mexican parents work long hours and cannot give their children enough attention, the parents have high expectations for their

children—who often have to deal with racism in school, which can get them in trouble. This, in turn, often leads to problems at home.

> *"The values of the Mexican family are interdependence (*cuento contigo*), trust (*confianza*,) and loyalty (*lealtad*)." Judy Salas-Rocha, WIA, Springfield High School, Oregon*

Ruth Vargas-Forman of Siempre Amigos/OHSU in Eugene is a qualified mental health professional who directs a bilingual and bicultural mental health program dedicated to Spanish-speaking survivors of torture and trauma from twelve different countries and ethnic backgrounds, who have fled from Central and South America to seek safety in our community. Many survivors of torture and political violence living in the United States have filed petitions for political asylum in the United States, said Vargas-Forman. Because it can take years to receive political asylum, if families are separated while they are waiting to receive asylum in the United States and legal residency, they often find that they have grown apart. As related by Forman, it takes time for separated family members to learn to live together and accept each other again. This is the kind of process she counsels.

Vargas-Forman's organization, Siempre Amigos with OHSU, provides a comprehensive program that includes psychiatric, psychological, legal, and social services for survivors of torture and political violence and increasingly those who have suffered from other forms of abuse and violence in their home countries. Vargas-Forman stated that most clients in the program report finding jobs in the first six months or within one year. The therapy that Siempre Amigos /OHSU provides focuses on pre-migratory experiences, experiences during migration, and post-migratory experiences. These often include financial and emotional stress; uncertain legal status; cultural and linguistic barriers; isolation; unfamiliarity with the legal, educational, and medical systems; and concerns for the family members who were left behind. Forman emphasized that the Latino family has been represented as homogeneous with a patriarchal structure where women and children have submissive roles, but men usually have more authority in the country of origin. In the United States, the women usually have more influence; women guide the family. In her work, Vargas-Forman has found that families living between cultures face the challenge of adapting to a new society, reframing family projects, restructuring relationships, and negotiating personal and family goals.

> *"Financial and emotional distress affects everyone, even immigrants who have legal status, because some members of their family may not have proper documents." Ruth Vargas-Forman, Siempre Amigos, OHSU.*

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Issues in Immigrant Communities

Ernesto Martinez (Ethnic Studies, University of Oregon, Eugene)
Maceo Persson (Basic Rights Oregon, Eugene)
Horacio Roque Ramirez (Chicano Studies, University of California, Santa Barbara)

Ernesto Javier Martinez spoke about his experiences of violence as a young gay man in the context of an analysis of masculinity and manhood among Mexican men. He titled his talk, "*Con Quién, Dónde, y Por Qué Te Dejas? Reflections on Passivity."* In particular, he reflected on his experiences of remaining passive and seemingly inactive when faced with homophobic and sexist violence. With respect to the memory of himself as someone who lacked the self-worth and courage to defend himself when subjected to violence, Martinez argued for the need to remember his passivity differently, as an attenuated, but crucial form of agency, as a form of internal deliberation in conflict with the outside world. In order to elaborate on this new understanding of passivity, Martinez theorized four of its features: (1) passivity as an important marker of recognition (recognition of oneself to oneself), (2) passivity as an important place holder for radical meaning-making; (3) passivity as learned behavior in a violent/caring family; and, (4) passivity as a form of communication with other queer subjects. What follows is a short excerpt:

> To be routinely terrorized and assaulted by young male schoolmates—to be cut, for example, with pencil sharpening *navajas* by the toughest boys in school (little nicks on your shoulder as they walked by and seductively smiled a *"¡JOTO!"* in your face)—was to initiate, in me, a series of internal, nonverbal revelations, for the body cut by the blade at school was also the body of the boy that in secret wore his mother's dresses, it was also the body of the boy who registered the pain of the slap across his face and his father's *"camina como hombre"* mantra, as well as the body of the boy who, when called *"¡JOTO!"* in public, felt an empty space behind and around him.
>
> This was the body that had no communal back up. They called me *"¡JOTO!"* slapped my face, cut my arm, and all that I could do was stand frozen, acknowledging, in an accordion-like fashion, the multiple worlds of my policed gender collapse and unfold around me. I would, of course, deny them and all of their claims (if only through silence, if only for the time being), but I would never deny it and the injured body to myself. For the body and I served as testimony and archive—we remembered. More than remember, we stood seemingly frozen as a testament to the labor it takes to make sense of it all. Where

> does one take one's body in order to learn how the cut on the arm (by boys one does not know) relates to the slap on the face (by a father one knows intimately), and how do both of these relate to the boy who just a few minutes ago, among his friends, called you *joto*, but who now, alone in a dark room caresses you intimately. If there is nowhere to go in order to find this out, one turns inward, and the inwardness (which is an excavation, a sorting) is manifested outwardly as inaction.

Maceo Persson shared his personal story as the son of a Chilean mother who left her country after the military coup, and settled in Sweden. Persson came out to his mother as transgendered when he was a sophomore in high school. In his presentation, Persson analyzed similarities between crossing national and gender borders. In a nation, he suggested, everyone has a legal national identity, usually determined by place of birth. In a similar pattern, most everyone has a legal documented sex. Sex is usually determined by the shape of your genitals at the time of birth. In discussing how people cross gender borders, Persson stated that for many, transition from one sex to another is a long process that some never finish. Like the experience of national-border crossing, Persson commented—particularly if you are undocumented—the gender transition process is dangerous. Many people die crossing international borders, and many people are murdered for transitioning their gender.

Persson compared the difficulties of undocumented Latino immigrants who have to work underground—often in dangerous and unprotected jobs—with transgender persons who may find it difficult to gain employment and also have to work underground in dangerous and often unprotected environments. Both undocumented Latino migrants and transgender persons are often under-employed. Persson stressed the importance of legality for both migrants and transgender people. Persson spoke about the meaning of transitioning for a Latino immigrant. Different countries and states recognize gender transition and gender identity differently. For example, the state of Oregon recognizes the sex on your birth certificate as your legal sex, yet a person can get a valid state ID after a gender change by submitting the letter of a therapist.

Horacio Roque Ramirez spoke about his experiences as a Salvadoran immigrant who came to the United States with his family and related his personal story to the politics of being gay and out in the Latino community. What follows is a summary of his talk.

Today, I am one of those lucky gay men most open to his family about his desires, sexuality, and life. Long before any gay liberation movements in any country, my parents in El Salvador in the 1950s and 1960s already had a good understanding of homosexualities, including gender-transgressive women and men. Long before my birth in 1969, my father told me he had counseled one of his very close friends to be understanding about his gay son—el hijo afeminado—who experienced much harassment from his fellow classmates in our country's school of medicine, so much so that he decided to leave El Salvador for Mexico's Guadalajara. That's where he retired in the 1980s, one less medical doctor for my country. It seems there was already a sociological and everyday understanding then in the 1950s about what Latin American cities were most tolerant to the hemisphere's queers.

Yet, not all could afford to leave, and not all necessarily had to. As my father recounts today the different experiences of gay men and lesbian women in El Salvador, my mother also tells me of the 'sophisticated' Vicentea—Chentiya, as the neighbors called him—whom my mother allowed to use her sewing machine in Santa Ana for his own creations. 'Era bien sofisticado,' my mother tells me about Vicente, as my mother's sewing machine linked my family—long before my birth—to the creative labors of this effeminate Salvadoran. As Vicente's death approached in the 1990s, my mother was reminded he remembered her with great affection for her support back then. Yet another queer link to my past through my blood family, and a very supportive one, I believe, was rooted, but not isolated, in class conditions. In many societies, class is simply inseparable from culture.

I migrated to the United States as an airplane-riding wetback illegal with a fake middle class passport in 1981 from El Salvador, part of the region's massive exodus based on military, economic, political, and personal conditions. At that time, my parents lost all they had worked for decades, and I have gained the most from that transnational trek—the youngest child and the only boy (!) in the family to get to benefit from being able to learn a new language at age 11, from a new multiracial cultural understanding society, and from the educational opportunities the University of California has afforded immigrant nerds like me. I now correct native speaker's English language writing skills, and feel quite good about it.

I also stopped repressing my own homosexuality in 1991, even if the combined cultural weight of U.S. and Latino life pressed hard against me at age 21. Then, as an undergraduate at UCLA, I could begin to be quite public about my queer desires, politicize them, and write about them, but not with my blood family. Even if my family hardly represented conservative or homophobic or religious traditions—the stereotype of Latin America—I could not do it. I could not come out to them. Culture is heavy, especially when we forget we feel it.

It took me a decade of my own solitary and somewhat public, queer male erotic ventures away from home to become secure about queer me, and a doctoral degree on queer Latino life and death from a world-renowned institution, finally to be able to tell my folks about what they knew all along—it was an uneventful declaration of their son's homosexuality. But it was finally out, in 2001, only months before completing my Ph.D. at UC Berkeley, so that we could finally begin to tell more openly—and for me to listen more honestly—about where Salvadorans and Latinos come from.

Until we have mapped all global regions around gender and sexual and erotic experiences and cultural realities and legacies, we cannot make gross generalizations about who is more 'advanced' than whom about understanding, tolerance, acceptance, and appreciation of queer women and men. My immigrant Salvadoran family roots and public memories are enough empirical and historical bases for me to challenge any North European– or U.S.–based claims about what we immigrants do. They should be so happy we arrived, and continue to do so.

Services for Immigrant Families

Miriam Bautista (Advocate for Latino health issues, Eugene)
Sister Barbara Haase (PeaceHealth Community Outreach, Eugene/Springfield)
Patricia Cortez (Amigos Multicultural Services, Juventud FACETA, Eugene)
Laura E. Isiordia (Farmworker Housing Development Corporation, Woodburn)

Miriam Bautista opened the panel by emphasizing the need to provide culturally competent services for Latino immigrants. She then discussed the added layer of challenges faced by Latino families of children with disabilities who are even more invisible among the "already invisible. " Bautista mentioned the need to connect families to resources and focused on the particular difficulties many families have in navigating the system of special education in the United States. She reported on the results of a series of focus groups conducted around the state of Oregon that highlighted the importance of listening, building long-term relationships with Latino families, and bringing different kinds of Latino families together. Often Latino immigrant families who have children with disabilities do not know they are not the only ones and there are other immigrant families that have children with disabilities as well. Connecting these families allows them to support one another and learn from one another.

Sister Barbara Haase of Peacehealth Community Outreach shared with the audience how she began working with Latino families. She explained that since the mid-1980s, one of the Sisters noticed the lack of prenatal care and birthing services for poor (as well as Latino) women—a high percentage of new mothers today are Latina. Sister Haase stated that Sacred Heart wanted to provide first-rate health care for Latino families. United Way of Lane County formed a coalition of many persons in Lane County. After trying a number of strategies for running an independent clinic, they moved to PeaceHealth. The Coalition worked to form a federally funded health clinic. The coalition obtained clinic space in Springfield, Oregon, with some services during evening hours. Sister Haase emphasized the importance of working with Latino youth to encourage those interested in health careers. PeaceHealth has been successful in recruiting Spanish-speaking doctors. Sister Haase also emphasized the importance of listening to and hiring Latino employees. For example, she said, a grant to teach Latinas to do breast self-exams ran into problems around cultural norms of touching oneself. Therefore it would be important to have Spanish-speaking employees who understand those cultural norms present and available when such a study is undertaken.

Sister Barbara Haas speaks to the group.

Patricia Cortez of Amigos Multicultural Services and Juventud FACETA focused her discussion on services for Latino youth and what she has learned from working with youth. Cortez sees three main issues that emerge in working with Latino youth: (a) the importance of consistency—i.e. always being there, not coming and going, (b) length of availability of services—short programs of eight weeks are often not enough, and (c) language and cultural competence—offering services in a language and manner that is culturally appropriate and comfortable for clients. Cortez stated that researchers tell us that the best way to offer services is to have someone of the same ethnic/country background as the person seeking the services.

Services should be provided from a position of solidarity, not charity. "People don't want to be seen as pobrecitos (pitiful people desperate for help)." Patricia Cortez, Amigos Multicultural Services and Juventud FACETA, Eugene, Oregon.

Some Latino youth, she emphasized, do not actually need services—they need caring and support. "We encourage them to recognize the leaders in themselves," Cortez said. She doubts that adults always know what is best for young people—"most young people often know what they need, and are responsible enough to participate in making it happen." Cortez commended Sister Hasse's program for encouraging young Latinos to give back and get involved—since it will make them feel good about themselves and preserve their culture.

Laura Isiordia began by sharing her personal history. "When I first came here from Mexico, I worked in the fields but now I work for the Farmworkers Housing Development Corporation (FHDC) in Woodburn, Oregon." Isordia explained that FHDC has an Individual Development Account that matches funding for housing and helps clients to continue their education. Isordia also stated that it was important for her to let people know that she is a survivor of domestic violence and sexual abuse: "I

have to say that loud and clear." Isiordia emphasized that there are many barriers for Latina immigrant women when they try to access services. For example, language issues are often obstacles when women call 911 for help and the operator only speaks English.

Some providers talk about "empowering people," but we are already "empowered," Isordia said, "we just need a little push." Laura Isordia, FHDC, Woodburn, Oregon

While there are many good services available, she pointed out that in Woodburn where she lives and works, 79 percent of individuals do not have health insurance. She mentioned that the kinds of services that are particularly lacking for immigrants are mental health services and information about nutrition. She shared information about the health fairs that FHDC has had for the past three years where participants can receive medical exams, breast exams, vaccinations, and information about health services. Through their organizing work, FHDC has been able to offer ongoing education about health, references for health concerns, and more. Isiordia concluded by asking conference participants to imagine themselves in a place outside of the Unites States where English is not spoken, where they had been beaten, where their children needed medical services, and where when they went to try to obtain help, they would run into economic and linguistic barriers. "When you run into someone who doesn't speak your language, please extend your hand and remember that many times, those are the people who put food on your table," she requested of the audience.

KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

Lessons on Gender and Family Issues among Immigrant Populations in Oregon and California

Guadalupe Quinn (CAUSA, Lane County)
Patricia Zavella (University of California, Santa Cruz)

Guadalupe Quinn of CAUSA began by stating, "I have worked on issues of immigrants' rights for 29 years, and I often wonder after our discussion ends, where do we go from here?" Quinn stated that she does not believe we can have social services without social change. "Advocates and activists need to think locally, and at the state and national level. The anti-immigrant rhetoric at the national level is scary and serious right now. I believe that the struggle for immigrant rights has become more difficult and more dangerous in the last five years. In fact, I cannot think of any other time when it has felt this scary for immigrants in the United States, and I have lived here since 1951. "

"What still needs to happen at the local level? How do we continue to move forward?" were further questions posed by Quinn. She emphasized anti-immigrant referendums on the ballot, strong anti-immigrant sentiment, and the presence of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in Eugene, Oregon. Another significant issue is the lack of knowledge among Latino immigrants about their rights. For example, recent passage of legislation makes it very difficult to apply for an Oregon driver's license

without a social security number. "How do we support our communities that are under attack?" asked Quinn. "To move forward, we need to be willing to learn how to be good allies, and ask what we can do together. One of the most important things for immigrants to know right now is that they have support, that they are not alone. No matter what happens, we are informed and here for each other. Individually, we need to act when we see and hear things that affect immigrants negatively." She stressed that immigrant rights are not just about what happens to immigrants, but about broader human rights issues that pertain to us all. She concluded by stating, "Immigration sometimes is portrayed just as an economic issue, or a political issue, but this is about the lives of people—what they live every day. We need to move legislation that supports immigrant families at the national level—politicians won't do it. We all need to stand in solidarity with people coming here to live better lives. It is important to remember that immigrants are not taking anything from the country, they are contributing instead."

Patricia Zavella from the University of California, Santa Cruz, noted in her keynote address, "There are many commonalities between migrants who settle in California and work in the fields, and those who work in agriculture and forestry here in Oregon." She discussed the implications of her comparison in the form of lessons. "When we look at immigrant families more closely, we see that love and commitment bring people together and social forces pull them apart, an effect exacerbated by immigration." Social forces affect immigrant families differently, she suggested. The first lesson she focused on was about the situation of immigrant families in relation to the United States and their countries of origin. Zavella suggested incorporating a transnational perspective in our work, being mindful that those who immigrate have multiple reasons for moving and often leave family members and important aspects of their identities behind.

Zavella emphasized that the vulnerability of Mexican families became visible in predawn raids by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) under the 2006 operation "Return to Sender." Nationally, 18,000 undocumented migrants were detained. Looking for those with outstanding warrants or immigration violations, the raids also took away those who were not on the ICE's lists. There have been protests and informational meetings at churches and community centers throughout the country, especially since federal officials disclosed that more sweeps are "very possible." Much of the community support was too late for those divided families who will have to cope with separations for some time to come. Families can also be split up if one partner is in the country illegally, even when married to a U.S. citizen. Another lesson is that we must find ways to protect immigrant families from deportation.

Another issue Zavella addressed concerns the tensions in immigrant families related to mixed legal status—these are families in which some members are undocumented while others are permanent residents or U.S. citizens. In mixed status families, she noted, the legal privileges afforded to citizens or permanent residents have significant material consequences in terms of access to health care or education or vulnerability to deportation. In mixed status families there are often important language differences as well. Some members are proficient in English while others are mainly Spanish speakers or

speak an indigenous language. Communication across generations may also be in different languages—with children speaking English and parents or other relatives speaking a different language. Zavella told the audience that research shows that the children of immigrants are often called upon to interpret in schools or with health care practitioners. Often these experiences can be quite troubling with inappropriate disruption of power dynamics within families and extraordinary pressures on children who are called upon to interpret. Zavella suggested we need to pay attention to the children of the undocumented, and consider how immigration policy is having negative effects on families in the United States.

Another area of concern Zavella emphasized is multiple-stage immigration, where different families come to the United States at different times. In this process, Zavella stated, family reunification is exacerbated by generational and gender differences. Those children who were born in Latin America and remained there for some time with other relatives, but then were raised for part of their childhood in the United States may feel estranged in immigrant families. The negative effects of these separations and reunifications can affect those in subsequent generations. Zavella concluded that there is actually a wellspring of support for immigrants provided by activists, professionals, and relatives, friends, and neighbors. We need to make our voices heard, she told us, and shift the debate toward the analysis of the consequences of neoliberal policies and corporate practices on immigrants. She affirmed that this conference, which dealt with how Latin American immigration interfaces with gender and families, was an important step in that direction.

(For the complete keynote address, please see Appendix I.)

Marcela Mendoza talks with several conference participants about their impressions.

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Advisory Committee: Joan Acker, Patricia Cortez, Itahi Diaz, Francisca Johnson, Pedro Garcia-Caro, Ernesto Martinez, Martha Martinez, Heather McClure, Lise Nelson, Ken Neubeck, Craig Opperman, Guadalupe Quinn, Carmen Urbina, and Anselmo Villanueva.

Panel Organizers and Chairs: Ken Neubeck (Eugene Human Rights Commission, Amigos Multicultural Services), Martha Martínez (College of Education, UO), Heather McClure (Anthropology, UO, Oregon Social Learning Center), Guadalupe Quinn (CAUSA, Lane County), Lise Nelson (Geography, UO) and Joan Acker (Sociology, UO), Lynn Stephen (Anthropology, Ethnic Studies, CSWS, CLLAS, UO), Marcela Mendoza (CSWS, CLLAS, Anthropology, UO), Ernesto Martínez (Women's and Gender Studies, English (UO), and Ellen Scott (Sociology, Women's and Gender Studies, UO).

Interpretation Organizers: Marcela Mendoza and Heather McClure.

Conference Note Takers: Vertin Alvarez, Corrie Burdett, Angie Chase, Miguel Chávez, Emily Hall, Matthew Sargis, Tami Hill, Lon Warnecki, and Alicia Young.

Prepared Notes and Slides Contributed By: Jonathan Fox, Edward M. Olivos, Odilia Romero, Judith Salas-Rocha, Ruth Vargas-Forman, and Patricia Zavella.

Conference Co-sponsors: the Wayne Morse Center for Law and Politics, the School of Law, the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Education, the Office of the Provost for International Affairs and Outreach, the Office of the Senior Vice President for Research, the Office of the Provost, and the Office of the Vice Provost for Institutional Equity and Diversity.

Conference Sponsor: the Center for the Study of Women in Society and the Women in the Northwest Initiative's project on Gender, Families, and Immigration.

A detailed program with speaker information can be found at: http://csws.uoregon.edu/Immigration

Género, Familias e Inmigración Latina de Oregón

ACTAS DEL CONGRESO REALIZADO EN LA UNIVERSIDAD DE OREGÓN EL 22 Y 23 DE MAYO DEL 2008

Compiladoras: Marcela Mendoza y Lynn Stephen
Traducción: Marcela Mendoza
Fotos y Diseño de Página: Shirley Marc

Debido al aumento de la inmigración latinoamericana proveniente sobre todo de México, en el año 2006 la población latina ya había llegado a representar el diez por ciento del total de la población del estado de Oregón. Aunque los latinoamericanos han inmigrado a Oregón desde el siglo XIX, el crecimiento de la población latina se aceleró a partir mediados de la década del 1990. Los inmigrantes latinos se han establecido en distintos lugares del estado y contribuyen al desarrollo de muchos pueblos y ciudades. En el 2006 los niños latinos representaban el 15 por ciento de la población menor de 18 años a nivel estatal mientras que los niños nacidos de madres latinas representaban el 20 por ciento de todos los nacimientos de Oregón. Si continúa la tasa de crecimiento actual, el Departamento de Educación de Oregón estima que en el año 2020, el 28 por ciento de todos los estudiantes de las escuelas públicas va a ser latino.

En un momento en que los debates sobre la inmigración y el derecho a la ciudadanía estaban en su punto álgido tanto en el estado como a nivel nacional, esta conferencia se dedicó especialmente a las comunidades de inmigrantes latinos de Oregón desde una perspectiva de género y de generación. Realizada del 22 al 23 de mayo del 2008 en el edificio Knight de la Facultad de Derecho de la Universidad de Oregón, la conferencia incluyó paneles sobre los jóvenes y la educación, los desafíos para hombres y mujeres inmigrantes, asuntos laborales, cambios en la dinámica de las familias latinas, diversidad sexual de las familias inmigrantes, liderazgo organizativo de las mujeres indígenas y acceso a servicios para inmigrantes. La conferencia comenzó con un foro comunitario sobre "Mitos y realidades acerca de la inmigración: las perspectivas de género, de los jóvenes y de las familias", seguida de una reunión plenaria acerca de "Construir alianzas para apoyar los derechos de los inmigrantes" y finalizó con una presentación destacada sobre "Lecciones sobre temas de género y de familias entre poblaciones de inmigrantes latinos de California y Oregón". La conferencia fue un evento bilingüe, todos los paneles contaron con servicio de interpretación simultánea, el programa de la conferencia se imprimió en inglés y en español y los anuncios previos también se publicaron en los dos idiomas. La conferencia concluyó con una recepción y un evento cultural que incluyó una presentación del profesor Arturo Arias (Departamento de Español y Portugués de la Universidad de Texas-Austin) y los Millers in Da' Mix, un

grupo Hip Hop latino de músicos y bailarines de la escuela secundaria de Springfield, Oregón. Durante la conferencia se exhibió una colección de fotografías preparada por la Alianza Comunitaria del Condado de Lane. Durante los dos días que duró el evento, participaron más de 200 personas.

Entre los panelistas e invitados de esta conferencia hubo treinta líderes comunitarios y promotores de los derechos de los inmigrantes, miembros de más de veinte organizaciones de Eugene, Springfield, Salem, Woodburn, Portland, Scappoose, Medford, Los Ángeles y Oaxaca, México. También participaron profesores, estudiantes avanzados e investigadores de la Universidad de California (Santa Cruz y Santa Bárbara), Universidad de Ciencias y de la Salud de Oregón (OHSU), Universidad del Estado de Oregón (OSU), Universidad de Oregón (UO) y Centro de Aprendizaje Social de Oregón (OSLC).

Una particularidad de la organización de esta conferencia fue que los organizadores utilizaron la etapa de planeamiento para convocar a las comunidades latinas de distintos lugares del estado, un proceso mediante el cual los líderes comunitarios y quienes los apoyan se comprometieron a desempeñar un papel importante en este evento. Muchos de ellos integraron un comité asesor formado por miembros de la comunidad que ofreció ideas y sugerencias e identificó los temas clave que luego se discutieron en los paneles—identificados a través de un proceso de consulta comunitaria. Durante los dieciocho meses previos a la conferencia, los organizadores condujeron una serie de eventos públicos que atrajeron a un público variado, incluyendo inmigrantes latinos con sus familias, estudiantes, líderes comunitarios y promotores de los derechos de los inmigrantes, profesionales que prestan servicios de salud, agentes que proporcionan servicios sociales, educadores, miembros del sistema jurídico, académicos y otras personas que trabajan en temas relacionados con los inmigrantes.

"Proporcionamos un foro especial sobre inmigración concentrándonos en la manera como la política y las leyes migratorias afectan a las mujeres, los hombres, las familias y la juventud latina", comentó Lynn Stephen, Profesora Distinguida de Antropología que dirigió el planeamiento de la conferencia y el comité consultivo. "Además, nos interesó explorar cómo esos temas podían llegar a ofrecer oportunidades para crear alianzas para defender los derechos de los inmigrantes".

FORO COMUNITARIO

Mitos y Realidades Sobre la Inmigración: Perspectivas de Género, de los Jóvenes y las Familias

Santiago Ventura (Oregon Law Center, Woodburn)
Patricia Cortez (Juventud FACETA, Eugene)
Odilia Romero (Frente Indígena de Organizaciones Binacionales, FIOB, Los Ángeles)
Edward M. Olivos (University of Oregon, Eugene)

Este foro comunitario ofreció una oportunidad para que activistas y estudiosos pudiesen referirse a temas substantivos en relación a servicios legales para inmigrantes y servicios de salud mental, organización sindical y educación pública. Todos los expositores eran inmigrantes latinos de primera o segunda generación y relacionaron esos temas con sus experiencias personales. Santiago Ventura, un empleado mixteco del Oregon Law Center, se refirió a la necesidad de contar con servicios de interpretación para trabajadores inmigrantes, particularmente aquellos que hablan una lengua indígena; de otra manera esos trabajadores no van a poder entender cuáles son sus derechos legales, recibir entrenamiento para evitar accidentes de trabajo y obtener servicios de salud y legales. Ventura afirmó que en el estado de Oaxaca donde nació, el gobierno de la comunidad al igual que los derechos y responsabilidades de los ciudadanos se conducen de manera distinta a como se hace en los Estados Unidos. En Oaxaca, un sistema de responsabilidad civil compartida requiere que todos los miembros de la comunidad participen en los puestos voluntarios para gobernar la ciudad, tales como consejero de la ciudad, bombero y otros. En los Estados Unidos, los servicios sociales y legales que proporciona el gobierno se organizan de una manera diferente. Las diferencias en la manera de acceder a los servicios y la falta de interpretación para hablantes de lenguas indígenas en agencias oficiales, sumada al miedo que pueden sentir los sujetos, limita el acceso de los inmigrantes a muchos servicios a los que tienen derecho. Ventura destacó que en Oaxaca se hablan dieciséis lenguas indígenas diferentes y que muchas de esas lenguas también se hablan en Oregón.

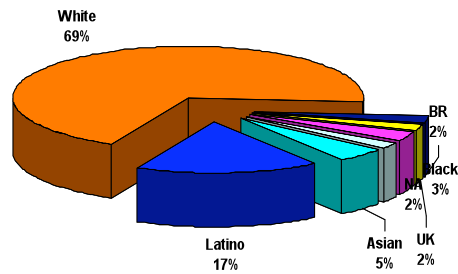
Tanto Santiago Ventura como Odilia Romero, una activista zapoteca afiliada al Frente Indígena de Organizaciones Binacionales (FIOB) destacaron el papel de los miembros de las comunidades inmigrantes para prestarse ayuda y apoyo mutuo. Los pueblos indígenas en la diáspora reconstruyen sus comunidades fuera de sus lugares originarios para permanecer conectados con familiares y amigos del lugar de origen y para mantener su lenguaje, sus tradiciones culturales y las formas de gobierno y asistencia mutua que los caracterizan. Esas comunidades existen en distintos lugares de México y de los Estados Unidos. Romero destacó que las razones de los indígenas para inmigrar a los Estados Unidos pueden ser personales, económicas o políticas. La violencia y represión política reciente en Oaxaca han causado la emigración de algunas personas que vinieron a los Estados Unidos en busca de protección. En unos pocos casos, las personas han solicitado asilo político.

> *“Es un hecho que la inmigración no es algo fácil o hermoso. Es una experiencia que quebranta a la persona—emocionalmente, físicamente y legalmente. Cada día nos sentimos tratados como criminales porque somos inmigrantes y perdemos nuestras tradiciones indígenas y nuestra lengua”, dijo Odilia Romero, FIOB.*

Los inmigrantes latinos se tienen que adaptar a la vida en los Estados Unidos mientras contribuyen al bienestar de sus familias y sus comunidades. Patricia Cortez, la coordinadora de Juventud FACETA—un grupo de jóvenes inmigrantes latinos de Eugene, Oregón—hizo notar la falta de servicios de salud mental accesibles para inmigrantes latinos, particularmente servicios que acepten y comprendan las diferencias culturales. Por ejemplo, el personal escolar a veces les aconseja a los estudiantes latinos y a sus familias que pidan asistencia psicológica pero no les dice cómo pueden hacer las familias de bajos ingresos para acceder a servicios de salud mental que sean culturalmente apropiados y de bajo costo. Los desafíos que encuentran los inmigrantes para adaptarse se complican por la falta de acceso a servicios o por el ambiente hostil que encuentran cuando tratan de acceder a servicios a los que tienen derecho.

Edward M. Olivos, un profesor del Departamento de Educación de Maestros en la Facultad de Educación de la Universidad de Oregón, se refirió al crecimiento sin precedentes de los estudiantes inmigrantes en las escuelas públicas de la nación entre 1995 y el 2005. “Lo que ocurre en Oregón no es una tendencia nueva ni es exclusiva de nuestro estado. El país entero se está diversificando en términos culturales, étnicos, lingüísticos y económicos”, dijo Olivos; este proceso se refleja claramente en las escuelas públicas. Mientras que las familias inmigrantes pueden elegir no utilizar los servicios sociales por el ambiente hostil que encuentran o por miedo a ser deportados por la agencia federal de inmigración (Immigration and Customs Enforcement -ICE) si no tienen documentos que prueben su presencia legal en el país, las familias no pueden evitar enviar a sus hijos a la escuela. Las escuelas públicas son uno de los principales puntos de contacto entre las familias latinas y el resto de la sociedad tanto en Oregón como en cualquier otro lugar. “Uno ve el mayor impacto de la inmigración en las escuelas”, dijo Olivos, “de la misma manera, los niños no están libres de los ataques que sufren los inmigrantes. Hay legislación pasada y presente en distintos estados que es contraria a la inmigración y apunta no solo a los trabajadores varones que vienen a los Estados Unidos, sino también ataca a toda la familia, incluso a los niños”. Olivos destacó que el futuro de la nación depende, en cierta medida, de que los hijos de los inmigrantes latinos se eduquen y terminen la escuela secundaria. El número de estudiantes en las escuelas de Oregón ha aumentado significativamente en la última década, aumentando del 6,8 por ciento en 1995 al 16,8 por ciento en el año escolar del 2007-2008.

Perfil demográfico de los estudiantes de las escuelas públicas de Oregón 2007-2008



Fuente: Oregon Department of Education

Miembros de la audiencia en un panel de la mañana

PRESENTACIÓN DEL INFORME "LA EXPERIENCIA DE LOS INMIGRANTES DE OREGÓN" PREPARADO POR EL LABOR EDUCATION RESEARCH CENTER (LERC).

La Experiencia de los Inmigrantes de Oregón: Estudios, Análisis y Recomendaciones de un Grupo de Investigadores de la Universidad de Oregón

Robert Bussel y Marcela Mendoza

Mientras que inmigrantes y refugiados de distintas partes del mundo continúan asentándose en Oregón, es necesario que los administradores, los que prestan servicios y el público en general aprendan más acerca de las experiencias y las aspiraciones de estos oregoneses recién llegados. "La experiencia de los inmigrantes de Oregón" es el resultado de dos años de colaboración entre investigadores de la Universidad de Oregón. Con la intensión de aumentar la concientización pública acerca de tendencias y desarrollos importantes sobre el tema de la inmigración, este informe responde a las siguientes preguntas:

- ¿Cómo ha sido la historia de los inmigrantes de Oregón? ¿Cómo ha evolucionado a través del tiempo?
- ¿Por qué tantos inmigrantes y refugiados se asentaron en Oregón recientemente?
- ¿Dónde se asentaron los inmigrantes y cómo se desempeñan en las escuelas, los lugares de trabajo y los contextos comunitarios?
- ¿Cómo responden las comunidades y las instituciones sociales a la presencia de los recién llegados?

Este informe ofrece una síntesis concisa de muchos aspectos de la experiencia inmigrante de Oregón y se centra especialmente en la experiencia de los inmigrantes latinos, que representan la mayoría de los recién llegados a Oregón en los últimos quince años.

Para obtener este informe en inglés en formato PDF visite la siguiente dirección:
http://www.uoregon.edu/~lerc/pdfs/immigrationenglish.pdf

Para obtener el PDF de este informe en español visite la siguiente dirección:
http://www.uoregon.edu/~lerc/pdfs/immigrationespanol.pdf

PLENARIO

Construir Alianzas para Apoyar los Derechos de los Inmigrantes

Ramón Ramírez (Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste, PCUN/CAUSA, Woodburn, Salem)
Jonathan Fox (University of California, Santa Cruz)
Marcy Westerling (Rural Organizing Project, Scappoose)

Marcy Westerling, Ramón Ramírez y Jonathan Fox proporcionaron ideas acerca de los desafíos implícitos en tratar de construir un movimiento a largo plazo para apoyar los derechos de los inmigrantes en Estados Unidos. Los panelistas discutieron los cambios en la participación política desde el 2006 cuando se llevaron a cabo las marchas masivas que organizaron los inmigrantes y aquellos que los apoyan. También destacaron que con frecuencia son los asuntos locales y estatales (más que los nacionales) los que motivan a las personas a participar políticamente. Por ejemplo, el tema de permitir o no que los inmigrantes indocumentados tengan registros para conducir en Oregón ha generado un interés generalizado. Los panelistas abogaron por una estrategia nacional para incentivar la naturalización de inmigrantes que cumplen con los requisitos para convertirse en ciudadanos (por ejemplo, reduciendo el costo de las solicitudes y simplificando los exámenes) y también abogaron para aquellos que han "cumplido con las reglas" puedan llegar a naturalizarse.

Marcy Westerling explicó que el Rural Organizing Project (ROP) nació en 1992 a consecuencia de un diálogo inter-generacional centrado en la oposición a la llamada Ballot Measure (propuesta) 9 de Oregón que estaba en contra los derechos de las personas gay. La alianza de los ciudadanos de Oregón (Oregon Citizen's Alliance), un grupo que apoyaba la propuesta de 1992 Ballot Measure 9, definió los derechos de las personas gay como "derechos especiales". Los oponentes de la propuesta, ROP, Basic Rights Oregon, PCUN, CAUSA y otras organizaciones, la consideraron como un ataque a las libertades individuales. Los participantes de este diálogo inter-generacional analizaron los orígenes de la exclusividad política, las ganancias del movimiento por los derechos civiles, el temor hacia la homosexualidad y el poder del racismo para cambiar los derechos constitucionales de las personas. A través de este diálogo, los grupos participantes decidieron formar una alianza con distintas organizaciones, incluso varias organizaciones latinas. ROP comenzó a utilizar el concepto de "raza" como un punto de vista cultural para analizar asuntos políticos. "Una gran parte de ROP está compuesto por gente 'blanca' que habla con otra gente 'blanca'", dijo Westerling. Para aprender más acerca del rol que desempeña el racismo en el estado de Oregón, ROP comenzó a prestar atención al trabajo del sindicato de Pineros y Campesinos del Noroeste (PCUN) y CAUSA (una coalición por los derechos de los inmigrantes de Oregón) y preguntó cómo su grupo podría apoyar el trabajo de PCUN y CAUSA, mientras educaba a sus propios miembros acerca del racismo. ROP está dedicado a una red de miembros de una ciudad pequeña, sobre todo personas "blancas" que pueden convertirse en aliados de organizaciones latinas y de otras organizaciones. El locus de la alianza entre ROP, PCUN y CAUSA consiste en crear una red de individuos que comprenden que privar a las personas de sus derechos sobre la base del concepto de "raza" es un ataque a los valores democráticos de todos.

"Para construir una alianza uno tiene que aceptar que se pueden cometer errores y luego corregirlos; este no es un proceso prolijo y ordenado", dijo Marcy Westerling del Rural Organizing Project.

Ramón Ramírez relató la historia de PCUN, el único sindicato de trabajadores rurales de Oregón. Los fundadores de PCUN comenzaron a organizarse en 1977, los primeros afiliados fueron trabajadores indocumentados que no sabían hablar en inglés y sentían mucho miedo. PCUN se convirtió en un sindicato oficial en 1985 y hoy tiene 5500 miembros registrados. Desde el principio, los miembros de PCUN comprendieron que no podrían cambiar sus condiciones de trabajo por sí mismos, sino que tendrían que construir alianzas con personas que los apoyaban para sostener el movimiento de los trabajadores del campo y hacerlo crecer.

Ramón Ramírez (PCUN) y Marcy Westerling (ROP) conversando durante un descanso de la conferencia.

"Para que los trabajadores del campo lleguen a cambiar sus condiciones de trabajo, tiene una importancia vital que puedan construir alianzas", dijo Ramón Ramírez (PCUN).

En 1992, las comunidades LGBTQ (gays, lesbianas, bisexuales y otras diversidades de género) le pidieron a PCUN que se uniese a ellas para combatir la Ballot Measure 9. Ramírez les dijo a los

miembros de PCUN que si llegaba a pasar esta propuesta que limitaba los derechos de las comunidades LBGTQ entonces los derechos de los inmigrantes serían los próximos en recibir un ataque.

Los miembros de PCUN y representantes de las comunidades LGBTQ se encontraron para discutir sus diferencias. Según Ramírez, discutieron sobre temas tales como homofobia entre los latinos. Los latinos de PCUN tenían una sensación de intranquilidad frente a la perspectiva de establecer una alianza a largo plazo con comunidades LGBTQ, pero recibieron suficiente información como para reconocer que se trataba de los derechos de todas las personas, no solo de los derechos de los trabajadores inmigrantes.

Ramírez sugirió que los líderes de PCUN aprendieron observando lo que ocurrió cuando se aprobó la Proposición 187 de California. La Proposición 187 fue una iniciativa de 1994 diseñada para negar servicios sociales, atención médica y educación pública a inmigrantes indocumentados. La Proposición 187 fue aprobada en California, pero luego la Corte Suprema de California la declaró inconstitucional. Observando la manera como se organizaron los que estaban en contra de la Proposición 187, Ramírez y otros líderes de PCUN sintieron que les había faltado una estrategia política sólida para responder al ataque. Los organizadores de las comunidades LGBTQ de Oregón ya habían logrado derrotar la propuesta Ballot Measure 9. Cuando aparecieron propuestas en contra de los inmigrantes en las elecciones provinciales de 1996 y 1997, entonces PCUN estableció una alianza con los organizadores LBGTQ. Durante ese mismo período, una propuesta de legislación nacional liderada primero por el senador Ron Wyden de Oregón y luego por el senador Gordon Smith, también de Oregón, intentó reproducir el problemático Programa de Braceros de los años 1940. Según Ramírez, las alianzas establecidas con ROP y con otras organizaciones resultaron esenciales para poner presión sobre Smith y Wyden en Oregón y también en el estado de Washington, lo que eventualmente resultó en una fuerte oposición del Presidente Clinton, quién dijo claramente que si la legislación fuese aprobada, la iba a vetar. La continua presión ejercida por PCUN, CAUSA y sus aliados sobre Smith y Wyden resultó en una propuesta de legislación que abría el camino para naturalizar a los trabajadores del campo, la cual durante el otoño del 2001 parecía tener el apoyo de los dueños de empresas agrícolas y de organizaciones que apoyaban los derechos de los inmigrantes y de los trabajadores rurales. Después del 11 de septiembre del 2001, todas las propuestas de ley relacionadas con inmigración perdieron interés para los legisladores por varios años. Las alianzas establecidas por PCUN y CAUSA con las comunidades LGBTQ, ROP y otras organizaciones continuaron funcionado y resultaron efectivas para defender a los derechos de los inmigrantes. Ramírez dijo que PCUN aprendió que no hay una manera fácil para establecer alianzas. Hay que desarrollar confianza y eso habitualmente se tiene que hacer comenzando a escala pequeña y estableciendo relaciones personales con las organizaciones locales.

> *"Las organizaciones no pueden hablar solo entre ellas o con las personas que comparten las mismas perspectivas. La tarea de construir alianzas desafía a las personas a pensar distinto", dijo Ramón Ramírez de Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste (PCUN) y CAUSA.*

Jonathan Fox de la Universidad de California-Santa Cruz compartió sus pensamientos sobre "coaliciones de movimientos y movimientos de coaliciones" basado en las alianzas ya mencionadas entre CAUSA, PCUN y ROP. Fox discutió cuales son los desafíos en el proceso de establecer coaliciones políticas que duren mucho tiempo. Fox destacó lo difícil que es establecer ese tipo de alianzas. Si bien intuitivamente parece obvio que las coaliciones y las alianzas son asociaciones orientadas hacia un objetivo en particular y que ambas involucran esfuerzos para cambiar el balance del poder, estos conceptos pueden no ser sinónimos. Algunas de esas asociaciones están basadas en la conveniencia y el interés personal mientras que otras están basadas en convicciones y en el interés común.

Según Fox, una coalición es una asociación temporaria formada para buscar el interés personal y una alianza es un acuerdo entre dos o más partes para avanzar intereses y objetivos comunes. Por ejemplo, la aprobación de tratado norteamericano de libre comercio (North American Free Trade Agreement-NAFTA) dió inicio a muchas asociaciones a través de la frontera internacional y estableció redes y coaliciones entre grupos de interés público en los Estados Unidos y en México. Para llevar a cabo la integración comercial de eso estados se formaron distintas clases de asociaciones: un conjunto abarcaba sectores laborales, medioambientales, de derechos humanos, de derechos civiles y grupos que apoyaban el intercambio comercial; mientras que otro conjunto de asociaciones trataba de establecer alianzas internacionales para encontrar contrapartes en el otro país. Estas fueron asociaciones instrumentales, de poca duración que terminaron una vez que finalizó el debate que dió origen a NAFTA.

Fox examinó las coaliciones y las alianzas que prevalecieron y aquellas que no duraron. Su estudio se refiere a asociaciones que abarcan varios sectores, forman redes y movimientos. Fox afirmó que los términos "red" (network) o coalición no parecen apropiados para la clase de diálogo horizontal que vemos entre los líderes de ROP y PCUN, la cual es una relación entre contrapartes. Un movimiento puede llegar a ser mucho más amplio que una coalición o una red. Por ejemplo, en la primavera del 2006, una movilización cívica liderada por inmigrantes puso la necesidad de reforma inmigratoria en la agenda nacional. Distintas coaliciones de organizaciones latinas, sindicatos, centros de trabajadores, y otros formaron parte de esta movilización. Más de tres millones y medio de personas marcharon entre marzo y mayo del 2006 en Chicago, Los Ángeles, San Diego, San José, Fresno, Dallas, Las Vegas, Denver, Phoenix, Fort Myers y Walla Walla. Las iglesias católicas y los medios de habla hispana desempeñaron un papel crucial para llegar a otras personas más allá de los que ya estaban organizados, convenciendo a mucha gente de que ese era el momento de arriesgarse y aparecer en la esfera pública. Sin embargo el efecto político de la movilización resultó ambiguo porque energizó ambos sectores, a los que apoyan a los inmigrantes y a los que están en contra de ellos y las repercusiones todavía se sienten.

Desde entonces esas coaliciones cambiaron su foco: de movilizar para una acción cívica masiva en las calles a movilizar inmigrantes documentados y residentes permanentes para que participen en el proceso político. También se han ocupado de movilizar ocho millones de residentes permanentes que estaban en condiciones de solicitar la naturalización, sin esperar que se reforme la ley federal de inmigración. Uno de los slogans de las marchas fue "*Hoy marchamos, mañana votamos*". Aunque en ese momento no quedaba claro si el cántico era una predicción, un deseo o incluso una provocación vacía de contenido. Después de todo, los inmigrantes indocumentados que marchaban no iban a poder votar hasta que no ganasen la batalla por la reforma de la ley inmigratoria. De modo que el asunto se convirtió en cómo transformar esa enorme energía cívica en poder político que pudiese reforzar el impulso de aquellos legisladores de Washington, D.C., que apoyaban la reforma inmigratoria.

Fox dijo que la respuesta del gobierno fue aumentar el costo de la solicitud para obtener la ciudadanía, hacer más difícil el examen para naturalizarse y aumentar la tasa de rechazo de los solicitantes. Las coaliciones necesitan establecer una base común entre ciudadanos, residentes e inmigrantes indocumentados para que los indocumentados puedan llegar a convertirse en ciudadanos y para que los ciudadanos participen activamente en el proceso político. La audiencia generó preguntas interesantes al respecto: ¿Por qué las personas que están en condiciones de convertirse en ciudadanas no se naturalizan? ¿Cómo podemos hacer para incentivar a los latinos para que participen en el proceso electoral?

> *"Hablamos del movimiento por los derechos de los inmigrantes pero en la práctica nos estamos refiriendo a personas que tienen distintos tipos de derechos: aquellos que tienen una situación legal y pueden votar; aquellos que podrían recibir ese derecho pero no lo tienen y aquellos que en este momento se encuentran excluidos de un recurso para obtener esa situación legal. Esto crea diferentes grupos de personas, si bien a veces estas personas forman parte de una misma familia", dijo Jonathan Fox de la Universidad de California-Santa Cruz.*

Asociaciones que atraviesan distintos sectores: Los networks, las coaliciones y los movimientos

Características compartidas	***Networks que atraviesan sectores***	***Coaliciones que atraviesan sectores***	***Movimientos que atraviesan sectores***
Intercambio de información y experiencias	*Si*	*Si*	*Si*
Base social organizada	*A veces más, a veces menos o ninguna*	*A veces más, a veces menos o ninguna*	*Si*
Apoyo mutuo	*A veces desde afuera y posiblemente solo discursivo*	*Si*	*Si*
Acciones conjuntas y campañas	*A veces poca coordinación*	*Si, basada en metas mínimas acordadas en común, a veces de poca duración, como tácticas*	*Si, basada en una estrategia común a largo plazo*
Visiones compartidas	*No necesariamente*	*No necesariamente*	*Generalmente sí*
Políticas culturales compartidas	*Muchas veces no*	*Muchas veces no*	*Valores políticos, estilos e identidades compartidas*

Adaptado de Jonathan Fox, Lessons from Mexico-US Civil Society Coalitions, en *Cross-Border Dialogues: US-Mexico Social Movement Networking,* compilado por David Brooks y Jonathan Fox. La Jolla, CA: San Diego, Center for US-Mexican Studies, University of California, 2002.

PRESENTACIÓN DE LA ETNOGRAFÍA DE LA COLABORACIÓN "CONSTRUIR ALIANZAS: COLABORACIÓN ENTRE CAUSA Y RURAL ORGANIZING PROJECT (ROP)"

Por Lynn Stephen con la colaboración de Jan Lanier, Ramón Ramírez y Marcy Westerling

Esta etnografía destaca la colaboración entre dos organizaciones importantes de Oregón. Estas organizaciones—CAUSA (una coalición que apoya los derechos de los inmigrantes) y Rural Organizing Project (ROP)—han logrado éxitos significativos al detener esfuerzos locales, estatales y nacionales que intentaban limitar los derechos de los inmigrantes latinos, de los ciudadanos gays y las ciudadanas lesbianas y de otras personas que trabajan por la justicia económica y social. Para entender cómo y por qué ROP y CAUSA han podido aliarse hay que ver cuáles son los valores sociales y las estrategias políticas que comparten. A través de las voces de participantes de ROP y CAUSA, "Construyendo Alianzas" presenta los obstáculos que enfrentan dos organizaciones para colaborar la una con la otra sobre la base de diferencias sociales, culturales y económicas entre sus miembros y en la manera en que conceptualizan e interpretan sus respectivas luchas. Esta etnografía analiza en profundidad dos casos específicos para demostrar la dinámica de una colaboración exitosa. El primer caso se trata de la derrota en 1998 de una propuesta de ley nacional que intentaba introducir lo que los activistas llamaron un "Programa Nuevo de Braceros" que hubiese limitado los derechos de los trabajadores del campo. El segundo caso fue una iniciativa del año 2000 a nivel estatal que hubiese prohibido a los maestros de las escuelas públicas enseñar, promover o reconocer la homosexualidad en las escuelas. En las conclusiones se analizan los riegos y los beneficios de colaborar entre organizaciones, como continuar nutriéndolas una vez que ya están formadas y como las colaboraciones pueden desarrollar poder político en los escenarios políticos cambiantes de Oregón y de los Estados Unidos en general.

La versión en inglés está disponible en la siguiente dirección:
http://www.leadershipforchange.org/insights/research/files/ROPsummary.pdf
Una guía en inglés con instrucciones para establecer colaboraciones aparece en:
http://wnw.uoregon.edu/pdf_imm/Building%20Alliances%20pgs%201-24_comp.pdf
Una guía en español con instrucciones para establecer colaboraciones aparece en:
http://wagner.nyu.edu/leadership/reports/files/Final_FormacionDeAlianzas.pdf

Los Jóvenes y la Educación

Charles Martínez, **Jr.** (UO School of Education, Institutional Equity and Diversity, Eugene)
Carmen Urbina (4 J School System, Eugene)
Víctor Becerra (LEAD and Juventud FACETA, Eugene)
Elizbeth Sampedro (Juventud FACETA, Eugene)

Carmen Urbina inició las presentaciones de este panel mostrando datos que ilustraban como el sistema educativo y la comunidad ven la brecha que caracteriza el desempeño escolar de los estudiantes latinos. Desde el punto de vista del sistema educativo los administradores del Distrito Escolar 4J de Eugene se dieron cuenta que el número de estudiantes latinos había crecido 110 por ciento en los últimos siete años pero solo 43 por ciento de los estudiantes latinos del décimo grado que estaban aprendiendo inglés como segunda lengua (English Language Learners-ELL) podían aprobar o exceder las expectativas de las evaluaciones a nivel estatal. Las estadísticas muestran que los estudiantes latinos tienen dificultades en el sistema educativo tal cual funciona ahora. Su desempeño escolar se reduce drásticamente a través de los doce años de escolaridad y los datos de otros lugares del estado muestran cifras similares; aunque esos datos se refieren únicamente a los estudiantes que están aprendiendo inglés como segunda lengua (ELL). Las escuelas emplean un modelo de carencias para explicar la brecha en el desempeño escolar, refiriéndose a las desventajas económicas, al poco conocimiento del inglés y al hecho que muchos estudiantes están recibiendo educación especial (para estudiantes con problemas de aprendizaje). Desde el punto de vista de las familias de esos estudiantes latinos "veo una lucha tremenda sobre la inmigración", dijo Urbina, "veo padres que están haciendo todo lo que pueden para que sus hijos salgan adelante". Los padres inmigrantes quieren que sus hijos retengan el lenguaje y la cultura de su país de origen. Los padres sienten que el sistema educativo mata el espíritu de sus hijos y les dificulta la conexión con sus familias. Cuando los estudiantes que están aprendiendo inglés salen de los salones de clase comunes solo aprenden un lenguaje social, en vez de un lenguaje académico y los estudiantes internalizan ideas de fracaso. En una consulta con padres latinos del Distrito Escolar 4J de Eugene, el tema principal que preocupaba a los padres fue la necesidad de enseñarles a sus hijos estrategias para evitar el racismo y el abuso", dijo Urbina.

> *"Si voy a decir algo sobre la brecha en el desempeño educativo es que todos tenemos responsabilidad en esto. Esta es una crisis y todos debemos actuar para solucionarla", dijo Carmen Urbina del Distrito Escolar 4J de Eugene, Oregón.*

Elizabeth Sampedro, una estudiante que recibió un reconocimiento del gobernador de Oregón (Governor's Student Award) en el 2007 y es la cofundadora de *Nuestro Lugar*, un centro de Eugene para adolescentes, habló sobre su experiencia en la escuela secundaria como inmigrante de primera generación. "Cuando estamos en la escuela", dijo Sampedro, "hablamos entre nosotros en español y nos encanta pero también escuchamos decir a muchos otros estudiantes 'no sé por qué estoy tratando de salir adelante si no tengo papeles, documentos inmigratorios'". Sampedro le recordó a la audiencia que un estudiante inmigrante puede sacarse A en todas sus clases pero al final no tiene valor porque si no es un residente permanente legal no puede inscribirse en la Universidad sin pagar tanto como pagan los estudiantes que vienen de otros estados y debe anotarse en la universidad como si fuese un "estudiante extranjero". Sampedro dijo que le da pena escuchar a los estudiantes indocumentados que quieren dejar la escuela; sugirió que hay tantos estudiantes inteligentes que necesitan una oportunidad para tener éxito. La sanción de una ley como la propuesta DREAM Act les daría esa oportunidad. La propuesta DREAM Act (Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act) es una propuesta de ley federal que permitiría que los estudiantes indocumentados con calificaciones altas pudiesen obtener la residencia legal permanente. Para obtener la residencia legal permanente los estudiantes deberían inscribirse en la Universidad o en las fuerzas armadas.

> ***"****Cuando uno es un estudiante inmigrante de primera generación en un salón de clase de la escuela secundaria y ve a otros estudiantes que se le parecen, automáticamente uno quiere estar con ellos", dijo Elizabeth Sampedro de Juventud FACETA y Nuestro Lugar- LEAD.*

Víctor Becerra obtuvo su diploma de educación secundaria (GED) en el 2007. Becerra compartió con la audiencia de que manera afecta a los inmigrantes de primera generación el hecho de estar aprendiendo inglés como segunda lengua. "Cuando llegué a los Estados Unidos tenía 10 años", dijo Becerra, "y no sabía nada de inglés pero una maestra me ayudó". Le dijeron que para poder comenzar el sexto grado debería tomar clases en el verano, "pero los maestros no le enseñan a uno lo que uno debe saber", dijo Becerra. De modo que continuó tomando clases de inglés como segunda lengua hasta que llegó al noveno grado, algo que lo confundió mucho. A algunos de sus amigos les hubiese gustado inscribirse en la Universidad pero como tienen un estatus migratorio indocumentado no pueden obtener ninguna ayuda económica. Becerra dijo que cada año terminan la escuela muchos estudiantes que tienen un estatus migratorio indocumentado y que por esa razón no pueden inscribirse en la universidad.

Charles Martínez Jr. concluyó la sesión discutiendo la situación de las familias latinas inmigrantes de Oregón basado en sus investigaciones realizadas con el equipo de investigación latino del Oregon Social Learning Center. Martínez describió muchos obstáculos que enfrentan las familias latinas

durante el proceso de inmigrar a Oregón. También discutió cambios en los patrones de inmigración que ocurrieron en la década pasada. Por ejemplo, muchos de los inmigrantes latinos recientes vienen de comunidades rurales pequeñas de México; para algunos su primer idioma es una lengua indígena y luego tienen que aprender español y después inglés para sobrevivir el proceso migratorio.

Martínez mostró otras estadísticas importantes para contextualizar la situación de las familias inmigrantes latinas. Sobre unos 47 millones de latinos que viven en los Estados Unidos, el 55 por ciento son ciudadanos; casi la mitad del resto (45 por ciento) son residentes legales. Martínez destacó que si bien los debates políticos sobre inmigración con frecuencia terminan en cuestiones relacionadas con legalidad e ilegalidad, el tema del estatus legal tiene consecuencias mucho más complicadas para las familias. Martínez le dijo a la audiencia que en Oregón la mayoría de los latinos son inmigrantes de primera generación pero la mitad de los jóvenes latinos del estado han nacido en los Estados Unidos; también discutió los distintos patrones de inmigración en el estado. Por ejemplo, mientras que la mayoría de los adultos latinos que viven en Oregón ha vivido aquí durante diez años o menos, hay lugares como Woodburn dónde la historia del asentamiento es mucho más larga y profunda.

Finalmente Martínez se refirió a la situación económica de las familias latinas inmigrantes. En Oregón muchas familias latinas tienen ingresos menores que los de las familias de otros grupos de población. Esta disparidad en los ingresos individuales no incluye el dinero que los inmigrantes envían a sus países de origen. La presión económica y el stress que experimentan las familias inmigrantes pueden llegar a contribuir a su mayor vulnerabilidad y puede tener un resultado negativo sobre su salud. Los niños de los inmigrantes tienden a aculturarse muy rápidamente, en parte debido a las presiones para socializarse por parte de la escuela, los grupos de amigos y los medios de comunicación. Sin embargo, los padres latinos tienden a aculturarse mucho más lentamente. Las investigaciones muestran que esta brecha en la velocidad de aculturación puede llegar a agregar stress a la vida familiar y aumentar la posibilidad de que algunos jóvenes latinos experimenten problemas. De todos modos, las familias latinas tienen una gran fortaleza basada en sus culturas (por ejemplo, el familismo que promueve un lazo fuerte y un sentido de responsabilidad compartida dentro de las familias) que ayuda a protegerlas de los resultados negativos mientras ocurre el proceso de aculturación. Las intervenciones y los actos de prevención deben enfatizar y apoyar esa fortaleza basada en la cultura.

> *"¿En qué momento dejamos de hablar de los datos y comenzamos a actuar? ¿Cuándo vamos a decir 'ya es suficiente' para comenzar a actuar?" dijo Charles Martínez Jr. de la Universidad de Oregón y OSLC.*

Millerz in Da' Mix, un grupo de danza de la escuela secundaria de Springfield que cautivó a los participantes de la conferencia con su baile estilo hip-hop.

Desafíos para los Hombres y las Mujeres Inmigrantes

Beatríz Martínez (Welcome Center, Springfield)
Jorge Navarro (Centro Latino Americano, Eugene)
Raul de la O (Emergence, Eugene)

Jorge Navarro dirige el Centro Latino Americano, una agencia que desde 1972 presta servicios sociales a la población latina de Eugene, Oregón. Navarro inició las exposiciones de este panel enfatizando los desafíos que enfrentan las familias latinas. Navarro dijo que un adulto inmigrante puede tardar hasta seis años en aprender a hablar y escribir un idioma nuevo mientras que los niños lo aprenden en un año. La capacidad para aprender los pone en la situación de tener que interpretar para sus padres, lo que destaca las dificultades de traducir y comunicar asuntos que tienen una carga emocional para los padres y los hijos. "En general, los americanos son individualistas, materialistas y democráticos", dijo Navarro, "mientras que los latinos están más centrados en su familia, orientados hacia la comunidad y tienen un sentido de respeto hacia la autoridad". En el país nuevo, el papel del padre se revierte y el padre puede llegar a sentir resentimiento hacia sus hijos, afirmó Navarro. La identidad de los hijos a su vez se ve cuestionada en la escuela, en situaciones públicas y en el hogar. Los jóvenes comienzan a cuestionar su propia identidad. Los temas más importantes en las familias siguen siendo las dificultades del lenguaje y definir los roles de autoridad, sugirió Navarro. Los adultos de la familia trabajan en puestos que pagan salarios mínimos y los niños quedan solos la mayor parte del día. Algunas mujeres son víctimas de abuso por parte de sus parejas. "En el Centro Latino Americano usamos nuestros recursos limitados para producir intervenciones que beneficien a las mujeres, las

familias y los niños—en ese orden", dijo Navarro. "Es necesario crear avenidas y oportunidades para superar el racismo, el clasismo, el sexismo y el abuso entre las parejas en la comunidad latina".

> *"La familia, el verdadero regalo que nuestra comunidad latina tiene para ofrecer, se encuentra amenazada", dijo Jorge Navarro del Centro Latino Americano*

Beatriz Martínez del Centro de Bienvenida de Springfield, Oregón, explicó que ella trabaja con el sistema escolar pero que es muy limitado lo que puede hacer por las familias porque muchos inmigrantes recientes tienen miedo de ir a una consulta médica e incluso ir de compras a los comercios. "Doy clases de inglés tres veces por semana", dijo Beatriz Martínez, "y las que vienen son mujeres. Aunque pueden hablar en inglés en la clase, no lo hablan cuando tienen que salir; les digo que las personas son personas sin importar el color de la piel o el idioma que hablan, uno tiene que superar el miedo". Martínez aconseja a los padres inmigrantes que vayan con sus hijos a la escuela y les hagan preguntas a los maestros y a los administradores. "Los maestros les van a prestar atención a sus preguntas, de la misma manera en que ustedes les prestan atención a lo que dicen los maestros", dijo Beatriz Martínez, "los padres tienen tanto poder como los educadores, aunque reconozco que las familias latinas no se sienten cómodas cuando tienen que enfrentar a las autoridades ". "Una maestra, un sacerdote, cualquiera que tenga poder sobre nosotros merece respeto", explicó Martínez, "así que no les decimos 'quiero hacer una pregunta' ni tampoco les decimos que no estamos de acuerdo con lo que dicen".

Los niños de muchas familias latinas no reciben los servicios que podrían recibir a través del plan de salud de Oregón (Oregon Health Plan) y de otros programas que proporcionan servicios médicos, de dentista y de oculista, aunque en realidad les corresponden. El desafío es lograr que las familias admitan que necesitan ayuda y animarlas para que accedan a esos servicios. Beatriz Martínez considera que muchas veces los padres no tienen tiempo de aprender inglés debido a sus horarios de trabajo y sienten que están perdiendo autoridad sobre su familia a medida que los hijos se aculturan. Los niños sienten que tienen que adaptarse a la conducta de sus pares. Los niños latinos inmigrantes se preocupan porque quieren tener la apariencia adecuada, tener los ojos y el pelo del color correcto y usar las ropas adecuadas. Martínez concluyó diciendo que hay maneras de adaptarse a la vida en los Estados Unidos sin perder la identidad personal, justamente de eso se trata convertirse en bilingüe y bicultural.

> *"Podemos apreciar a nuestros amigos americanos y seguir siendo quienes somos. Me llevó mucho tiempo darme cuenta que no tengo que convertirme en una persona diferente, que puedo ser bicultural y seguir siendo quién soy", dijo Beatriz Martínez del Springfield Welcome Center.*

Raúl de la O de Emergence se centró en las barreras que enfrentan las familias inmigrantes y el tipo de recursos culturales que tienen que utilizar para fortalecerse. De la O propuso que miremos al contexto amplio en el cuál viven los inmigrantes una vez que se establecen en los Estados Unidos. Los inmigrantes, tal como todas las demás personas, quieren conseguir buenos empleos y ver sus sueños realizados. Sin embargo, cuando llegan a un país nuevo experimentan una crisis de identidad: "Uno tiene la piel oscura, no habla el idioma, su cultura es diferente y eso crea un efecto dominó", dijo de la O. El tema más importante para los hombres inmigrantes es encontrar un trabajo interesante, que no sea denigrante, dado que muchos de los empleos que consiguen los inmigrantes terminan siendo degradantes. Muchos inmigrantes vienen a los Estados Unidos con un nivel de educación y con habilidades que los colocan en una posición superior a los puestos que están disponibles para ellos. Los obstáculos que encuentran son su falta de dominio del inglés, discriminación y presunciones acerca de su nivel de destreza que terminan afectando de vida familiar de los inmigrantes. Todos los miembros de la familia sufren las consecuencias. Cada vez más, las mujeres están inmigrando solas, tanto como los hombres.

> *"Las mujeres inmigrantes ahora se están arriesgando tanto como los hombres se arriesgaban antes", dijo Raúl de la O de Emergence, Eugene.*

Raúl de la O hizo la siguiente pregunta: ¿Por qué es tan difícil para los inmigrantes latinos aprender un idioma nuevo y aprender a vivir de la manera como se vive en este país? Luego la contestó de una manera personal: "Porque al hacerlo, me quedé con un sentimiento de vacío interno". De la O se refirió a cinco características que definen la cultura latina y afectan el proceso de aculturación: (a) familismo, el énfasis en la familia como fuente de apoyo social, (b) simpatía, la capacidad de compartir sentimientos, ser respetuoso y amable con otras personas, (c) personalismo, la preferencia por las relaciones personales, sentirse atraído por aquellos que reflejan actitudes cálidas, (d) machismo, mostrar rasgos que se consideran masculinos, tales como fuerza física y coraje, destacando la idea de que los hombres son los que tienen que controlar la situación, (e) marianismo, el sufrimiento solitario de las mujeres que se quedan en el hogar y cuidan al esposo y a los hijos. De la O dijo que perdió esas características durante su propio proceso de adaptación a la vida en los Estados Unidos. Enfatizó que la familia latina se puede considerar como un factor que protege y puede convertirse en el sitio para

desarrollar fortaleza cultural. De la O considera que el rol de las organizaciones de servicio consiste en crear opciones para las familias y empoderarlas para que desempeñen un papel en la educación de los niños, se hagan cargo de sus propias finanzas y eliminen el abuso doméstico, entre otras cosas.

Asuntos Laborales

Ignacio Páramo (VOZ, Workers' Rights Education Project, Portland)
Marcelina Martínez y **Julie Samples** (Oregon Law Center, Woodburn y Hillsboro)
Nimfa López (Sindicato internacional de empleados de hoteles y restaurantes, Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union-HERE, Eugene)
Dagoberto Morales (UNETE,Center for Farmworker Advocacy, Medford)

Ignacio Páramo de VOZ, un proyecto de Portland para educar a los trabajadores sobre sus derechos habló de lo que hace con inmigrantes latinos que se emplean por hora (day laborers), que se contratan para hacer trabajos manuales y reciben su pago al final del día (en vez de por semana o por quincena). Entre 100 y 200 *jornaleros* (day laborers) se reúnen diariamente en las calles de Portland esperando que alguien los contrate. Los vecinos y los comercios comenzaron a mostrarse preocupados por la presencia de los jornaleros. La organización de Páramo logró comunicarse con ellos y trabajó junto con la policía para diseñar un plan de acción. La meta es educar a los jornaleros sobre sus derechos legales porque estos trabajadores son muy vulnerables al abuso y a la violación de sus derechos laborales. Los empleadores los contratan por una semana o por un mes sin decirles cuanto les van a pagar. La organización de Páramo abrió una oficina para jornaleros—un centro dónde los trabajadores que están buscando empleo temporario pueden llegar y sentirse más protegidos y recibir entrenamiento para distintos empleos.

Marcelina Martínez y Julie Samples explicaron cuál es la clase de servicios que se ofrecen a los trabajadores del campo en las oficinas del Oregon Law Center de Woodburn y Hillsboro. En este momento el centro tiene dos proyectos centrados en trabajadores de origen indígena: uno sobre salud y seguridad en el trabajo y otro destinado a prevenir el acoso sexual en el campo. El Centro tradujo información sobre salud y seguridad en el trabajo, acoso sexual, derechos de los trabajadores y derechos humanos a distintas lenguas indígenas de México y América Central y facilita CDs con esa información.

El proyecto contra el acoso sexual está dirigido a los trabajadores rurales, en particular aquellos que hablan idiomas indígenas. Marcelina Martínez, quién habla español y mixteco y trabaja para el Oregon Law Center de Hillsboro, habló sobre sus experiencias personales trabajando en el campo, discutió la discriminación con la que se encontró y explicó temas que son importantes para los trabajadores indígenas, tales como las dificultades del lenguaje, experiencias con el cuidado de la salud, falta de conocimiento de sus derechos legales y otros asuntos.

Los participantes del panel Dagoberto Morales, Ignacio Páramo, Marcelina Martínez, Julie Samples, Ninfa López y la organizadora del panel Lise Nelson escuchan la interpretación de la discusión al inglés. Esta conferencia fue completamente bilingüe.

Ninfa López habló de su experiencia como empleada en un hotel de Eugene. Durante seis años López y otras empleadas latinas experimentaron abuso y violaciones laborales por parte de su empleador. Por ejemplo, tenían que trabajar siete días por semana sin descanso y se les asignaban tareas que eran muy pesadas para ellas. Si se quejaban, el encargado les decía que había otros trabajadores que querían ocupar sus puestos, asustándolas para que se mantuviesen calladas. El empleador sugirió que si las mujeres hacían una queja, las iban a castigar quitándoles horas de trabajo. Poco a poco algunas de esas mujeres comenzaron a darse cuenta de la realidad de su situación y ahora están peleando por sus derechos. Se afiliaron a un sindicato y han logrado mejorar mucho la situación laboral. "*La unión hace la fuerza*!", dijo López.

Dagoberto Morales compartió información sobre lo que hace con trabajadores inmigrantes en el sur de Oregón. UNETE se ocupa de asuntos de vivienda y de transporte para trabajadores inmigrantes. Los organizadores tratan de motivar a los jóvenes que no tienen la oportunidad de asistir a la Universidad animándolos para que se empleen en puesto técnicos luego de graduarse de la escuela secundaria. UNETE también educa a los jóvenes acerca de sus raíces culturales. Morales explicó que si los jóvenes no saben de dónde vienen y quiénes son, entonces no se pueden adaptar y ganar confianza en sí mismos. UNETE también tiene un programa llamado *La persona de maíz* que les enseña a los niños y a los adolescentes sobre cómo se producen los alimentos. Los jóvenes aprenden a preparar tortillas, atole, tamales—todas comidas que se preparan con maíz. La organización se ha aliado con americanos nativos de origen indígena porque "somos la misma gente", dijo Morales, "aunque la colonización europea nos dividió. Después de más de 500 años todavía hay una idea de separación, todavía los pueblos indígenas encuentran mucha discriminación". Morales es un indígena Purépecha del estado mexicano de Michoacán.

El Liderazgo y la Organización de las Mujeres Indígenas

Odilia Romero (FIOB, Frente Indígena de Organizaciones Binacionales , Los Angeles)
Reina Vásquez (Amigos Multicultural Services, Juventud FACETA, Eugene)
Centolia Maldonado (FIOB, Frente Indígena de Organizaciones Binacionales, Juxtlahuaca)

Este panel comenzó con la proyección de la película "Sueños Binacionales", un documental de 30 minutos de duración dirigido por Yolanda Cruz. Este film sigue a dos grupos de indígenas inmigrantes de Oaxaca – mixtecos que han inmigrado continuamente a California durante las últimas tres décadas y chatinos que han inmigrado a Carolina del Norte durante los últimos diez años. Esta película captura los sacrificios enormes que hacen los inmigrantes y cuenta sus historias, por ejemplo la de una madre joven que deja su aldea, su cultura y hasta su hijo para emplearse como camarera en un hotel. También muestra que hay muy pocas oportunidades económicas en los pueblos de dónde vienen los indígenas inmigrantes. Allí se practica la agricultura de subsistencia y hay pequeños comercios que no generan ingresos insuficientes para mantener a una familia. La película destaca como las aldeas quedan casi vacías debido a la inmigración y enfatiza las difíciles decisiones que deben tomar aquellos que deciden emprender el viaje *al norte*. Una de las líderes que aparecen en el film es Centolia Maldonado, la coordinadora de la región mixteca de Oaxaca para el Frente Indígena de Organizaciones Binacionales (FIOB). Centolia no pudo participar de la conferencia debido a una emergencia médica en su familia pero envió el siguiente mensaje:

Todas las mujeres son líderes en sus hogares, hemos desarrollado nuestro liderazgo de una manera distinta. Para que una mujer se convierta en líder tiene que ser capaz de construir alianzas. Esas alianzas pueden ser con hombres o con otras mujeres. No pude asistir a la universidad para estudiar porque no tenía el dinero necesario porque trabajaba en mi casa y no ganaba un salario; pero mi organización, FIOB, me proporcionó oportunidades para conseguir becas que me permitieron asistir a la Universidad de Santa Cruz dónde pude desarrollar una visión más amplia de nuestros problemas locales y ahora puedo realizar mi trabajo mucho mejor. Como líder siento que voy a dejar de aprender cuando me muera. Nuestras comunidades son para mí una escuela permanente.

Reina Vásquez habló de su trabajo por los derechos de los inmigrantes de Eugene, Oregón y su experiencia como inmigrante zapoteca de Oaxaca que no tiene vergüenza de hablar en su idioma. Vásquez comenzó a trabajar en el campo con sus padres en Oaxaca cuando tenía seis o siete años mientras estudiaba por la noche. Su madre no había tenido la oportunidad de asistir a la escuela y quería que su hija aprendiese a leer y a escribir. La mayoría de las mujeres de su pueblo no saben leer o escribir en español y no asisten a la escuela. Sin embargo un día su madre le dijo que no iba a poder continuar en la escuela porque necesitaba que fuese a trabajar para ayudar a su familia. Vásquez eventualmente decidió migrar a los Estados Unidos y su vida cambió significativamente. Cuando llegó trabajó en el campo y en otros empleos aunque le resultó difícil porque no hablaba inglés. Trabajó en restaurantes y no le permitían hablar en español en el lugar de trabajo. En el 2003, Vásquez pasó a ser miembro de Juventud FACETA, un grupo local de jóvenes inmigrantes latinos, allí desarrolló destrezas sociales y evolucionó como persona, aprendiendo a valorarse a sí misma, a su cultura zapoteca y a las

culturas de otros miembros del grupo. Aprendió sobre derechos humanos y derechos de los inmigrantes. Ahora está empleada y sigue estudiando mientras cuida a su hijo de un año y envía dinero a sus padres que están en México. Vázquez concluyó comentando que en Oaxaca las mujeres solteras con hijos son consideradas “malas mujeres” porque no se han casado y sus hijos no tienen un padre. “Aquí soy la madre y el padre de mi hijo”, dijo Vázquez, “eso es difícil pero no es imposible”.

Odilia Romero de FIOB habló de sus experiencias personales como una mujer indígena zapoteca de Oaxaca que migró a Los Ángeles. Romero se casó a los 15 años de edad, tuvo una hija y asistió a la escuela. Su madre quería que se educase porque así no tendría que soportar la humillación de ser iletrada. Ya en los Estados Unidos Romero abandonó a su esposo y mantuvo a su hija como madre sola. Romero se convirtió en una líder de FIOB, una organización de Los Ángeles que tiene vínculos con Oaxaca para empoderar a los trabajadores indígenas que mantienen sus valores y su cultura. “Las mujeres inmigrantes indígenas afrontan muchos obstáculos”, dijo Romero, “tales como la discriminación étnica y la falta de igualdad de género”. Poder comunicarse con otros trabajadores y compartir experiencias a través de sus actividades en FIOB le ayudaron a aliviar esos obstáculos.

Negociando la Dinámica Familiar

Erlinda González Berry (Ethnic Studies Department, Oregon State University, Corvallis)
Mario Magaña (4-H Youth Development Education, Oregon State University, Corvallis)
Judith Salas Rocha (Springfield High School)
Ruth Vargas-Forman (Oregon Health Sciences University, OHSU y Siempre Amigos, Eugene)

Erlinda Gonzalez-Berry discutió algunos de los desafíos más significativos de las familias inmigrantes. Por ejemplo, las técnicas de crianza que los padres inmigrantes aprendieron en sus países de origen pueden resultar inútiles o habría que desalentarlas en su nuevo destino. El castigo corporal como una herramienta de disciplina, el respeto indiscutido hacia el padre o hacia las figuras de autoridad y la importancia del chisme como una forma de reforzar la conformidad en las comunidades inmigrantes son muy distintos de las técnicas de crianza y socialización que las familias inmigrantes experimentan en los Estados Unidos. Aquí los jóvenes inmigrantes desean ser independientes y conducirse como lo hacen sus pares pero tienen que responder a los dos mandatos, el de la cultura de sus padres y el de su nuevo ambiente.

González-Berry destacó que entre los adolescentes la presión de los pares reemplaza el consejo paterno, lo cual con frecuencia resulta en la rebelión de los jóvenes inmigrantes latinos dado que se sienten avergonzados por sus padres. Esto causa gran tensión y rigidez entre los padres y los jóvenes que se encuentran atrapados en un ciclo de conflicto, mayor control de parte de los padres y rebelión. González-Berry describió a los jóvenes inmigrantes latinos como intermediarios culturales, especialmente cuando sus padres tienen poca experiencia y poca capacidad para pedir ayuda y además no hablan bien el inglés. Cuando los niños tienen que interpretar para los padres se puede producir una inversión de roles. Dado que los padres inmigrantes todavía no se han integrado a la nueva cultura, en realidad son sus hijos los que los socializan—en vez de los padres socializar a los hijos. Según González-Berry esto les otorga a los hijos un sentimiento de autoridad y permite que tomen ventaja de las situaciones. Los padres inmigrantes necesitan contar con un sistema de apoyo que respeta sus valores y su cultura. Integrarse requiere aceptar ambas culturas, un proceso que resulta más productivo para todos los individuos involucrados, mucho más que el proceso que se denomina asimilación descendente.

González-Berry concluyó afirmando que las mujeres se han hecho más independientes gracias al trabajo asalariado y algunos hombres oponen resistencia a la libertad que acaban de conseguir sus esposas, lo cual altera la dinámica familiar dándole a la mujer más poder para tomar decisiones. Sin embargo, cuando los hombres y las mujeres se ponen de acuerdo, las familias pueden llegar a ofrecer solaz y protección contra la hostilidad de la sociedad envolvente. Los hijos mayores, especialmente los que son inmigrantes de primera generación, muchas veces hacen sacrificios personales para asegurar el éxito de sus hermanos menores.

Mario A. Magaña es un profesor de la Universidad del Estado de Oregón (OSU) y un educador del servicio de extensión regional de la misma Universidad (OSU Extension Service Regional Educator) dónde se dedica a crear e implementar programas y actividades educativas centradas en los jóvenes y en las familias latinas. En su trabajo Magaña usa sus experiencias personales como trabajador rural mexicano, estudiante universitario, profesional y ahora profesor universitario. Cuando era niño en México, Magaña apenas terminó la escuela primaria y no pudo continuar en la secundaria porque sus padres no podían pagársela. Cuando cumplió 20 años unos parientes de su pueblo natal le hablaron sobre las oportunidades de trabajo y también las actividades divertidas que había en los Estados Unidos. Esto lo convenció de que los Estados Unidos eran un buen lugar para trabajar, ganar dinero, ahorrar y también divertirse; de modo que decidió cruzar la frontera. Magaña pronto se dio cuenta que, en realidad, la vida aquí era muy difícil porque estaba separado de su familia de catorce hermanos y hermanas y tenía que trabajar más horas de las que trabajaba cuando vivía en México. “Mi vida como trabajador rural en el estado de Washington era peor que en México, en Washington trabajaba 14 horas por día”.

En 1986, Magaña migró al estado de Washington con su esposa y en 1990 alguien le dijo acerca del programa HEP de la universidad estatal (Washington State University) dónde se podía obtener el GED (certificado de educación secundaria para adultos). Aprobó los exámenes del GED en español. En ese momento, Magaña no había aprendido a hablar en inglés pero un consejero le informó sobre CAMP, el programa de asistencia educativa para migrantes (College Migrant Assistant Program-CAMP) de la universidad estatal de Oregón (Oregon State University-OSU) de Corvallis, dónde podría aprender inglés y recibir educación universitaria. Al comienzo Magaña dudó pero luego decidió inscribirse en OSU. Dejó a su familia en el estado de Washington durante seis meses y luego se la llevó a Corvallis, Oregón dónde Magaña terminó su maestría universitaria. Ahora trabaja para la universidad donde ayuda a las personas que se encuentran en una situación todavía peor a la suya cuando recién llegó a los Estados Unidos.

> *“No creemos en nosotros mismos, no sabemos qué hacer porque no conocemos el sistema, necesitamos consejo”, dijo Mario Magaña de OSU.*

Judy Salas-Rocha es una asistente social en la escuela secundaria de Springfield, Oregón que trabaja sobre todo con estudiantes latinos y sus familias. Salas-Rocha habló sobre la importancia de conocer a toda la familia para poder trabajar exitosamente con los estudiantes; enfatizó la importancia de descubrir quién tiene autoridad en la familia porque normalmente la madre es la que protege a los jóvenes en el hogar. Los miembros de familias mexicanas se vinculan unos a otros a través de fuertes lazos familiares, interdependencia, confianza mutua y lealtad. Se espera que los hermanos se ayuden unos a otros, eso puede causar la ausencia de un estudiante de la escuela para ayudar a un miembro de

la familia, lo cual a su vez puede afectar el desempeño escolar de ese estudiante. Las familias inmigrantes sienten el desafío del idioma desconocido, las leyes diferentes y una manera distinta de criar a sus hijos. Los jóvenes adquieren el inglés más rápido porque lo emplean para comunicarse con sus pares en la escuela, pero los padres no sienten la misma presión por comunicarse y se asimilan mucho más lentamente. Aunque los padres mexicanos trabajan muchas horas por día y no les pueden prestar suficiente atención a sus hijos, sin embargo los padres tienen expectativas muy importantes para el futuro de sus hijos— quienes muchas veces tienen que lidiar con el racismo en las escuelas, lo que los puede poner en problemas. A su vez esto los lleva a tener problemas en su hogar.

> *"Los valores de la familia mexicana son interdependencia ('cuento contigo'), confianza y lealtad", dijo Judith Salas-Rocha de WIA, escuela secundaria de Springfield, Oregón*

Ruth Vargas-Forman de Siempre Amigos/OHSU en Eugene es una profesional de la salud mental que dirige un programa bilingüe y bicultural de salud mental dedicado a sobrevivientes de trauma y tortura de habla hispana, originarios de doce países distintos, con diferentes etnicidades que han escapado de América Central y del Sur. Muchos sobrevivientes de tortura y violencia política que viven en los Estados Unidos han solicitado asilo político en este país, dijo Vargas-Forman. Dado que el proceso para obtener asilo político puede llevar años, si las familias permanecen separadas mientras están esperando el asilo y la residencia legal en los Estados Unidos, con frecuencia se dan cuenta que maduran separadas. Cuando vuelven a reunirse, dijo Vagas-Forman, lleva tiempo para que los miembros de la familia aprendan a vivir juntos y aceptarse mutuamente otra vez. Vargas-Forman produce intervenciones en esta clase de procesos.

La organización Siempre Amigos con el apoyo de OHSU ofrece un programa comprehensivo que incluye servicios psiquiátricos, psicológicos, legales y sociales para los sobrevivientes de tortura y violencia política; cada vez más se ofrece la misma clase de servicios a aquellos que han sufrido otras formas de abuso y violencia en sus países de origen. Vargas-Forman dijo que la mayoría de los clientes de su programa encuentran trabajo dentro de seis meses a un año de llegar a los Estados Unidos. La terapia que ofrece Siempre Amigos /OHSU se centra en las experiencias anteriores a la migración, las experiencias durante la migración y después de la migración. Estas experiencias con frecuencia incluyen stress financiero y emocional, falta de certeza sobre la situación legal, obstáculos lingüísticos y culturales, aislamiento, falta de familiaridad con los sistemas legal, educativo y médico, sumado a preocupación por los miembros de la familia que quedaron en el país de origen. Vargas-Forman enfatizó que habitualmente se representa a la familia latina como si tuviese una estructura patriarcal homogénea donde la mujer y los hijos tienen roles sumisos; sin embargo los hombres tienen más autoridad en el país de origen. En los Estados Unidos, por lo general la mujer tiene más influencia; las

mujeres son quienes guían a la familia. En su trabajo, Vargas-Forman encuentra que las familias que viven entre dos culturas tienen que enfrentarse al desafío de adaptarse a una sociedad distinta, volver a construir sus proyectos, reestructurar sus relaciones y renegociar los objetivos personales.

> *"El stress financiero y emocional los afecta a todos, incluso a los inmigrantes que tienen una situación legal porque algunos miembros de la familia pueden carecer de documentos migratorios", dijo Ruth Vargas-Forman de Siempre Amigos, OHSU.*

Diversidad Sexual en las Comunidades Inmigrantes

Ernesto Martínez (Ethnic Studies, University of Oregon, Eugene)
Maceo Persson (Basic Rights Oregon, Eugene)
Horacio Roque Ramírez (Chicano Studies, University of California, Santa Barbara)

Ernesto Javier Martínez habló de sus experiencias de violencia como un hombre joven gay en el contexto de un análisis sobre masculinidad y virilidad entre hombres mexicanos. El título de su presentación fue "*Con quién, dónde y por qué te dejas? Reflexiones sobre la pasividad".* Martínez reflexionó sobre permanecer pasivo y aparentemente inactivo cuando se enfrentaba con violencia sexista y homofóbica. Respecto a la memoria de sí mismo como alguien que no tenía un sentido de autoconfianza y coraje para defenderse cuando era víctima de violencia, Martínez habló de la necesidad de recordar su pasividad de otra manera, como una forma atenuada pero crucial de agencia, como una forma de deliberación interna en conflicto con el mundo exterior. Para elaborar sobre este nuevo enfoque de su pasividad, Martínez teorizó cuatro características (1) pasividad como un marcador importante de reconocimiento (reconocimiento de uno mismo para con uno mismo), (2) pasividad como un soporte para construir sentido; (3) pasividad como una actitud aprendida en una familia violenta y a la vez considerada; (4) pasividad como una forma de comunicación con otros sujetos queer. Lo que sigue es un pequeño extracto:

> Ser asaltado con frecuencia y ser víctima de actos de terror por compañeros de escuela—cortajeado, por ejemplo, con un sacapuntas navaja por los chicos más bravos de la escuela (que dejaban pedacitos en tu hombros mientras pasaban a tu lado y sonreían seductoramente diciéndote *"¡JOTO!"* en la cara)—era iniciar en mi una serie de revelaciones internas, no-verbales, porque el cuerpo cortado por la navaja en la escuela era también el cuerpo de un chico que en secreto se ponía los vestidos de su madre, también era el cuerpo de un chico que registraba la pena causada por la cachetada y el mantra de su padre *"camina como hombre"*, al igual que el cuerpo del chico a quién cuando lo llamaban *"¡JOTO!"* en público sentía un espacio vacío detrás y alrededor suyo.
>
> Este era un cuerpo que no tenía apoyo de la comunidad. Me llamaban *"¡JOTO!"* me cacheteaban, me cortajeaban el brazo y me quedaba como congelado reconociendo, como si fuese un acordeón, los mundos múltiples en que mi género disciplinado colapsaba y se abría alrededor mío. Por supuesto yo podría haberlo negado junto con todos sus reclamos (al menos mediante el silencio, al menor por el momento), pero nunca

> lo negué y el cuerpo castigado para mí. Porque el cuerpo y yo servíamos como testimonio y archivo—recordábamos. Más que recordar, nos quedábamos como congelados como un testamento del trabajo que toma tratar de entender todo eso. Dónde se lleva uno su propio cuerpo para aprender cómo el corte en el brazo (hecho por chicos que uno no conoce) se relaciona con la cachetada (de un padre que uno conoce íntimamente) y como ambos se relacionan con el chico que unos pocos minutos antes entre sus amigos te llamó *joto* pero que ahora, solo en un cuarto oscuro, te toca íntimamente. Si es cierto que no hay a dónde ir para entender esto, uno se repliega hacia adentro y ese replegarse (que es una excavación, una organización interna) se manifiesta hacia fuera como inacción.

Maceo Persson compartió su historia personal como hijo de una madre chilena que dejó su país después del golpe militar y se estableció en Suecia. Persson le dijo a su madre acerca de su naturaleza transexual cuando estaba en la escuela secundaria. En su presentación, Persson analizó las semejanzas entre cruzar fronteras nacionales y fronteras de género. En una nación, sugirió, todos tienen una identidad nacional legal por lo general determinada por el lugar de nacimiento. Siguiendo un patrón similar, casi todos tienen un sexo legal documentado. El sexo está determinado habitualmente por la forma de los genitales de la persona al nacer. Discutiendo cómo las personas cruzan fronteras de género, Persson dijo que para muchos la transición de un sexo a otro es un proceso largo y algunos no lo terminan nunca. Tanto como la experiencia de cruzar fronteras nacionales, comentó Persson—especialmente si uno no tiene documentos—la transición de género es peligrosa. Mucha gente muere cruzando las fronteras internacionales y a muchas personas las matan por cambiarse el género.

Persson comparó las dificultades de los inmigrantes latinos indocumentados que tienen que trabajar en la economía informal—con frecuencia en empleos que son peligrosos y no ofrecen protección—con las personas transexuales a quienes se les puede hacer difícil encontrar un empleo y tienen que trabajar en la economía informal en ambientes peligrosos y sin protección. Ambos, los migrantes latinos indocumentados y las personas transexuales con frecuencia están empleadas por menos tiempo del que en realidad podrían trabajar. Persson enfatizó la importancia de la legalidad para los inmigrantes y las personas transexuales. Persson habló del significado transicional para un inmigrante latino. Distintos países y estados reconocen de manera diferente la identidad de género y la transición de género. Por ejemplo, el estado de Oregón reconoce el sexo que aparece en el certificado de nacimiento como el sexo legal de la persona, sin embargo si la persona quiere obtener una identificación válida en el estado luego de cambiar de sexo tiene que presentar una carta de su terapeuta.

Horacio Roque Ramírez habló de sus experiencias como un inmigrante salvadoreño que vino a los Estados Unidos con su familia y relacionó su historia personal a la política de ser gay y miembro de la comunidad latina. Lo que sigue es un resumen de su presentación.

"Hoy soy uno de esos gays con suerte que se comunican con su familia acerca de sus deseos, su sexualidad y su vida. Mucho antes de los movimientos de liberación gay en mi país, mis padres en El Salvador en los años 1950 y 1960 ya entendían bien las homosexualidades, incluso de hombres y

mujeres que adoptaban conducta trasgresoras de género. Mucho antes de mi nacimiento en 1969, mi padre me dijo que le había aconsejado a un amigo muy cercano que fuese comprensivo con su hijo gay--el hijo afeminado—que experimentaba acoso por parte de sus compañeros en la facultad nacional de medicina, tanto que decidió irse de El Salvador a Guadalajara, México. Se jubiló en esa ciudad en los años 1980, un médico menos para mi país. Parece que ya había un entendimiento cotidiano y sociológico en los años 1950 acerca de cuáles eran las ciudades latinoamericanas más tolerantes.

"Sin embargo no todos podían irse y no todos tenían que hacerlo necesariamente. Mi padre hoy me cuenta sobre las distintas experiencias de los gay y las lesbianas en El Salvador y mi madre también me cuenta sobre el sofisticado Vicente—la Chentiya lo llamaban los vecinos—a quien mi madre le prestaba la máquina de coser en Santa Ana para que se hiciera sus propias creaciones. 'Era bien sofisticado' cuenta mi madre acerca de Vicente. La máquina de coser de mi madre ligó a mi familia—mucho antes de mi nacimiento—a las tareas creativas de este afeminado salvadoreño. Cuando Vicente estaba a punto de morir en los años 1990, le dijeron a mi madre que la recordaba con gran afecto porque lo había apoyado. Otro queer conectado a mi pasado a través de la línea de sangre de mi familia, uno que era muy colaborador, creo, no aislado en su condición de clase. En muchas sociedades la clase es simplemente inseparable de la cultura.

"Emigré a los Estados Unidos desde El Salvador en un avión, viajando "de mojado" con un pasaporte de clase media en 1981 como parte del éxodo masivo basado en condiciones militares, económicas, políticas y personales. En ese momento mis padres habían perdido todo aquello por lo que habían trabajado durante esa década y yo era el que más había ganado en ese movimiento transnacional--el hijo más joven y el único varón (!) de la familia tuvo el beneficio de aprender un idioma nuevo a la edad de 11 años, un nuevo entendimiento de una sociedad multi-racial y cultural y pudo aprovechar las oportunidades educativas que la Universidad de California les brinda a los inmigrantes como yo. Ahora les corrijo a los hablantes nativos del inglés la manera como escriben y me siento bien por eso.

"Dejé de reprimir mi homosexualidad en 1991, a la edad de 21 años, cuando el peso cultural combinado de la vida latina en los Estados Unidos me apretaba. Entonces como estudiante de la Universidad de California en Los Ángeles puede comenzar a expresarme públicamente acerca de mis deseos queer, politizarlos y escribir sobre ellos pero no con mi familia de sangre. Aún cuando mi familia no representaba tradiciones conservadoras, religiosas u homofóbicas--el estereotipo de latinoamérica—no podía hacerlo. No les podía decir a ellos. La cultura es pesada, en especial cuando nos olvidamos que la sentimos.

"Me llevó más de una década de aventuras eróticas queer solitarias y a veces públicas para estar seguro de que soy gay y un doctorado sobre la vida de queer latinos y la muerte de una institución mundialmente renombrada hasta que fui capaz de decirle a mi familia lo que ellos ya sabían desde hace tiempo--fue una declaración sin complicaciones acerca de la homosexualidad de su hijo. En el 2001 unos pocos meses antes de terminar el doctorado en la Universidad de California, Berkeley, finalmente

ya les había dicho, de modo que ya podían comenzar a contarme más abiertamente—y yo podía escuchar más honestamente—acerca de dónde vienen los latinos y los salvadoreños.

"Hasta que no hayamos mapeado todas las regiones globales alrededor del género y las experiencias eróticas y sexuales y las realidades y los legados culturales, no podremos hacer generalizaciones acerca de quién tiene un entendimiento más avanzado que los otros, quién tiene más tolerancia, aceptación y apreciación por las mujeres y los hombres queer. Las raíces y la memoria pública de mi familia inmigrante salvadoreña proporcionan una evidencia empírica y una base histórica suficiente como para desafiar cualquier afirmación de estadounidenses o de europeos del norte sobre lo que hacemos los inmigrantes. Ellos deberían estar contentos de que llegamos y de que continuamos llegando".

Servicios para Familias Inmigrantes

Miriam Bautista (advocate for Latino health issues, Eugene)
Sister Barbara Haase (PeaceHealth Community Outreach, Eugene/Springfield)
Patricia Cortez (Amigos Multicultural Services, Juventud FACETA, Eugene)
Laura E. Isiordia (Farmworker Housing Development Corporation, Woodburn)

Miriam Bautista inició el panel afirmando la necesidad de proporcionar servicios que sean culturalmente apropiados para los inmigrantes latinos, luego discutió la dificultad adicional que tienen las familias latinas con niños con discapacidades que son aún más invisibles entre aquellos que ya son poco visibles. Bautista mencionó la necesidad de conectar a las familias con los recursos y centrarse en las dificultades particulares que tienen muchas familias que deben navegar el sistema de educación especial. Bautista informó acerca de los resultados de una serie de grupos focales conducidos en distintos lugares del estado de Oregón y subrayó la importancia de escuchar, establecer relaciones duraderas con las familias y poner a distintas familias latinas en contacto unas con otras. Con frecuencia las familias inmigrantes que tienen hijos con discapacidades no saben que hay otras familias inmigrantes que también tienen hijos con discapacidades, que ellos no son los únicos. Al ponerlas en contacto, esas familias se pueden apoyar mutuamente y aprender unas de las otras.

Sor Barbara Haase de Peacehealth Community Outreach compartió con la audiencia cómo comenzó a trabajar con familias latinas. Explicó que a mediados de 1980 las Hermanas del hospital notaron la falta de cuidados prenatales y servicios de parto para los pobres, lo cual incluye a las madres latinas—un porcentaje alto de las madres recientes son latinas. Sor Haase dijo que el hospital del Sagrado Corazón quería proporcionar cuidados de la salud de primera clase para las familias latinas. United Way del Condado de Lane formó una coalición integrada por muchas personas del condado. Luego de tratar distintas estrategias para hacer funcionar una clínica independientemente, llevaron la clínica a PeaceHealth. La coalición se ocupó de formar una clínica de salud con fondos federales y

obtuvo un lugar en Springfield, Oregón, prestando servicios durante las últimas horas de la tarde. Sor Haase destacó la importancia de trabajar con los jóvenes latinos para interesarlos en el estudio de carreras relacionadas con el cuidado de la salud. PeaceHealth ha tenido éxito reclutando doctores de habla hispana. Sor Haase también enfatizó la importancia de contratar empleados latinos y escucharlos. Por ejemplo, un subsidio para enseñar a las latinas a hacerse auto-exámenes de senos se encontró en problemas debido a normas culturales acerca de como tocarse el propio cuerpo. De modo que sería importante contratar empleados de habla hispana que entiendan esas normas culturales y que estén presentes cuando se realizan esa clase de estudios.

Patricia Cortez de los Servicios Multiculturales Amigos y Juventud FACETA centró su presentación en los servicios para jóvenes latinos y lo que ella aprendió trabajando con los jóvenes. Cortez ve tres asuntos principales que emergen de su trabajo: (a) la importancia de ser consistente—por ejemplo, estar siempre ahí, no yendo y viniendo; (b) la duración de los servicios—los programas cortos de ocho semanas no son suficientes; y (c) la competencia cultural y lingüística—ofrecer servicios de una manera y en un lenguaje que sean culturalmente apropiados y que resulten confortables para los clientes. Cortez dijo que los investigadores afirman que la mejor manera de ofrecer servicios a una persona es hacerlo mediante alguien que sea del mismo país o que tenga la misma identidad étnica de la persona que requiere esos servicios. Algunos jóvenes latinos en realidad no necesitan servicios—necesitan cuidado y apoyo. “Los animamos para que reconozcan en sí mismos a los líderes que ya son”, dijo Cortez. Cortez duda que los adultos siempre sepan qué es lo mejor para los jóvenes—“la mayoría de los jóvenes sabe qué es lo que necesita; son lo suficientemente responsables como para ocuparse de lograrlo”. Cortez reconoció el valor del programa de Sor Hasse que alienta a los jóvenes latinos a involucrarse en la comunidad y a devolver parte de lo que recibieron—algo que los hace sentir bien consigo mismos y los ayuda a preservar su cultura.

> *Los servicios se deben proporcionar desde una posición de solidaridad, no de caridad. “Las personas no quieren que los vean como pobrecitos” (gente desesperada por conseguir ayuda, que da pena), dijo Patricia Cortez de Amigos y Juventud FACETA, Eugene, Oregón.*

Laura Isiordia comenzó compartiendo su historia personal: “Cuando llegué aquí primera vez desde México, trabajé en el campo pero ahora trabajo para la corporación de viviendas para trabajadores de campo (Farmworkers Housing Development Corporation-FHDC) de Woodburn, Oregón”. Isordia explicó que FHDC ofrece un tipo de cuenta financiera individual para colaborar con las personas que necesitan vivienda y ayuda a sus clientes para que continúen estudiando. Isordia también dijo que era muy importante para ella compartir con la audiencia que ha sobrevivido violencia doméstica y abuso sexual: “Tengo que decirlo claramente”. Isiordia destacó que hay muchos obstáculos

para las mujeres latinas inmigrantes que necesitan recibir servicios. Por ejemplo, hay problemas de comprensión cuando una mujer llama 911 y el operador solo habla inglés.

> *Algunas agencias que ofrecen servicios hablan de "empoderar" a la gente, pero nosotros ya estamos "empoderados" (empowered), solamente necesitamos un empujoncito", dijo Laura Isordia de FHDC, Woodburn, Oregón*

Aunque hay muchos servicios buenos disponibles, Isordia dijo que en Woodburn, que es su lugar de trabajo y residencia, el 79 por ciento de las personas no tiene seguro de salud. Dijo que los servicios para inmigrantes que más faltan son los de salud mental e información acerca de nutrición. Isordia compartió información sobre ferias de salud organizadas por FHDC en los últimos tres años, dónde los participantes reciben estudios médicos, control de los senos, vacunas e información sobre servicios de salud. Mediante su trabajo organizativo, FHDC ha podido llegar a ofrecer educación sobre temas de la salud, dar referencias para tratar problemas de salud y otros servicios. Isiordia concluyó pidiendo a los participantes de la conferencia que se imaginen a sí mismos en algún lugar fuera de los Estados Unidos dónde no se habla inglés, dónde alguien los ha golpeado, dónde sus hijos necesitan servicios médicos y cuando fueron a buscar ayuda se encontraron con obstáculos económicos y de lenguaje: "Cuando quiera que sea que ustedes se encuentren con alguien que no hable su idioma por favor denle una mano y recuerden que muchas veces esas son las personas que ponen los alimentos en su mesa."

PRESENTACION DESTACADA

Lecciones Sobre Temas de Género y Familias entre Inmigrantes de Oregón y de California

Guadalupe Quinn (CAUSA, Lane County)
Patricia Zavella (University of California, Santa Cruz)

Guadalupe Quinn de CAUSA comenzó diciendo: "Me he ocupado sobre asuntos de derechos de los inmigrantes durante los últimos 29 años y con frecuencia, después que termina una discusión, me pregunto: ¿y ahora por dónde seguimos?". Quinn dijo que no cree que podamos lograr servicios sociales para inmigrantes si no logramos un cambio social. "Los activistas y aquellos que apoyan a los inmigrantes tienen que pensar a nivel local, a nivel del estado y a nivel nacional. La retórica en contra de los inmigrantes a nivel nacional da miedo y es muy seria. Creo que la lucha por los derechos de los inmigrantes se ha puesto más difícil y más peligrosa en los últimos cinco años—de hecho, no recuerdo ningún otro momento que haya sido tan atemorizador para los inmigrantes en los Estados Unidos y yo vivo aquí desde 1951".

Quinn hizo otras preguntas: ¿Qué es lo que todavía tiene que ocurrir a nivel local? ¿Cómo podemos hacer para seguir avanzando? Destacó las propuestas de naturaleza anti-inmigratoria que se incluyeron entre las propuestas que se votaron en el estado de Oregón en noviembre del 2008 y la presencia en Eugene de agentes del servicio federal que hace cumplir las leyes migratorias (Immigration and Customs Enforcement-ICE). Otro tema significativo es la falta de conocimientos que tienen los inmigrantes latinos sobre sus derechos. Por ejemplo, una ley estatal que se aprobó recientemente hace que sea muy difícil obtener una licencia de conductor en Oregón sin un número de seguridad social. Quinn preguntó: "¿Cómo podemos apoyar a las comunidades que están siendo atacadas?". Su respuesta fue: "Para salir adelante necesitamos aprender a funcionar como buenos aliados y preguntar qué es lo que podríamos hacer juntos". Una de las cosas más importantes que los inmigrantes deben saber en este momento es que tienen apoyo, que no están solos. No importa lo que pase, nos mantenemos informados y nos ayudamos los unos a los otros. Individualmente necesitamos actuar cuando vemos y escuchamos cosas que pueden llegar a afectar negativamente a los inmigrantes. Quinn destacó que los derechos de los inmigrantes no son solamente acerca de lo que les ocurre a los inmigrantes sino que son un asunto más amplio de derechos humanos que nos concierne a todos. Concluyó diciendo: "A veces la inmigración se describe como un asunto económico o político pero en realidad se trata de la vida de las personas—lo que ocurre en su vida cotidiana. Necesitamos lograr la aprobación de leyes que apoyen a las familias inmigrantes a nivel nacional—los políticos no lo van a hacer. Todos tenemos que tomar una posición de solidaridad con las personas que vinieron a este país para tener la oportunidad de vivir una vida mejor. Es importante recordar que los inmigrantes no están sacando nada de este país, en cambio están contribuyendo a su desarrollo".

Patricia Zavella de la Universidad de California- Santa Cruz destacó en su presentación que "Hay muchos puntos en común entre los migrantes que se asentaron en California y trabajan en el campo y

aquellos que trabajan en agricultura y en forestación en Oregón". Zavella discutió las implicancias de esta comparación en forma de lecciones: "Cuando miramos de cerca a las familias inmigrantes vemos que el amor y la dedicación reúne a las personas mientras que las fuerzas sociales las separan y el proceso inmigratorio acentúa estas fuerzas". Las fuerzas sociales afectan de diferente manera a las familias inmigrantes. La primera lección de Zavella fue sobre la situación de las familias inmigrantes en relación a los Estados Unidos y a sus países de origen. Sugirió el valor de incorporar una perspectiva transnacional considerando que los que migran tienen muchas razones diferentes para mudarse y con frecuencia dejan miembros de la familia en el país de origen, lo cual constituye un aspecto muy importante de su identidad.

Zavella afirmó que la vulnerabilidad de las familias mexicanas se hizo evidente en el 2006 al comienzo de las redadas del servicio federal de inmigración (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement -ICE) bajo la operación "Return to Sender". A nivel nacional fueron detenidos 18.000 migrantes indocumentados. Si bien los agentes buscaban a personas que habían violado la ley de inmigración o que tenían órdenes de arresto por causas penales, también se llevaban en las redadas a otros inmigrantes que no estaban en las listas de ICE. Ha habido protestas y reuniones informativas en iglesias y en centros comunitarios de todo el país, especialmente después que el servicio federal hizo saber que era "muy posible" que ocurriesen otras redadas. El apoyo comunitario resultó demasiado tardío para las familias divididas que van a tener que afrontar la separación. Las familias también se pueden dividir si uno de los miembros de la pareja vive en el país sin autorización, aún cuando esté casado con un ciudadano norteamericano. Entonces otra lección consiste en la necesidad de encontrar maneras para que las familias inmigrantes no sean deportadas.

Zavella también se refirió a las tensiones que ocurren en la familia a causa de la mezcla de situaciones legales—hay familias en las que algunos miembros tiene un estatus indocumentado mientras otros son residentes legales permanentes o ciudadanos estadounidenses. En esta clase de familias, dijo Zavella, los ciudadanos y los residentes legales tienen privilegios que acarrean consecuencias materiales significativas en términos de acceso a servicios de salud, educación o vulnerabilidad a ser deportado. Además, en estas familias con frecuencia hay diferencias en el idioma que prefieren hablar los distintos miembros. Algunos hablan inglés correctamente mientras otros hablan español o una lengua indígena. La comunicación inter-generacional también puede realizarse en idiomas diferentes—puede ocurrir que los niños hablen en inglés y que los padres y otros parientes hablen un idioma diferente. Zavella le dijo a la audiencia que las investigaciones muestran que los hijos de los inmigrantes con frecuencia tienen que interpretar para sus padres en las escuelas y en las clínicas médicas. Esas experiencias de interpretación pueden llegar a ser muy traumáticas y pueden producir una disrupción inadecuada de la dinámica de poder dentro de las familias, además de poner una presión enorme sobre los niños a quienes se les pide que interpreten. Zavella sugirió que deberíamos prestar atención a los niños indocumentados y considerar de qué manera las leyes inmigratorias están afectando negativamente a las familias que viven en los Estados Unidos.

Zavella destacó otro tema de preocupación relacionado con la inmigración por etapas cuando los miembros de la familia vienen a los Estados Unidos en distintos momentos. Durante el proceso de reunificación familiar se exacerban las diferencias generacionales y de género. Los niños que nacieron en Latinoamérica y siguieron viviendo allí durante algún tiempo con otros parientes pero luego, durante una etapa siguiente de la niñez, fueron criados en los Estados Unidos pueden llegar a sentirse afectivamente alejados de sus familias inmigrantes. Los efectos negativos de esas separaciones y reunificaciones pueden llegar a afectar a otros en generaciones sucesivas. Zavella concluyó diciendo que en realidad se encuentra mucho apoyo para los inmigrantes, proporcionado por activistas, profesionales, parientes, amigos y vecinos. Necesitamos hacer escuchar nuestras voces y cambiar el debate para discutir las consecuencias que tienen las prácticas neoliberales y corporativas sobre los inmigrantes. Afirmó que esta conferencia, centrada en la manera como la inmigración latinoamericana intersecta con cuestiones de género y de familias es un paso muy importante en esa dirección.

APPENDIX 1

Lessons on Gender and Family Issues among Immigrant Populations in Oregon and California

by Patricia Zavella

I've been asked to speak about "Lessons on Gender and Family Issues among Immigrant Populations in Oregon and California"—a pretty tall order. As Lynn Stephen's book, *Transborder Lives: Indigenous Oaxacans in Mexico, California, and Oregon* illustrates, there are powerful commonalities between migrants who settle in California and work in the fields and those who work in agriculture and forestry here in Oregon. I have been conducting research on immigration from Mexico to Santa Cruz County in northern California, using participant observation, life histories with 60 people—women and men, migrants and Mexican Americas, straight and queer—and a survey with 152 people that we administered during Binational Health Week about access to health care. I want to share my reflections and observations based on this research and discuss their implications as broader "lessons."

Years ago Silvia Pedraza (1991) suggested the need for analyses of gender and family that would provide the necessary link between macro critiques of structural forces and microanalyses of individual experiences. She argued that we need to keep in mind the big picture—for example, how globalization displaces and impoverishes people in Latin America, and pushes them into the migrant stream *al norte*. Individual family members reflect upon these social forces, strategize about how to cope with them, and occasionally triumph in their ability to establish new opportunities and create meaningful lives. Too often scholars work either at the macro or the micro level, and do not communicate with one another. So we still need analyses of gender and family and this conference helps fill in the gaps. We have heard a wealth of information that helps us understand the complexities of families in the context of structural forces. I want to push our thinking a bit further and share five major lessons.

Families are sites where contradictory processes occur—those that bring people together and those that pull them apart. Families are formed out of love, cooperation, communication, and optimism. Families are also about commitment. Of course families can take different forms—nuclear, single parent, extended, combined—and include heterosexual or homosexual partners. When you add migration to the mix, the complications of forming and maintaining families increase. On the other hand, there are many social forces that lead to family dissolution—unemployment and poverty, for example, or domestic violence, generational tensions around values, dating or friends. So keeping families together and happy is an ongoing struggle for all of us.

Yet when we look at immigrant families more closely, we see that the love and commitment that bring people together and the social forces that pull them apart are exacerbated by immigration. My colleague Yvette Flores, who studies intimate partner violence in Mexico and the United States, finds

that immigration does not necessarily cause violence, but in those families where there is violence, immigration may increase it significantly. Immigration is like putting families on steroids—whatever dynamics are there are intensified.

However, there are some social forces that affect immigrant families differently, which leads to my first lesson about the situation of immigrant families in relation to the United States and their countries of origin. I suggest that when we think about immigration and all the different types of families, we need to incorporate a transnational perspective, mindful that those who immigrate have multiple reasons for moving and often leave family members and other important aspects of their identities behind.

Mexican scholar Gustavo Lopez Castro (1986) offers the concept of *la casa dividida* (the divided home), which is a social phenomenon that affects the households of immigrants, where some kin reside in the United States and some reside in Mexico. According to Lopez Castro, *la casa dividida* contains "sustenance on one side and the heart in the other," with frequent communication and social exchange among family members. In Lopez Castro' formulation, sustenance in *la casa dividida* is generated through the journeys of men to find opportunities in *el norte* while women children and the elderly who were left behind in Mexico maintain the affective and emotional ties.[i] The gendered strategy of sending male family members to another country to mediate unequal resources between countries—and thus creating transnational families and households—has a long history. Mexican families used this strategy when men went abroad, whether as permanent workers or temporary contract workers like the Bracero's Program. Lopez Castro's concept ignores the productive activities and substantial emotional and kinship work performed by women and kin left behind. It also ignores the emotional labor and toll on men who immigrate and must cope with families separated by immigration. Divided families include immigrant women who leave behind minor and adult children, or stage immigration where family members are brought over in phases with complex temporary family arrangements.[ii] Whatever the gender make up of immigrants and those left behind, divided families are a form of transnational social relations—whether there is indeed frequent communication and social exchange among members is a question that requires empirical information. I suggest that family disruptions generate in the immigrants feelings such as "*no soy de aqui ni de alla*—I'm not from here nor from there."

Once immigrants arrive in the United States, there are several dimensions of *casas divididas*, beginning with those who experience separations under duress. Throughout the nation, and I'm sure here in Oregon, the Department of Homeland Security has organized deportation campaigns. The vulnerability of Mexican families became visible in predawn raids by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) under the 2006 operation "Return to Sender." Nationally, 18,000 undocumented migrants were detained.[iii] Ostensibly looking for those with outstanding warrants or immigration violations, the raids also took away those who were not on the ICE's lists. According to the immigration lawyer in Santa Cruz County who provided legal advice to some of the families of those detained: "None of the people I saw today are criminals. Their parents brought them over when they were children illegally and they never were able to fix their papers. Many of them own their own businesses. They own their own homes." There were protests and informational meetings at churches and community

centers throughout the country, especially since federal officials disclosed that more sweeps are "very possible."

A number of families kept their children out of school for fear that they would be deported, and these families were trying to melt into the underground once again. Legal advisors pointed out that one does not have to let anyone inside unless they have a warrant. The Mexican Consulate helped those families that were separated to locate missing members. Susan Coutin (2000) argued that the undocumented have an "enforced orientation to the present," that is, the revocability of the promise of a future occasioned by the uncertainties arising from the possibilities of deportation, which prevent many from making long-term plans. In Santa Cruz County, a task force called Stop the Raids pushed for city resolutions to prevent local police from assisting the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, which passed in the two major cities. Much of the community support was too late for those divided families who will have to cope with separations for some time to come.[iv]

In addition, families can be split up if one partner is in the country illegally, even when married to a U.S. citizen. There has been an increase of 56 percent of immigration enforcement in recent years, and deportations of undocumented spouses married to citizens have also increased.[v] Children have lost a parent if that parent was deported, and there have been highly visible stories of deported mothers, such as the case of Elvira Arrellano. These scenarios are so widespread that the Mexican Congress passed a resolution calling on the U.S. Congress to suspend the deportation of any unauthorized parents of U.S. citizens, and immigrants filed suit alleging violations of the U.S. Constitution by domestic security agencies that conducted a "campaign of terror and intimidation."[vi] So my second lesson is that we must find ways to protect immigrant families from deportation. Again, a transnational perspective helps us see how these problems are viewed differently from the U.S. and Latin America.

The third lesson I want to discuss is about the *continuing* structural tensions in immigrant families related to mixed legal status. In these families, some members are undocumented while others are permanent residents or U.S. citizens. Jeffrey Passel (2005) estimated that in 2004 there were 6.3 million unauthorized immigrant families—that is about 13.9 million people. While there can be any number of variations, a likely scenario is a family with a father who became a permanent resident after the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA), with an undocumented mother and older siblings, and younger children born in the U.S. who are citizens. (Of course we all know of families in which it is the father or children who are undocumented but many more men than women were legalized under IRCA). In mixed status families, the legal privileges afforded to citizens or permanent residents (but not the undocumented immigrants) have significant material consequences in terms of access to health care and education or vulnerability to deportation.[vii] The undocumented do not have access to a wide variety of benefits ranging from drivers' licenses to scholarships. Even when the undocumented do have rights, such as to prenatal care, often they worry that presenting themselves in public may jeopardize their stay in the United States, or they are unfamiliar with such benefits.

Mixed status family members are well aware of disparities within their households which often infringe upon daily life. One woman told me, for example, that as a child she knew she could never get sick since that would expose her whole family to deportation. So every time she got a cough or sneezed she

became anxious, worrying about the possible consequences. In a national survey conducted by the Pew Hispanic Center, when asked, "regardless of your own immigration or citizenship status, how much do you worry that you, a family member, or a close friend could be deported," 53 percent of all Latinos responded "a lot or some." Of those, 67 percent of the foreign-born responded that they worried "a lot or some."[viii]

In families with parents and children of different legal statuses there are often important language differences as well—some speak English fluently while others are mainly Spanish speakers or speak an indigenous language. In these families, communication across generations may be in different languages—with children speaking English and parents or other relatives speaking a different language. Research shows that the children of migrants are often called upon to translate in schools or with health care practitioners, even though in California by law there are supposed to be translation services, so as to avoid errors of interpretation that could exacerbate health problems. Often these experiences can be quite troubling with inappropriate disruption of power dynamics within families and extraordinary pressures on children who are called upon to translate. In these mixed status or mixed language families, thousands of children are denied their childhood, made to worry about quotidian struggles around privilege—like who will get deported, who will translate if translation services are not provided, who has the right to a doctor's visit, who can plan for college, etc. There may well be mental health implications as anxiety and stress about legal status takes its toll. So my lesson number three is the following: in the acrimonious debates about immigration reform, we need to pay attention to the children of the undocumented who may be undocumented themselves or citizens, and consider how immigration policy is having negative effects on families in the United States.

My fourth lesson is related to stage immigration where family reunification—which may be quite a long, difficult process—is exacerbated by generational and gender differences and also can have long-term consequences. I am reminded of an interview with a woman I'll call Nancy. Her family was reunited after five long years of separation despite her family's best efforts and despite the fact that her mother was a U.S. citizen. Nancy felt a deep sense of abandonment and she recalled a lonely life in Mexico even though she was surrounded by kin. Because they were poor, she only completed elementary school. She recalls: "At school in Mexico, I used to watch how the other mothers would get honored for being mothers on Mother's Day and I had to sit there all by myself. When my parents left to the United States, one of my youngest brothers was one and a half years old." She continued: "When my mom came back to get us, my brother called her 'aunt.' He didn't want to be around her." Once Nancy immigrated to California, full assimilation was not possible and the family remained at the low end of the class spectrum, working as farm workers. Nancy recalled praying to the village saint, wondering what she had done to deserve such a bleak life. Nancy consciously wanted to spare her children the trauma that she suffered as a child from feeling abandoned and working in the fields. She said: "I think I feel this because of what happened with my parents. It's like you don't want your children to have to go through the same experiences that you went through." Her melancholia and longing for a unified, nuclear family and full-time, stay-at-home mother continued long after the actual circumstances of separation ended. We do not know how many families experience a reunification

process that is difficult, but we can estimate that there are thousands. A *Los Angeles Times* reporter once told me that the numbers are so high that the LA County school district was trying to figure out how to deal with children who had been left behind.

So my fourth lesson is about how those children who were born in Latin America but then raised here or even second-generation youth may feel estranged in migrant families. They too may feel "*no soy de aquí ni de allá*" as they reflect upon the consequences of immigration. In other words, the negative effects of separations and reunifications affect those of subsequent generations. We should be thinking about how communities can provide spaces for families to reconcile the huge emotional and social barriers established by family stage immigration.

I want to conclude by discussing what we have learned from the immigrant rights demonstrations of spring 2006. These protests were organized by clergy, hometown associations, immigrant rights and labor activists of diverse affiliations, and numerous individuals and Spanish language radio announcers really helped get people to support them. The demonstrations were remarkable moments of solidarity between U.S. citizens of diverse backgrounds and the undocumented, which include those from every continent, although Latinos were most prominent.[ix] They were also key moments in ongoing political activism.[x] The overwhelming majority of participants in the largest march held in Chicago were U.S. citizens who voted, and this appears to have been the case in other cities as well. In polls taken in March 2006 after the demonstrations, 65 percent of all those polled and 60 percent of voters favored temporary worker programs that would allow the undocumented to legalize their status.[xi] New applications for citizenship surged in summer of 2007, suggesting that the civic participation of Latinos may increase.[xii]

In my view, the demonstrations were all about families, since immigrants and their supporters protested a punitive immigration law that would have separated families and undermined the gains made by those trying to survive. So my final lesson is about the wellspring of support for immigrants, often unheard in the debates about immigration reform that includes activists, professionals as well as academics, and the relatives, friends, and neighbors of immigrants. We need to make our voices heard and shift the debate toward the *consequences* of neoliberal policies and corporate practices on immigrants; this conference, which illuminates how Latin American immigration interfaces with gender and families, is an important step in that direction.

NOTES

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[i] Lopez Castro's analysis is reminiscent of Parsons and Bales' instrumentalist-emotional system of family in the 1950s in which nuclear families with a gendered division of labor was the norm. For a critique, see Coontz (1992). Palerm's (1991) study of Mexican farmworkers finds that 13 percent had "binational families" with occupied homes on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border.

[ii] Parrenas 2001 and 2005; also see Basch, Glick Schiller, and Szanton Blanc 1994.

[iii] Activists filed a lawsuit against the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) on behalf of a six-year old Latino citizen who was held for 10 hours when his father was detained. In 2006, ICE agents deported 183,431 people.

[iv] Detentions and deportation proceedings can be quite intimidating. ICE has no obligation to tell detainees about their rights and is pressured to stipulate an order of removal which admits to their own removability, otherwise they may be detained for as long as a month. Parents, even nursing mothers, are separated from their children and not allowed to reunite with them until deported or moved to long-term detention facilities. Once slated for deportation, detainees are moved to jail, sometimes with criminal offenders, while they are checked for previous criminal records.

[v] There were 108,000 removals in 2000, which increased to 168,310 in 2005, an increase of 56 percent. When a U.S. spouse sponsors an authorized migrant, legal permanent residence can be obtained in as little as six months. However, an unauthorized spouse must return to the home country and wait for three-ten years to apply for residence, though waivers are sometimes granted under extraordinary circumstances.

[vi] The resolution was in response to the pleading by seven-year old Saul Arellano, a U.S. citizen, who requested help in preventing his undocumented mother from being deported.

[vii] Unauthorized migrants may receive Medicaid coverage for emergency medical conditions, including labor and delivery, and in the past the infant of an unauthorized mother, who is a citizen, was automatically eligible for health coverage for one year. As of 2006, federal policy prohibits children born in the United States to unauthorized migrants from automatic entitlement to health insurance through Medicaid. Health care practitioners worry that this policy will make it more difficult for infants to obtain health care needed in the first year of life.

[viii] The telephone survey of randomly selected respondents was conducted from October 3 through November 9, 2007 among a nationally representative sample of 2,003 Hispanic adults (Pew Hispanic Center 2007).

[ix] Spanish-language linguists view the term, Latino, as gender neutral; however I will occasionally use Latina/o to emphasize gender relations.

[x] In February 2006, activists organized la Marcha Migrante to protest H.R. 4437 and demand humane and comprehensive immigration reform that would prevent deaths while crossing the border; the second Marcha Migrante (February 2007) highlighted individuals' stories about the need for immigration reform; and Marcha Migrante III (February, 2008) provided strategies for achieving the goals of immigration reform through voter registration drives and protests at the Canadian border. See: http://www.indybay.org/newsitems/2008/02/14/18479308.php, retrieved on February 22, 2008. According to Centolia Maldonado Vasquez, there was also a sympathy march in Oaxaca where participants demanded: “No al criminalización a los migrantes (no to criminalization of migrants).” “Binational Struggles of Mexican Indigenous Migrant Communities: Oaxacan Perspectives,” April 25, University of California, Santa Cruz.

[xi] Voters tend to be older, white and middle class while those who do not vote are more likely to be young and immigrant (Taylor and Fry 2007).

[xii] More than 460,000 applications for citizenship were filed in July 2007 alone in anticipation of a major increase in filing fees, a nearly 650 percent increase over the number filed during the same month in 2006, according to the latest United States Citizenship and Immigration Services data. Overall, nearly 1.4 million naturalization applications were filed in fiscal 2007, almost twice as many as during the previous year. By the end of December

2007, there were nearly one million pending naturalization cases. See http://www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/FS21_NaturalizationBacklog_022608.pdf, retrieved on February 26, 2008.

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APPENDIX 2

Frente Indigena de Organizaciones Binacionales/Indigenous Front of Binational Organizations (FIOB) Presentation

By Odilia Romero

Thank you for inviting me to participate on this panel. Today, I will begin by sharing the myths I carried with me to the U.S. and the facts of migration, because my experience is very similar to other indigenous migrants here in the United States. I come from a Zapotec community named Zoogocho. My parents migrated to the United States in 1979 to obtain 500 pesos to expand their meat business that they left in the care of my maternal grandmother along with three of father's step-brothers. When I was young and asked after my parents, they told my grandmother and neighbor that they were fine and not to cry for them. Besides, they would soon come back. Meanwhile, they were going to send back plenty of money; they were going to send me toys; they were going to make lots of money, bring it back home soon to build a house and continue selling pork. Well, in reality, my parents never moved back nor did they send large amounts of money. The little that they were able to afford my step uncles spent on liquor. My parents never came back with a handsome sum of money. Nor do they have an adobe house, but they do now have a concrete house with a kitchen, a stove, and a refrigerator. Yet their dream house is empty. The 500 pesos have not yet been accumulated. No one ever told them the reality of migration. No one ever told them that they would not come back to Zoogocho, nor that their daughter was going to get raped if she was left behind. Since 1979, their return to Zoogocho was first limited by documents and money. After the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act, they had the availability to travel, but they lacked the funds.

When my parents finally sent for me, my grandmothers told me that I was to go to school and learn English like the gringos. They said, "You will grow tall and your skin will lighten up. You will have a lot of friends and you are going to make money. You will live in a nice house like the gringos." Suddenly I was already in Mexico City with my aunt where they cut my hair and added bangs to my hair style so that would not be so "rach," so Indian looking. When Maria the "smuggler" picked me up in Tijuana, she said that as soon as we get on the bus go to sleep. She added that if anyone asks you, tell them I am your mom. And, "your name is now Patty…" She said all of this in our Zapoteco because she was from the same town as me.

When I finally arrived to L.A., we lived in the Pico-Union area in a four-story building. Nothing that my grandmother had told me was true. Her comments were her own assumptions of what the United States is supposed to be.

There was no nice house. Five of us lived in a single apartment. My three sisters and I slept in bunk beds. My mom and dad slept on the floor and my aunt close to the bathroom. We ate, played,

studied, and slept in the same place. There were no gringos. There were a few "gueros" (Mexican Mestizos) who mocked the way we spoke and dressed. This was not the picture that my grandmothers had painted. They never told me that I was going to be mocked, nor that no one was going to understand me or that I would not understand them. They did not tell me that English was not the same as Zapoteco. The myth I was told about migration to the U.S. was completely the opposite of the reality.

My story is no different than many migrants, be they Zapoteco, Triqui, or Purepecha. The fact is that as indigenous migrants we are more prone to gangs, alcohol, drugs, and teen pregnancy due to cultural and linguistic barriers. We also lose our language and our indigenous way of life. There is a limited success at attending college, but the reality is that achieving our goals and dreams is very difficult.

Our neighborhoods are the most poverty stricken communities, where the schools look like prison and we find military recruiters on a daily basis. The buildings we live in and the schools we attend are crowded like sardines in a can.

Our parents wanted for us to go to school, but they don't know how to help us navigate the educational system. They also have a language barrier because of limited Spanish. They have eight-hour or more jobs that do not allow them to be attentive to our education. As migrants, we do not have a choice other than to work to pay for rent, basic utilities, and food.

Again, I say this based on my personal experience with people from my hometown, especially those of us who came in the 1980s at the age of ten or eleven. Some of us did not finish high school, nor did we attend college. Of course, there is always one or two who somehow manage to go a bit further. Most of us married at a young age, like me at the age of fifteen. However, I continued to learn to read and write both Spanish and English, but only after many years.

I did not succeed in education as my grandmother predicted, nor did my skin lighten, nor do we live in nice house like the "gueros" (U.S. citizens). I lived in rented slum apartments until I moved from a poverty stricken neighborhood to another. I now live in South Central Los Angeles where the schools continue to look like prisons, where libraries, parks, and schools are limited.

Just like my parents, many of my Zapotec brothers and sisters from Zoogocho are not going back. They have all built the house of concrete in Zoogocho that they originally left to pursue. However, they live here in Los Angeles, and the dream house is empty. Zoogocho is a ghost town. As of last year, there are only 88 people living in Zoogocho, mainly natives and seniors.

The rest of the town's population has migrated to Oaxaca City and Mexico City, but the largest migration is to the Pico-Union area of Los Angeles. They live in unsafe buildings. Those who have been

successful purchase homes in the poverty-stricken community of South Central Los Angeles where they rent out the rooms in order to make the enormous mortgage payments of 30 years.

Most of us work in the service sector—in restaurants and hotels, and as cleaners and gardeners, but there are also some who have had successes in having their own gardening businesses and restaurants, amongst other small businesses in the communities where they live, such as Koreatown, Pico-Union, and South Central Los Angeles.

I conclude by saying that I am in a privileged position to be on this panel and to share my experience as an indigenous migrant woman who came with myths about migration, and that as soon as we crossed the border we are welcomed with false open arms. There are many challenges to overcome. The facts about migration are not easy or beautiful. It is a breaking experience emotionally, physically, as well as legally. On a daily basis we are criminalized as migrants even as we lose values and legacies such as our indigenous way of living, our language and traditions.

APPENDIX 3

Coalitions of Movements and Movements of Coalition

By Jonathan Fox

Thanks very much for the opportunity to learn about the CAUSA-ROP alliance, and the chance to share some of the reflections about coalitions that it provoked. This talk is called "coalitions of movements and movements of coalitions." I will start with the punch line. Reading this study, I was really struck by some of the ways in which the CAUSA-ROP experience disrupts much of the conventional wisdom about coalitions—especially cross-sectoral or multi-issue coalitions. Specifically, this alliance experience questions several myths about coalition politics—such as, that:

* Coalitions have short time horizons, dominated by the imperatives of the electoral or legislative moment, and they tend to erode or disband once the motivating campaign is over.

or

* Coalitions require compromise and privilege a lowest-common-denominator approach—as in… "the enemy of my enemy is my friend."

or

* Coalitions prioritize instrumental over transformational goals, in the name of practicality and getting the job done.

Here is another example. Many of these issues came up in the spring of 2006, when the wave of immigrant-led civic mobilization put comprehensive immigration reform on the national agenda, in the form of the McCain-Kennedy bill, an approach that became so watered down and restrictive, with such a long and indirect pathway to citizenship, that many grassroots immigrant rights groups wondered whether if the bill passed, they would actually lose. Yet key inside-the-beltway groups stuck with the idea that even minimal change was better than none, whatever could be extracted from a still-Republican dominated Congress. Outside the beltway, many preferred to see continued organizing on the ground, as well as electoral change, to shift the balance of forces that boxed in such a bitter compromise proposal.

In light of the conventional wisdom about coalitions that I've just caricatured, the *Building Alliances* study raises some questions about terminology. In everyday language, the terms *coalition* and *alliance* are used interchangeably. They seem to be almost perfect synonyms. After all, both refer to goal-oriented partnerships between actors. Both involve efforts to change the balance of power. Their meanings seem intuitively obvious. But then again, maybe each term carries with it a slightly different set of implications or associations that we might consider.

If we go back to basics and check the definitions of coalition, they tend to go like this—from the *Oxford English Dictionary*: "A temporary alliance, especially of political parties forming a government." Here a coalition is one kind of alliance—implying there are also long-term alliances.

If we look at Wikipedia—and even professors do—"A coalition is an alliance involving cooperation for joint action, each in their own self-interest. This alliance may be temporary or a matter of convenience."

This view of coalition doesn't quite jibe with the verb to *coalesce*, which implies more of a coming together—but it raises one of the main issues that comes up when thinking about coalitions and alliances—some are based on *convenience*, while others are based on *conviction.* How do we tell which are which, and does one sometimes evolve into the other?

In contrast, if we look up alliance on Wikipedia, one definition is: "An alliance is an agreement between two or more parties, made in order to advance common goals and to secure common interests." These definitions suggest that maybe there are some subtle differences. Maybe it is parsing a bit much, but one could argue that while "coalition" tends to refer to the pursuit of "self-interest" as the main motivation, the definition of "alliance" refers to **"**common interests**."** So maybe the two terms are not perfect synonyms after all.

This study of *Building Alliances* is especially insightful on this particular issue, since it shows clearly some of the ways in which each group's "*self-interest*" came to be redefined through mutual education to create a broader sense of shared, *common interests*. Your hard work of reaching out, listening and taking risks redefined "them" to become "us," a process forged in the heat of fighting common enemies around ballot initiatives back in the 90s, yet broadening and deepening far beyond those initial defensive campaigns. After all, coalitions that are driven by the need to close ranks against shared threats are easier to explain, but they rarely last once the immediate threat has passed. But here we are, a decade later, and your partnership continues.

I'd like to turn to the issue of coalitions and movements, by way of two snapshots of different ways of thinking about them. The first draws from work around the NAFTA debate and looks at what we could call coalitions of movements. The second builds on immigrant rights work and the upsurge of migrant-led organizations—seen most visibly in the spring 2006 wave of mobilizations—and looks at what we could call a movement of coalitions.

Snapshot A: Coalitions of movements: Looking back at the NAFTA debate's cross-sectoral and cross-border collaboration.

During the decade before and after NAFTA, I was working with a wide range of public interest groups in the United States and Mexico that were looking for two kinds of partnerships to deal with the challenge of top-down North American integration. One set of partnerships reached across *sectors*,

involving labor, environmentalists, human rights groups, civil rights organizations and trade policy advocacy groups—and the other set of partnerships reached across *borders*, as groups in each sector tried to find counterparts in the other country.

One of the challenges in thinking about these relationships was how to avoid falling into the trap of wishful thinking, implicitly assuming that these cross-border dialogues, exchanges, and campaigns were *necessarily* dense, cohesive, long-term partnerships. Keep in mind that the 1990s was a time when many assumed we were on our way to an ever more powerful global civil society. But in fact, looking back, one way to tell the story of this period of cross-border organizing, from the late 80s through the late 90s, is that many groups came together in the heat of the NAFTA debate, and then once the debate was largely over (until the current U.S. presidential campaign revived it), most of these organizations let their cross-border relationships lapse, turning back to their respective local and national arenas. So the last 15 years of U.S.-Mexico people-to-people work is *not* a story of onward and upward, ever-broadening and deepening relationships—but rather it is mainly a story of largely instrumental, short-term campaigns focused on a very specific inside-the-beltway target—the very close, hard-fought 1993 congressional vote on NAFTA. Sure, there are exceptional partnerships that have survived, mainly among groups with shared worldviews like Catholics for Choice in both countries, or the smaller, most internationalist of the unions, or among the border city anti-toxics groups, which directly face shared threats—but we are a long way from the range of people-to-people partnering that was going on fifteen years ago, at the height of the NAFTA debate.

This trajectory of relationships suggests that it is useful to step back and try to recognize varying degrees of density, to disentangle relatively loose networks from more campaign-oriented coalitions, from dense and more cross-border social movement organizations that really shared both long-term strategies and transformational worldviews—like the FIOB, represented here by friends and colleagues Odilia Romero and Centolia Maldonado.

The FIOB, as you heard from Odilia last night, is the Indigenous Front of Binational Organizations. In Latin America, the term “front” refers to a coalition. Yet the FIOB is and is not a coalition. It is a mass membership organization that is especially unusual because it has organized membership in both countries, so its component parts are more like *branches* than distinct organizations. In some ways the term “Front” in the FIOB’s name is left over from its early history, when it was founded by several politically and ethnically distinct organizations in Los Angeles in 1991. Since then, those different groups either coalesced or went their own way. So in that sense the FIOB has become a single organization, and in practice is no longer a “front.” Yet it could be described as a coalition for different reasons. Each of its three state level branches—in California, Baja and Oaxaca—has its own local committees, its own leadership and its own elections. And in their tri-annual delegate assemblies, when they get together to chose their leaders, as they will next week, each state level branch is likely to caucus before coming back to the plenary to make the hardest of the decisions.

Thinking about how coalitions can emerge within movement organizations, another FIOB experience comes to mind—in a study where Centolia wrote about one of her own experiences in the book *Indigenous Mexican Migrants in the United States.* She organized a coalition in her home community in Oaxaca to challenge the entrenched power of authoritarian male elders. She brought together the women who had not migrated with male returning migrants who had been summoned back to do temporary community services. Both the women and the returning men were excluded from decision-making by a handful of local elites, and together they were able to democratize the community.

But back to this broad question of how to go beyond a "you know it when you see it" approach to defining coalitions. The NAFTA debate's upsurge of U.S.-Mexico and cross-sectoral public interest exchanges sometimes generated *networks* of ongoing relationships. Sometimes these networks generated the shared goals, mutual trust and understanding needed to form *coalitions* that could collaborate on specific campaigns. As Margaret Keck put it once, "coalitions are networks in action mode."

Networks, in contrast, do not necessarily coordinate their actions, or come to agreement on specific joint *actions* (as implied by the concept of coalition). Networks may be limited to information sharing—how many mailing lists are we all on? Networks may be limited to mutual support—but that is not the same as joint action.

As an aside, the idea of network raises some translation issues, both linguistic and conceptual. I was recently reminded that in Mexico, for awhile some grassroots movement strategists had issues with the Spanish term for network—*red*—in part because it also means net, which unlike "network," can have other purposes—like capturing things. They were very concerned about protecting their autonomy, so they didn't want to get "caught," even if the relationship was supposedly horizontal. In response—and this is twenty years ago, pre-internet—in an effort to describe the kind of flexible mutual support, joint action and horizontal relationships that respect the autonomy of each participant, Oaxaca-based Gustavo Esteva proposed the alternative term *hammock*. OK, hammocks are flexible, they adapt to each participant's particulars, you can use one when you want it, you can bring them with you or put them away, as necessary. Catchy yes, but the term turned out not to travel as well as network. So "hammock" didn't quite catch on, but it was a nice try.

But back to networks and coalitions, either term necessarily implies serious horizontal exchange among the rank and file of participating organizations. Coalitions often rely on a handful of leaders to manage relationships between broad-based social organizations that may have relatively little awareness of the nature and actions of their counterparts. The case we learned about today is remarkably different. In practice, these concepts of "network," "coalition" and "movement" are often used interchangeably—but the expectations we bring to these ideas can differ. Within the same collaborative relationship, some may see it as a loose network, while others consider it to be a shared movement.

So yes, networks, coalitions and movements are often used as synonyms, and it may sound merely academic to try to disentangle them, but the idea here is to avoid either overstating or understating the actual density and cohesion of the relationships. The reason is very practical—to encourage *realistic expectations on all sides*—which I would argue are crucial to the effectiveness and survival of partnerships for social change. OK, fast forward to:

Snapshot B: A movement of coalitions: Immigrant rights since the 2006 mobilization

Doing research on the spring 2006 wave of immigrant rights protests raised questions about the earlier effort to disentangle coalitions from movements, as I just laid out. What that unprecedented wave of mass civic action showed was that a movement can be much, much larger than the sum total of all the organizations and coalitions involved. More than 3.5 million people marched between March and May 1, by the most conservative media estimates, which means that the message reached many more people than all the already existing immigrant organizations and advocacy groups added up could possibly account for. This is a longer story, but the Spanish language media and the churches were both crucial for reaching out so far *beyond the already-organized*, convincing so many people that this was the time to take the risk inherent in coming out in the public sphere. In many cities—unlike many previous protests and campaigns, most often led by advocates—this time migrant leaders took the lead.

So if we return to the question of terminology, the initiatives involved in the NAFTA debate involved cross-sectoral and cross-border coalitions of movements—most of which remained primarily national or local in their focus. When we look back at the spring of '06, the immigrant rights protests reflect a movement of coalitions**.**

In each city, unions, churches, U.S. Latino organizations, the Spanish language media, worker centers, community organizations and immigrant hometown associations each came together in their own way—or not. Though all part of the same broad movement, none of the city-level coalitions can be taken for granted—whether between unions and churches, U.S. Latino and immigrant-led organizations, between Latino immigrants of different national origins and ethnicities, between community organiations & elected officials—none of these cross-sectoral partnerships are somehow automatic or easy—each of these working relationships involves their own set of challenges. For example, in Los Angeles, one of the flagship immigrant rights coalitions took a stand in favor of a statewide referendum to allow teens to make reproductive decisions without parental consent. Practically the next day they got a phone call from the Cardinal, who has plenty of clout with their funders.

No doubt many of you are familiar with what happened in the spring of 2006, but I will just mention one way in which different coalitions coexisted within the movement. In Chicago and L.A., the two cities with the largest turnouts—each had *more* than one march. But this did not faze the folks on the ground, since Chicago saw about a half million people and L.A. about three-quarter million marching peacefully for comprehensive immigrant reform, in both cases the largest street protests *ever* in those

cities' histories—as they were in San Diego, San Jose, Fresno, Dallas, Las Vegas, Denver, Phoenix, Ft. Myers FL, Walla Walla—the list is long. Yet the net political effect of this huge mobilization was ambiguous—it energized *both* sides, and the backlash is still under way. Inside the beltway, the political reality was that congresspeople from swing districts had little reason to care whether millions of people marched—especially if many were not eligible to vote and if those who did lived in districts already represented by pro-immigrant legislators.

Since then, as many of you know, the movement of coalitions that made the '06 marches possible then shifted gears—from mass civic action in the streets to a focus on citizenship for those immigrants who are permanent residents and are already eligible for naturalization.

As you recall, one of the main slogans was "Hoy marchamos, manana votamos"—"today we march, tomorrow we vote." Yet at the time, it wasn't so clear whether that slogan was a *prediction* or *wishful thinking*—maybe even an empty threat. After all, the undocumented who marched were not going to be voters until *after* the political battle for immigration reform was won. So we had a chicken and egg problem—how to turn this enormous wave of civic energy into raw political power that could actually bolster the clout of pro-immigration legislators in Washington. Meanwhile, there were two wild cards in the picture.

First, how much would Latino citizen voter turnout patterns change in 2006 and 2008? The short answer is that turnout increased substantially, though still with a long way to go. Second, there was a huge question mark surrounding the potential political power of legal permanent residents. After all, more than eight million LPRs are eligible for citizenship, *without having to wait for federal immigration reform*. In fact, one could argue that permanent residents were largely ignored until recently—both by most scholars of immigration and by an immigrant rights movement that has been focused mainly—and understandably—on the huge task of fighting for the rights of the undocumented. Yet the catch was that unless larger numbers of permanent residents became citizens and voted, it was unlikely that the legislative stalemate at the national level would be broken. The numbers show a dramatic response, unintentionally encouraged by the Bush administration's decision to sharply increase the fees a year ago.

In other words, within this broad movement of coalitions, millions of those who are eligible shifted from the right to be heard, to actually exercising their right to have rights. One of the main responses of the federal government was to double the fees for citizenship applications—keep in mind that in this country, the immigration bureaucracy is paid for by fees paid by the immigrants themselves, which is part of a broader federal policy decision to *not* encourage naturalization among those eligible.

The government response also included a substantially increased backlog, a possibly more difficult test—and an increased rejection rate. So even the *New York Times* came out with an editorial recently entitled: "Citizenship, Thwarted." I mention the citizenship issue in part because it involves

coalitions, and because it involves families. Both are central to the connections between citizens, permanent residents and the undocumented.

Here is another way of thinking about coalitions within movements—while it is easy to speak in shorthand about the immigrant rights movement, in practice we are referring to people with these three very different sets of rights—those who have legal standing and can vote, those who are eligible for these rights but still lack them, and those who are currently excluded from any pathway to gain standing. Because of these three different relationships to the state, this vertical power relationship creates very different groups of people—even though many of them are in the same families.

If the big question is, how can those who claim rights gain rights, then we see the chain of interdependence between citizens, permanent residents and the undocumented. Currently, Latino citizens who are under-represented need more permanent residents to become citizens for their *own* voices to be heard more forcefully. At the same time, given that the Bush administration is actively making it harder for eligible PRs to become citizens, more citizen action is needed to push back against the obstacles imposed on permanent residents. Meanwhile, the undocumented will only gain legal status and political representation if more citizens vote *and* if more residents become citizens. What makes this possible is that so many communities, and families—though divided by laws into different statuses—constitute *coalitions* that find common ground and are actively seeking mutual empowerment.

To sum up, the punch line is that we can find movements within coalitions *and* coalitions within movements. We are fortunate to be able to learn today from the CAUSA-ROP experience, which provides extraordinary lessons about how consciously shared leadership can transform what may have begun as a coalition based on mutual support in the face of shared threats, into a longer term alliance project that slowly and carefully redefines “us” and “them.”

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