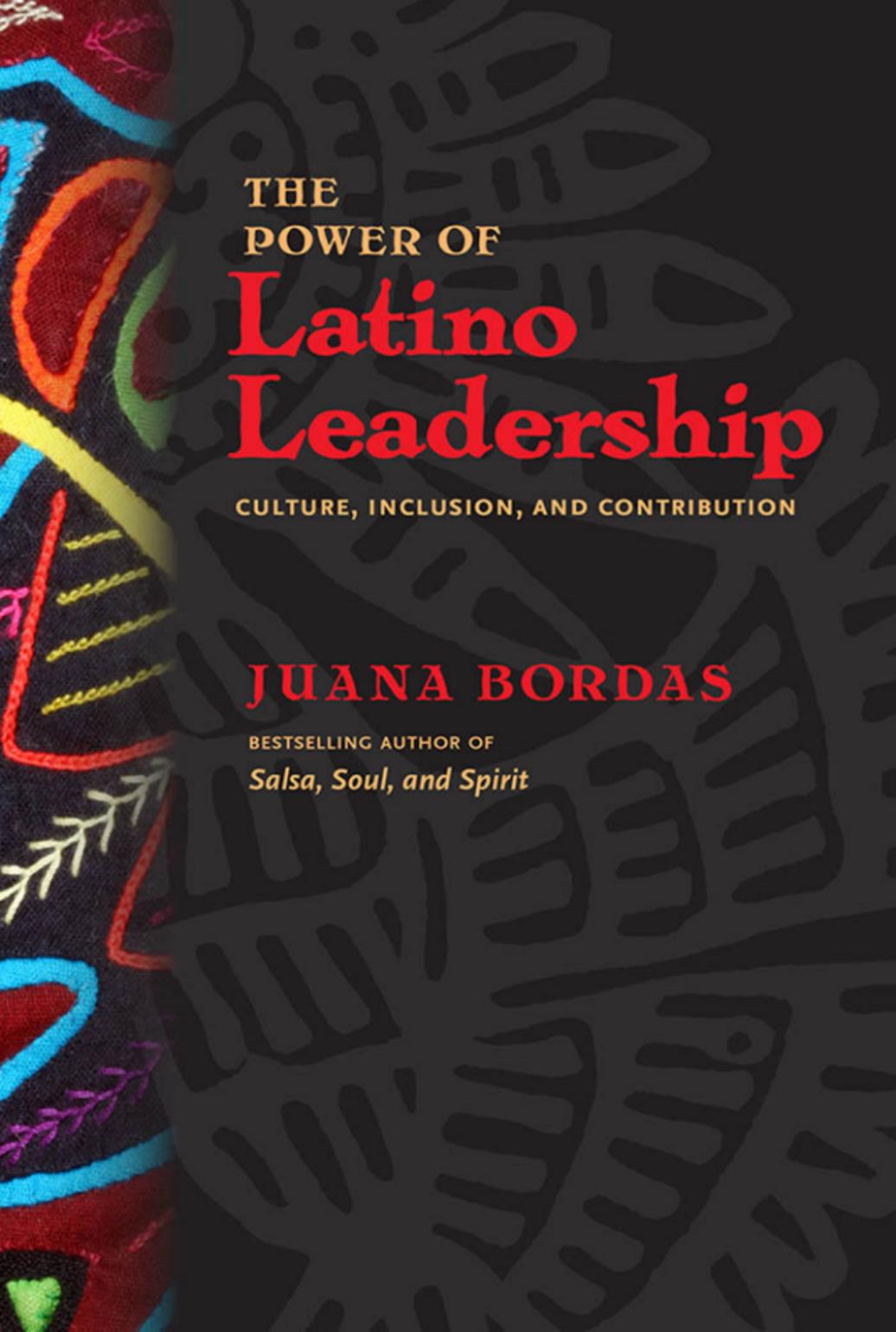


An Excerpt From

***The Power of Latino Leadership  
Culture, Inclusion, and Contribution***

by Juana Bordas

Published by Berrett-Koehler Publishers



THE  
POWER OF

# Latino Leadership

CULTURE, INCLUSION, AND CONTRIBUTION

JUANA BORDAS

BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF

*Salsa, Soul, and Spirit*

## More Praise for *The Power of Latino Leadership*

“Latinos have advanced because of the activist tradition of our leaders who organized people to address social injustice. As the Latino community comes into its power, our future leaders can learn from *The Power of Latino Leadership* as they create their own history. ‘Si Se Puede—Yes We Can’ is a call to action. This book captures this spirit.”

—**Dolores Huerta, President, Dolores Huerta Foundation; cofounder, United Farm Workers; and recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom**

“Latinos are part of the fabric of America. Our culture and values are perfectly consistent with the American Dream that has made and continues to make the United States great. *The Power of Latino Leadership* explores a leadership model to maximize the role of Latinos in America’s future growth and prosperity.”

—**Julián Castro, Mayor of San Antonio, Texas**

“*The Power of Latino Leadership* is a must-read for Latinos who want to integrate their history and culture into their future contributions, whether just starting on their leadership journey or already recognized leaders.”

—**Carlos F. Orta, President and CEO, Hispanic Association on Corporate Responsibility**

“At Western Union, I have the opportunity to see leadership in many ways. The most impactful are the hardworking, everyday heroes that make a difference in their communities. Bordas celebrates this type of leadership in this inspiring book. *The Power of Latino Leadership* brings to life the contributions US Latinos are making to invigorate our communities, culture, and economy.”

—**Hikmet Ersek, President and CEO, Western Union**

“It is now that Latino political and social strengths are being realized. This is attributed to leadership within the Latino community that has singularly focused on ensuring that our voices are heard and that we influence all sectors of American life. In *The Power of Latino Leadership*, Bordas offers a model for future leadership that draws on our strengths and leverages our enormous potential.”

—**Lisa Garcia Quiroz, Senior Vice President for Corporate Responsibility and Chief Diversity Officer, Time Warner, and Founding Publisher, *People en Español***

“This book is a must for anyone who wants to know how leaders develop their practices within a community context. Bordas has pulled together illuminating examples with great lessons for anyone working to create an equitable and truly diverse society.”

—**Rinku Sen, President, Applied Research Center; Publisher, Colorlines.com; and author of *The Accidental American***

“To the joy of some and the panic of others, America grows more diverse by the day. Leaders want to understand and motivate those they lead but may feel intimidated by the complex history and culture of Latinos in America. Native-born and immigrant...newly arrived and in the country since before there was a United States, Spanish-speaking, bilingual, English-dominant, with roots in countries running from Mexico all the way to the tip of South America...it’s a lot to master! Juana Bordas has written a handbook for making sense of it all. *The Power of Latino Leadership* helps the reader decode the coming America and the changing workforce.”

—**Ray Suarez, Senior Correspondent, *PBS News Hour*, and former host, *Talk of the Nation*, NPR**

“As one of the foremost experts on leadership in the Latino community, Juana Bordas has mentored generations of young Hispanics throughout her distinguished career. In her acclaimed new book, *The Power of Latino Leadership*, she presents a compelling case for how the strengths Hispanics bring to the table—deep roots, strong values, and our multifaceted culture—can infuse new life into and bring a fresh perspective to leadership development for all our country’s current and future leaders.”

—**Janet Murguía, President, National Council of La Raza**

“Juana Bordas’s exploration into the traits of contemporary Latino leaders arrives at an important moment for our country. Latinos are the nation’s second largest population and, as the 2012 election demonstrated, have become a decisive force in American politics. Bordas provides timely insight into Latino contributions to our nation’s future and why their influence will continue to increase.”

—**Arturo Vargas, Executive Director, National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials**

“Juana Bordas is a highly credentialed champion of diversity in leadership and organizational change. Her new book, *The Power of Latino Leadership*, is a welcome reminder of Juana’s lifelong passion to support and empower young Hispanic leaders. To develop a deeper appreciation for the countless contributions the Latino community is making to America’s multicultural leadership journey, read this book!”

—**Ken Blanchard, coauthor of *The One Minute Manager* and *Great Leaders Grow***

THE POWER OF

Latino

Leadership





Also by the author:

*Salsa, Soul, and Spirit: Leadership  
for a Multicultural Age*

**THE POWER OF**

# Latino Leadership

**CULTURE, INCLUSION, AND CONTRIBUTION**



**JUANA BORDAS**



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# The Power of Latino Leadership

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Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.  
235 Montgomery Street, Suite 650  
San Francisco, California 94104-2916  
Tel: (415) 288-0260, Fax: (415) 362-2512  
www.bkconnection.com

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First Edition

Paperback print edition ISBN 978-1-60994-887-0

PDF e-book ISBN 978-1-60994-888-7

IDPF e-book ISBN 978-1-60994-889-4

2013-1

Cover designer: Barbara Haines

Interior design, illustration, and composition: Seventeenth Street Studios

Proofreader: Laurie Dunne

Indexer: Janet Perlman

Cover art: istockphoto.com and Jorge Enciso: Design Motifs of Ancient Mexico (Dover).



*For the hundreds of thousands of Latino leaders who are uplifting their communities and building an inclusive society that cares for its people. For our young and emerging leaders who will fulfill the vision of Latino destino.*

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# Contents

**Preface** ix

**Introduction: Leading Latino Style** 1

**PART I: *La Historia*: Latino Fusion and Hybrid Vigor** 19

Chapter 1 Ancient Roots and Mestizo Ancestry 23

Chapter 2 The Latino Legacy in the United States 39

**PART II: Preparing to Lead: A Latino Perspective** 53

Chapter 3 *Personalismo*: The Character of the Leader 57

Chapter 4 *Conciencia*: Knowing Oneself and Cultivating Personal Awareness 67

Chapter 5 *Destino*: Personal and Collective Purpose 79

**PART III: The Cultural Foundations of Leadership** 97

Chapter 6 *La Cultura*: Culturally Based Leadership 99

Chapter 7 *De Colores*: Inclusiveness and Diversity 113

**PART IV: Putting Leadership into Action 131**

- Chapter 8 *Juntos: Collective Community Stewardship* 135
- Chapter 9 *¡Adelante! Global Vision and Immigration Spirit* 151
- Chapter 10 *Sí Se Puede: Social Activism and Coalition Leadership* 167
- Chapter 11 *Gozar la Vida: Leadership That Celebrates Life!* 183
- Chapter 12 *Fe y Esperanza: Sustained by Faith and Hope* 197

**PART V: Latino Destino 211**

- Chapter 13 *Building a Diverse and Humanistic Society* 215

**Notes 231**

**Glossary 247**

**Index 251**

**About the Author 260**

# Preface

I GREW UP IN THE early 1950s, when Latinos were in a cultural no-man's-land. These were the days when the sign No Mexicans, No Dogs hung in the windows of Texas restaurants and my mother was embarrassed by her broken English. In fact, the term *Hispanic* as an official designation occurred only from the 1980 census on. If my mother were alive today she would marvel at how far Hispanics have come. *Un milagro*—a miracle! Then she would make the sign of the cross in gratitude for divine providence.

Many people believe that the rising Latino influence is a recent phenomenon fueled by our exploding demographics. It's true that the Latino population in the United States grew by 43 percent in the last decade, accounting for more than half of the population gain.<sup>1</sup> Today one in six people in the United States is Hispanic. Our numbers are fifty million strong.<sup>2</sup> And tomorrow? By 2050 one in three Americans will be Hispanic.<sup>3</sup>

Most Latinos, however, understand that our advancement has taken centuries. Our roots go back to before the United States was a nation. Hispanics were born of conquest and colonization. We are a fusion people—mainly the offspring of the Spanish conquistadores and the

indigenous people of this hemisphere. But many Hispanics have African as well as European ancestors, such as those from Germany and France, who also settled the Americas. Hispanics are a mixture of cultures, languages, races, and nationalities.

And yet today, we are emerging with a strong identity. Latinos are embracing their culture and language, gaining economic and political clout, and expanding their global connections. These gains have been possible because of the vision, contribution, and relentless activism of our leaders. They have built a legacy of inclusive community leadership, based on cultural values and traditions, that has as its purpose to uplift people. And yet the story of how Latino leaders have guided their people has not been fully told.

I aspire to make that contribution. *The Power of Latino Leadership* is the first book squarely focused on describing the principles and practices of how Latinos lead. It will help Latinos to be effective and powerful by leading from their cultural core and will infuse mainstream leadership with an inclusive community spirit that fosters contribution and service.

The concept of *Latino power*, however, warrants a new definition. Historically, power has been hierarchical, the domain of the influential few, and associated with control and dominance. Most often power has been found in the hands of White males. Latino power, on the other hand, has evolved from the community—it is the power of *We*—the power that people have to change their lives for the better.

Latino power is accessible to many people. Diffused power means leadership is not concentrated in one voice or only a few. Instead, Latino power is leadership by the many—the thousands of Latino leaders working every day in communities across the country. Leaders encourage people to tap into their own power. Julián Castro, the young mayor of San Antonio, follows this tradition: “I think that what our young people should understand is that they can be leaders in their own right in their own community—in their neighborhood, church, college, job, or career, wherever it is. That is more empowering than looking up to one person as the Latino leader.”<sup>4</sup>

Moreover, *Latinos are diversity*—they are a cultural and ethnic group, not a race. Latinos are Brown, Black, White, Yellow, and all the beautiful

hues in between. Some Latinos have ancestors who were here before this country was the United States. Others have recently immigrated. Our extended families are composed of multiple generations. These differences drive an *inclusive* leadership form rooted in the culture's expansive diversity. Latino leadership is one of coalition building, bringing people together, working across sectors, and embracing a consciousness of partnership. Latino leaders leverage the power of inclusion.

Latinos maintain close ties to their twenty-two nations of origin and are culturally linked with people in North, Central, and South America. Over one-third of the continental United States was historically part of México, and these cultural roots remain strong. Latinos' power, therefore, is global in scope. Furthermore, until the last decade, over 40 percent of Latino growth was fueled by immigrants who bring hope, determination, and replenish the cultural core.<sup>5</sup> Unlike previous waves of immigrants, Latinos are acculturating, not assimilating. They are bringing their gifts into the mainstream and infusing the United States with a Latin flavor.

*Latino power is rooted in history and tradition*, an understanding that the past is the rich soil that nourishes tomorrow. Latinos owe a great debt to the leaders who have paved the way for our community to blossom. *The Power of Latino Leadership* acknowledges their legacy and contributions and delineates a path for continued Latino advancement.

*Latino power is ahora—now*. The road to the White House runs directly through the Latino community. In the 2012 presidential election, 71 percent of Latinos supported Barack Obama, ensuring his victory.<sup>6</sup> Latinos voted their values: a compassionate immigration policy, education for our children, care of the elderly, greater economic and social equity, and advancing a diverse society.

And *Latino power is our future*, the promise and potential of youth. For the first time, the US census reports that the majority of babies born in 2011 were a warm color of brown, chocolate, or latte. They are ethnic and racial minorities, and the majority is Latino. Today, one in five schoolchildren is Hispanic, as is one in four newborns.<sup>7</sup> Never before has an ethnic group made up so large a share of the youngest Americans. This

speaks to this urgency of this book, which will support young Latinos who wish to keep their cultural ties operating in a way that reflects their values and chart the future of our community.

Sustained by a culture of celebration, faith, and hope, Latino power is *destino* (destiny). It is the collective contribution Latinos will make. Based on their people-centered values, inclusiveness, and *bienvenido* (welcoming) spirit, Latino leaders are building a diverse and humanistic society.

And for those who are not Latino, a special welcome.

## ***Bienvenido*—The Power of Latino Inclusiveness**

**M**Y FAMILY IS A sundry variety of Latinos, like a delicious box of assorted chocolates. My seven brothers, sisters, and I emigrated from Nicaragua, and those older than I speak with a Spanish accent. Our children were born and raised in the United States and have a more blended Latino experience. Many of them married into different cultural groups, so now we have Latinos by marriage. My brother-in-law Karl, who is of German descent, and my niece Lorrie's Anglo husband can both attest that if you hang around Latinos long enough *the rhythm is going to get you*. Then there are the wonderful *amigos* who have been part of our extended family for so long that they are now Latinos by affinity, or *corazón* (heart).

This tradition of welcoming people into the tribe or culture has ancient roots. Native Americans acknowledge that a person can have an Indian heart or spirit. African tribes have ceremonies to initiate people who have become one of them. African Americans have honorary aunties and uncles and “other mothers.” Likewise, Latinos have elastic and expansive extended *familias*. People who have a special affinity are invited to become *comadres*, *compadres*, *madrinas*, *padrinos*, *tías*, or *tíos*. (More on this as we continue.)

If you are not a Latino by birth, this book is an invitation to do likewise: To become part of the familia. To experience our dynamic culture. To tap your feet to the salsa beat and become a Latino by corazón! To join with

us in creating a new America that is inclusive and heals the divisions that have separated us.

## Let's Talk about Latino Leadership

**I**NTEGRATING A MODEL ON Latino leadership is a work in progress. Just as Latinos are immensely diverse, so are their leadership forms. This book's purpose is to *start a conversation on how Latinos lead*. I humbly understand people may not always agree with the concepts. I acknowledge the wisdom and experience of the many leaders in the Latino community and welcome their perspectives and insights. So what are my credentials for writing this book?

I am Pan-Hispanic. Perhaps more simply said, my destino, which is a person's unique life path, opened doors for me to experience the many facets of my Latina familia. This allows me to put forth a comprehensive leadership model that brings together the nuances of the culture yet at the same time reflects our rich diversity.

Florida, where I was raised, is a cauldron of Latino culture. My extended family includes Mexicans, Colombians, and Cubans. My great-grandmothers were from Peru and British Honduras. I trained for the Peace Corps in beautiful Puerto Rico and served in Chile. Finally, I have lived in Colorado forty years among my cherished Mexican American *hermanos*, which has instilled a deep love for these politically oriented and mariachi-loving people.

My first book, *Salsa, Soul, and Spirit: Leadership for a Multicultural Age*, contained nine leadership principles from Latinos, Blacks, and American Indians in the United States. This multicultural model enriched American leadership by including the enormous contributions of communities of color. My goal was to inspire a core of multicultural leaders who recognize that diversity and inclusiveness are indispensable to crafting an equitable democracy and a global community.

I also wanted to honor the points of convergence from the common history and experiences shared by communities of color who despite racism and discrimination continue to focus on mutual advancement,

people-centered leadership, and responsible social action. Communities of color must identify the common ground and work together to bring their immense potential to fruition.

As a Latina, however, I want to further this work by highlighting the values and experiences that flow from my own culture and integrate these into a unique leadership model. *The Power of Latino Leadership* offers additional dimensions to the multicultural leadership principles in my first book. I hope by reading this book, other leaders will develop a deeper appreciation of the connecting points in our myriad cultures and further the conversation about multicultural leadership forms.

Many mainstream leadership books are written by scholars who have a theoretical framework and who may base their conclusions on research. When it is applicable, I reference and connect their work with current Latino leadership practices. A book about Latino leadership, however, if it is to accurately reflect its topic, requires a person who has practiced leadership in a proven and productive way.

My mainstream credentials include teaching at the Center for Creative Leadership, the most highly utilized corporate center in the world. I served as an adviser to the Kellogg National Leaders Program, as a vice chair of the Greenleaf Center on Servant Leadership board, and as a trustee of the International Leadership Association.

I have worked with the Hispanic community since I was twenty-one in the barrios of Santiago, Chile. I later served as the executive director of Mi Casa Resource Center, as the first president of the National Hispana Leadership Institute, and as the founder of the Circle of Latina Leadership in Colorado. In partnership with many organizations and talented Latinos, I have designed and implemented Latino leadership programs in Arizona, Colorado, Ohio, Illinois, the District of Columbia, New Mexico, Florida, and Texas. My article “Latino Leadership: Building a Humanistic and Diverse Society” was published by *The Journal of Leadership Studies* in 2001 and is one of the first conceptual frameworks on Latino leadership.

While these experiences are important in establishing my credibility, it is the many Latinos who I have worked with in countless endeavors that

prepared me to write this book. I am immeasurably grateful to have spent my life with thousands of Latinos who have advanced our community and nation. Today as an elder, I wish to integrate this knowledge into a viable theory of leadership based on our practical and collective experiences and woven from the beautiful culture that connects us. My *abuela* (grandmother) would simply have said, “Es tu destino.”

And speaking of destino, what luck that you are reading this book! Ah, perhaps it is not luck; perhaps it is your destino that your past and present have led you to this point of learning about the powerful leadership forms in the Latino community. Latinos can take pride in the immense contributions our leaders have made. Non-Latinos can become more culturally adaptive and start using the principles in this book to lead with a more inclusive spirit. We can all infuse our leadership journeys with a renewed sense of purpose and a vibrant Latino flavor!

## ***¡Ahora!* Latino Excellence**

**O**K, I ADMIT IT—I love *mi cultura* (my culture), and as you read on you will see that I am a Latina convert! I assimilated back in the late 1950s. But I knew I had lost a brilliant aspect of my cultural soul, and by serving in the Peace Corps in Chile, I reintegrated the beauty and power of my culture. So I am a Latina by birth and a convert by choice!

In this book, I present Latino culture, values, and leadership in the very best light. Hopefully, by recognizing our cultural zenith, leaders will emulate these values. Young Latinos will embrace the traditions of their *abuelos* and learn that keeping their culture will make them more powerful and successful. (This is not to deny the inconsistencies and less-than-desired aspects present in all cultures. For Latinos, discrimination and colonization are historical traumas. Remnants of these difficult circumstances endure in higher rates of poverty, lower educational levels, and diffuse identity.)

I would like the reader to consider that mainstream leadership books routinely emphasize the ideal. Books such as *Good to Great* or *In Search of Excellence* put forth the possibilities when visionary leaders take the

helm. Authors do not spend much time on topics such as “From Bad to Worse” or “In Search of Mediocrity,” although there are plenty of middle-of-the-road leaders and organizations. By stressing the ideal—the best of the best—and by having positive models to emulate, leaders and organizations expect to improve and move closer to that ideal.

And may reading about the Latino ideal nurture understanding and respect in other people who wish to share in our wonderful culture and powerful forms of leadership.

### ***¡Que Viva el Español!***

NOW ABOUT THE SPANISH words sprinkled throughout this *libro* (book) . . . Spanish is used when the meaning of a word is obvious or when it adds flavor and cultural zest. The first use of a Spanish word in a chapter is italicized and translated in the glossary. If the context cannot be understood without translation, the *palabras* (words) will be in parentheses or set off by a dash. The intent is to have readers get into the rhythm of *español* and to learn new ways of communicating. For Spanish speakers this makes the *libro* closer to their hearts. But being familiar with *español* is a good skill for leaders across the board. Many a politician or business leader has won over a Hispanic crowd by starting his speech in *español*.

Using a few Spanish words can facilitate positive work relations and promote culturally effective management with the fastest-growing segment of the workforce. Spanish fosters a business’s ability to tap into the lucrative and growing Latino market. Teachers can connect with a growing percentage of their students. Spanish words are also being integrated into the mainstream. As evidence of this, the March 3, 2012, *Time* magazine cover was titled “*Yo decido*: Why Latinos will pick the next president.” Taco Bell’s slogan is “Live *Más*.”

Because of immigration and migration the global community is right in our neighborhood. The Internet is connecting people from across the world like next-door neighbors. A great global passport is being able to communicate with people by saying a few words in their language. Spanish is a good start since it is spoken in twenty-two countries and is the language spoken by most people in the Western Hemisphere.<sup>8</sup>

So ¡*Ándale—vámonos!* Let’s get started!

## Acknowledgments—*Gracias*

**G**RATITUDE IS A CHERISHED Latino trait. Thank you to the many, many *gente* (people) who have helped and guided me in my leadership journey, especially my familia. A special *gracias* to my talented and dedicated *amigos* for reading and making suggestions on the manuscript: Richard Couto, the people’s professor; Cynthia Evans, the compassionate editor; Eric Fransen, the Millennial whiz kid; Lynette Murphy, the brilliant strategist; Sylvia Puente, the spiritual activist; Art Ruiz, the reflective thinker; and Karen Seriguchi, the talented copyeditor. Their insights, leadership experience, and contributions have enriched these words. To Steve Piersanti, the most inspiring editor in the world, and the Berrett-Koehler staff: thank you for your guidance in shaping this work. I am blessed with an extended familia like this and am forever grateful.

## Special Contributions: Profiles of Latino Leaders

**T**HE ROOTS OF LATINO leadership run deep. Our leaders have transformed the tribulations of being deemed a minority to the incredible influence Latinos are having today. Leaders are building on a tradition of people-centered, socially responsible, and community-based leadership. This was revitalized in the 1960s, when César Chávez and the United Farm Workers marched for fair pay and decent working conditions.

Today, leaders are stepping forth in unprecedented numbers and are guiding the Latino community with a deep sense of purpose. I have been privileged to include the voices of nine of these outstanding leaders in this book. You will be inspired by their stories and learn from their experiences and wisdom. (Unless otherwise noted, all the quotations from these special contributors in this book come from personal interviews conducted with them, which were transcribed verbatim and then coded for common themes and patterns.)

**Anna Escobedo Cabral** was treasurer of the United States from 2005 to 2008. Previously, she directed the Smithsonian Institution’s Center for Latino Initiatives and served as president of the Hispanic Association on Corporate Responsibility, a nonprofit coalition that advances Hispanic representation in corporate America. From 1993 to 1999, she was deputy staff director for the US Senate Judiciary Committee and executive staff director of the Senate Republican Task Force on Hispanic Affairs. Currently, Cabral holds a leadership position at the Inter-America Development Bank, which supports economic development throughout South America and the Caribbean.

**Julián Castro** became, at the age of twenty-six, the youngest elected city council member in San Antonio, Texas, history. He was elected mayor in 2009 and became the youngest mayor of a top 50 US city. He handily won reelection in 2011, with nearly 80 percent of the vote. Castro has focused on attracting well-paying jobs in twenty-first-century industries, positioning San Antonio to be a leader in the new energy economy, raising educational attainment, and revitalizing the inner city. In 2010, he was named to the World Economic Forum’s list of Young Global Leaders. *Time* magazine placed him on its “40 under 40” list of rising stars in American politics. He was tapped for the keynote address for the 2012 Democratic Convention.

**Janet Murguía** is president and CEO of the National Council of La Raza, the largest Hispanic advocacy organization in the United States. In this role she addresses issues affecting Hispanics, such as education, health care, immigration, and economic equity. Murguía is on the board of the American Heart Association, the Partnership for a Healthier America, and the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights. She is board chair of the Hispanic Association on Corporate Responsibility. Murguía was one of *Washingtonian* magazine’s “100 Most Powerful Women in Washington” and *People en Español*’s “100 Most Influential Hispanics.”

**Carlos Orta** is president of the Hispanic Association on Corporate Responsibility, whose mission is to advance the inclusion of Hispanics in corporate America at a level commensurate with their economic

contributions. He has worked in external affairs, corporate philanthropy, and government affairs at three Fortune 500 companies: Anheuser-Busch, Ford Motor Company, and Waste Management. Orta was selected by *Latino Leaders* magazine as one of the “101 Most Influential Leaders in the Latino Community.”

**Antonia Pantoja** described herself as an institution builder. Though she passed away in 2002, her legacy continues through ASPIRA (to aspire), a leadership program for Puerto Rican youth. Pantoja was the first Puerto Rican woman to receive the Presidential Medal of Freedom and the John W. Gardner Leadership Award. It was my honor to work with her on the curriculum for the National Hispana Leadership Institute and to review interviews for the film *Antonia Pantoja: Abriendo Caminos* (Opening Pathways, 2006). Her autobiography, *Memoir of a Visionary*, was published by Arte Publico Press in 2002.”

**Federico Peña** served as cochair of the historic 2008 and 2012 Barack Obama campaigns. He was elected mayor of Denver in 1983 and 1987, the first Latino mayor of a city with a minority Hispanic population. He revitalized Denver’s economic health by initiating such projects as Denver International Airport, a new convention center, and Coors Baseball Stadium. A civil rights lawyer, Peña served in the Colorado House of Representatives and was tapped by the Clinton administration as the US secretary of transportation and US secretary of energy. Peña is currently the managing director for Vestar Capital Partners.

**Hilda Solis** was the twenty-fifth US Secretary of Labor, and the first Latina to serve in a president’s cabinet. She served in the US House of Representatives from 2001 to 2009, representing the 31st and 32nd congressional districts of California. Early in her career she was elected to the Rio Hondo Community College Board in 1985 and the California State Assembly in 1992. In 1994 she was the first Hispanic woman elected to the California State Senate. She is known for her work with environmental justice, immigration, education, and workers’ rights. Solis was the first female recipient of the John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award, in 2000.

**Arturo Vargas** is executive director of the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials. Previously he was vice president for Community Education and Public Policy for the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund. He also served as senior education policy analyst at the National Council of La Raza. Vargas serves on the boards of Zero Divide, the Independent Sector, and the Alliance for a Better Community. He received *Hispanic* magazine's Hispanic Achievement Award for Community Service and for five years was named one of its 101 most influential Latinos. Twice he has been chosen one of "100 Hispanic Influentials" by *HispanicBusiness* magazine.

**Raul Yzaguirre** was cochair of Hillary Clinton's valiant bid for the presidency in 2008. He was president of the National Council of La Raza for more than thirty years, building it into the largest Hispanic advocacy organization in America. He is a founder of the Hispanic Association for Corporate Responsibility, the New American Alliance, and the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda. Yzaguirre was the first Hispanic to receive a Rockefeller Award for Outstanding Public Service from Princeton University and the John W. Gardner Leadership Award. He was appointed the ambassador to the Dominican Republic by President Barack Obama in 2010.

## Thoughts for Young Latino Leaders

The leaders interviewed for this book, like the majority of Latino leaders of the last century, have come from the public and nonprofit sectors. These leaders provided needed services to people, empowered them, and built community capacity. They have brought the Latino community to where we are today.

This book's purpose is to secure that legacy by describing the powerful ways these leaders have served their communities. I recognize that in this century young Latinos will expand the scope and power of Latino leadership. They will lead in every sector of society: as savvy entrepreneurs and successful corporate executives, college professors, writers, and school superintendents. Latinos will broadcast the news, direct movies, and produce TV shows. They will be America's doctors, US senators, and Supreme Court justices. And yes, we will elect the first Latino president.

It is my hope that as young Latinos move forward, they will honor the collective efforts it took for us to advance and never forget where they came from. By building on the legacy of the leaders who came before, young Latinos can continue advancing our community and integrate the contributions, cultural assets, and power of Latino leadership into the American mainstream.

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## INTRODUCTION

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# Leading Latino Style

**B**EYOND ITS CULTURAL INFLUENCE, Latino power will drive the American economic engine in this century. In 2017, Latinos will be the majority of the people entering the US workforce.<sup>1</sup> They are the fast-growing small-business sector. US Latino spending power represents a trillion-dollar market and the eighth-largest gross national product in the world.<sup>2</sup>

On a more practical level, by the middle of this century, when Latinos become the dominant workforce, organizations will need to cultivate Latino talent and benefit from their dynamic work ethic. Companies who are part of the bilingual market economy will grow and prosper. The future success of organizations and businesses, then, is closely linked to the growing Latino population and market. *The Power of Latino Leadership* offers an exciting, hands-on, and test-driven way to connect with and leverage Latino assets, energy, and values. It puts forth ten *culturally specific leadership principles* rooted in Latino history and tradition.

What is important to note is that, just as women left their imprint on the twentieth century and changed every institution in their wake,

so too will Latinos be the dominant force in these times. Women started the last century as 18 percent of the workforce. Today, they are a majority of workers and make up over a quarter of managers. They are the majority of students in colleges and universities, including law and medical schools. Women have made leadership more collaborative and relationship oriented.<sup>3</sup>

*The Power of Latino Leadership* describes how Latinos will have a similar transformative effect in this century. The book validates the leadership practices that have held Latinos together through the tribulations of being conquered, colonized, and deemed a minority. Their resiliency, contributions, and cultural vibrancy are a testament to the wisdom and perseverance of their leaders.

During the twenty-first century the Eurocentric influence of the past five hundred years will be transformed into a diverse multicultural form. Jorge Ramos, an award-winning Univision news anchor, notes that the Latinization of America is the fundamental influence that will change the monocultural nature of our society and replace ethnocentric tendencies with a multiethnic, multiracial, and multicultural nation.<sup>4</sup> Ramos is observing that the melting pot is being converted into a delicious paella and that Latinos are a vital ingredient adding color and flavor to our emerging rainbow nation.

## *Hispanic and Latino*

Almost four decades have passed since the US government mandated the use of the term *Hispanic*. *Latino* was not added as a choice until the 2000 census.<sup>5</sup> Hispanic and Latino are used interchangeably in this book. A 2012 study by the Pew Hispanic Center, *When Labels Don't Fit: Hispanics and Their View of Identity*, noted that 51 percent of Latinos have no preference between Hispanic and Latino. Thirty-three percent still prefer Hispanic, which is more traditional. (Most Hispanic organizations formed decades ago use this designation.) Fourteen percent now prefer Latino.<sup>6</sup> We will learn more about the multifaceted Latino identity as we explore this dynamic culture and its distinctive leadership forms. It is important to note that Hispanics may be of any race.

## Part I: *La Historia*: Latino Fusion and Hybrid Vigor

THE POWER OF LATINO leadership begins with the complex history that birthed the Latino phenomenon. Be prepared for an exciting roller coaster ride that starts in ancient Rome, traverses the conquest of the Americas, and continues to Manifest Destiny in the nineteenth century. Why, you might ask, do we have to unearth these historical skeletons? How will this shed light on the dynamic leadership that sustained and advanced Latinos?

Well, consider that the word *Latino* comes from its connection to *Latin America*, which has its antecedent in the Roman conquest of Spain in 200 BC. Part I, “*La Historia*: Latino Fusion and Hybrid Vigor,” starts with the footprints of the Spanish conquistadores—one of the precursors of today’s Latinos. To understand how far we’ve come and the powerful legacy of our leaders, young Latinos must know their history. Non-Latinos will learn about the long-standing presence and contributions of Latinos in this hemisphere.

Chapter 1, “Ancient Roots and Mestizo Ancestry,” considers the racial and cultural blending in Spain that was transported to the “new world.” These antecedents resulted in a type of encounter very different from that which occurred in North America. Mestizos—the mixed-blood offspring of the Spanish and the indigenous people of this hemisphere—became the dominant population and are the ancestors of today’s Latinos. We will explore a “creation” story of the Mestizo birth almost five centuries ago that prophesied the cultural fusion that would occur and gave hope for the future.

Chapter 2, “The US Latino Legacy,” describes the annexation of the US Southwest from México and the designation of Latinos as minorities. This was abetted by Manifest Destiny in the nineteenth century, proclaiming that Indians, Blacks, and the ancestors of today’s Latinos needed to learn the ways of White civilization. Manifest Destiny swept in a belief in cultural superiority and laid the groundwork for the segregated society that continued until the civil rights movement of the 1960s.

## Part II: Preparing to Lead: A Latino Perspective

**B**ECOMING A LEADER IN the Latino community requires pondering questions such as: Why do I desire to lead? What will be my unique contribution? How will I stay on the path I have chosen? Part II offers three culturally based principles that prepare a person to become a leader and to tap into his personal power.

Chapter 3, “*Personalismo*: The Character of the Leader,” explores the belief that every person has inherent value and must be treated with respect. While many cultures espouse this, it is *an actual expectation* of Latinos, not just a cultural nicety. Personalismo prescribes that leaders establish personal, genuine, and caring relationships.

Second, the leader must become the type of person other people will follow. The essence of personalismo is the leader’s character—her persona. The leader embodies traits that earn respect and trust.

To become this type of person requires a deep connection with the leader’s inner self—the rock on which character formation rests. This implies understanding one’s roots and family heritage, staying culturally connected, and understanding history. This is discussed in chapter 4, “*Conciencia*: Knowing Oneself and Cultivating Personal Awareness.” A leader must also deal with the aftermath of exclusion and discrimination, both on him personally and on Latinos as a whole.



*The essence of personalismo is the leader’s character—her persona. The leader embodies traits that earn respect and trust.*

The belief that every person has a distinct life path and purpose is explored in chapter 5, “*Destino*: Personal and Collective Purpose.” Knowing one’s destino requires the insight of conciencia. Individualistic cultures believe a person is in charge of and determines his own future. Many Latinos believe it is impossible to control chance, fate, or

unplanned events. (Having to deal with discrimination is a case in point.) Life presents certain opportunities, experiences, and challenges. Destino is a dance with the currents of life.

## Part III: The Cultural Foundations of Leadership

**L**ATINO LEADERSHIP FLOWS FROM the cultural spring. Part III considers the values that unify Latinos and their emerging collective identity.

Chapter 6, “*La Cultura: Culturally Based Leadership*,” looks at how the Latino culture is bound together by a common history, heritage, spiritual tradition, and language. *Most importantly, the culture is integrated by shared values such as respect, honesty, service, and generosity.* We will note seven key values from which culturally based leadership has emerged.

The Latino culture is a blended one, with roots in countries where the Spanish once ruled. The US Census Bureau’s code contains over thirty Hispanic or Latino subgroups.<sup>7</sup> When speaking of culture, I am referring to the *US Hispanic culture*. However, because 47 percent of Hispanics are immigrants, they have close cultural ties to Latin America.<sup>8</sup> US Latinos share a language, similar values, and traditions with both Latin America and Spain.

It is important to consider that US Latinos are undergoing a unique *acculturation* experience. A new Pan-Hispanic culture is emerging that integrates the many Latino subgroups and the newly immigrated. Cultural synthesis began with the Spanish and continues to be a distinguishing characteristic of US Latinos. Because 63 percent of Hispanics are of Mexican descent and historically one-third of the United States was México, the US Latino culture is influenced by and reflects these origins as well.<sup>9</sup>

Throughout this book we will learn about Latino values through *dichos* (adages or proverbs). In most cultures, adages convey the important and valuable. The Anglo adage “The early bird gets the worm” advises, “Be there first and be ready to act.” “Don’t make a mountain out of a molehill” means “Take things in stride and have perspective.” Similarly, *Mi casa es su casa* encourages generosity and sharing. *Mi casa es su casa* frames leadership as service and as caring for people. It counsels leaders, “Give of your time and ideas. Be generous. Value people and tend to their needs.”

*Dichos* are a way for Latinos to remember the wisdom of their *abuelos* and understand the foundations of leadership. For non-Latinos, learning *dichos* invites them to increase their cultural adaptability and become Latinos by corazón.

*Latinos are diversity.* Their multifaceted identity and inclusiveness is reflected in “*De Colores*” (Of Many Colors)—a traditional song about life’s incredible diversity. In chapter 7, “*De Colores: Latino Inclusiveness and Diversity*,” we will learn more about this cherished song and how it invites people to be part of the culture.

“*De Colores*” starts with the official US census designation of Hispanics as a category in 1980. However, while the census brought together the multiple categories of “Latino,” these subgroups continue to maintain their distinct identities and nationalities. Bringing diverse communities together and building a shared identity has been the ongoing work of Latino leaders. In today’s multicultural and global community, this indispensable ability is a special contribution of Latino leadership.

Inclusiveness is also evident in the intergenerational spirit. Latinos venerate age and experience. At the same time, young people are the promise of tomorrow. This intergenerational model is even more imperative today: the 2010 US census indicated that 23 percent of children under eighteen are Hispanic.<sup>10</sup>

## Part IV: Putting Leadership into Action

**L**ATINOS ARE A *WE*, collective culture, where the familia and *comunidad* (community) take precedence over the individual. Leadership, therefore, is not driven by individual success or credit

but by contributing to the group welfare. Chapter 8, “*Juntos: Collective Community Stewardship*,” discusses four action-oriented principles that support this process.

*Juntos* (we are together) signifies the collective and collaborative nature of leadership. Latino leadership is the power of many. Leaders are community stewards who promote *dispersed, shared, and reciprocal* power. The leader as equal—where the leader works side by side with others—facilitates people’s belief that they too can contribute. Traditionally, people power (not money, influence, or extensive resources) was the fuel for advancement.

Four practices foster community stewardship: (1) the power of a shared vision, (2) the power of history and cultural traditions, (3) *compartir*—the power of participation and shared responsibility, and (4) *paso a paso*—the power of a step-by-step approach where each success reinforces abilities and self-confidence. By linking the past, present, and future, leaders leverage the power of history and culture so that a sense of continuity and wholeness emerges.

In chapter 9, “*¡Adelante! Global Vision and Immigrant Spirit*,” we see how Latinos are connected through español to twenty-two countries and through a special kinship with Brazil, Portugal, Italy, and the Philippines.<sup>11</sup> Latinos are also an integrating force of the Western Hemisphere—bridging North, South, and Central America. Moreover, in the United States there are three dominant subgroups: Mexican, Puerto Rican, and Cuban, but in the last twenty years Latino diversity has expanded. Today there are substantial populations of Dominicans, Guatemalans, Nicaraguans, and Colombians.<sup>12</sup>



*Juntos* (we are together) signifies the collective and collaborative nature of leadership. Latino leadership is the power of many.

These international connections make Latinos a prototype for global leadership. In 2010 over 50 percent of all US immigrants were from México and South or Central America.<sup>13</sup> Immigration has contributed 40 percent of Latino demographic growth in the past decade.<sup>14</sup> Immigrants seek opportunity, work hard, and bring an entrepreneurial spirit evident in the Latino workforce participation and small-business sector growth—both of which are the highest in the nation.<sup>15</sup>

Immigration presents a conundrum for Latino leaders—any organization or business experiencing a 40 percent growth must scramble to find the resources to integrate this expansion. Furthermore, leaders must constantly help the newly arrived with education, English classes, and basic services. The fair and humane treatment of immigrants remains fundamental to the Latino agenda and was evident in the Latino vote in 2012 presidential election.

Chapter 10, “*Sí Se Puede*: Social Activism and Coalition Leadership,” frames leadership as social activism, a natural evolution for Latinos whose concern for the community good necessitated challenging social inequities. *Sí se puede!* (Yes, we can!) was a rallying cry for the farm workers who marched with César Chávez in the 1960s advocating fair pay, decent working conditions, and adequate housing. Chávez was following the Latino tradition of advocacy and social action that was reignited during the civil rights movement. Dealing with immediate issues while providing the skills and knowledge to address the institutional barriers that perpetuate injustice is core to Latino leadership.

The struggle for social and economic equality has endured because of *consistencia*—fierce determination, commitment, and reliability. While these are widespread leadership traits, for Latinos *consistencia* is a lifelong commitment—an understanding that social change takes generations. *Consistencia* is the reason leaders put in the long hours and hard work needed for community progress. *Consistencia* has been the nucleus of the growing Latino power today.

Social change requires a critical mass of organized people with a unified agenda. The most powerful Latino organizations are coalitions that bring the diverse Latino groups together around a whole array of issues.

Coalition leadership is sorely needed today in a divided America. Latinos offer viable models of reaching across differences, promoting partnerships, and working for the common welfare.



*“Sí Se Puede: Social Activism and Coalition Leadership,” frames leadership as social activism, a natural evolution for Latinos whose concern for the community good necessitated challenging social inequities.*

So how do leaders motivate people to do the hard work of community building *and* commit to the long-term struggle of creating a more equitable society? In chapter 11, “*Gozar la Vida: Leadership That Celebrates Life*,” we discover that leadership has to reflect a *social, family-oriented, and celebratory nature*. Check out most Latino events, and you will see music, dancing, good food, and socializing.

*Gozar la vida* means “to enjoy life.” For the 70 percent of Latinos who are working class, or who have dealt with discrimination, enjoying life replenishes their spirit and resolve. Since the culture prescribes that *people come first*, celebration strengthens relationships. What better way to enjoy people than to have a fiesta where the music is blaring and everyone contributes something?

And what do people do when they get together? Well, Latinos love animated conversation, storytelling, and expressing *cariño* (affection). When Latinos greet each other they give each other *abrazos* (embraces). They hug their leaders, too, because they have personal attachments to them.

Chapter 12, “*Fe y Esperanza: Sustained by Faith and Hope*,” explores the abiding faith that grounds the power of Latino leadership. How could Latinos have otherwise survived the five hundred years since the conquest of this hemisphere and kept advancing with their values and communities intact? The revered dicho *Está en las manos de Dios* (It’s in the hands of God) acknowledges protection and guidance on a daily basis. It anchors Latino optimism.

Faith, or *fe*, is a living current prescribing that people take care of one another. Leaders can tap into this sense of social responsibility and inspire the hope that by working together people can change their lives. César Chávez recognized that spirituality upheld the activist nature of leadership. “I don’t think I could base my will to struggle on cold economics or on some political doctrine,” he said. “I don’t think there would be enough to sustain me. For the basis must be faith.”<sup>16</sup>

## Part V: Latino *Destino*

**I**N 2030 LATINOS WILL be one-third of our nation’s people—certainly a critical mass that can influence the twenty-first century. What are the lasting contributions Latinos will make to our country? How will they achieve this? What actions are needed to coalesce the growing numbers, for them to work with other groups, and to actualize Latino power?

Chapter 13, “Building a Diverse and Humanistic Society,” discusses how the humanistic values of the Latino culture can help create a compassionate society—one that values people and community before material wealth or individual achievement. Second, we see how, as a fusion people from many races and nations, Latinos are cultural adaptives who have the ability to connect across differences. Due to their inclusive nature, Latino leaders can help fashion a society that embraces our great diversity.

I propose that Latinos put forth an expanded definition of inclusiveness—one that leaves an open door. This final chapter invites non-Latinos to become part of the *familia* (with the responsibilities this entails). Non-Latinos can experience and incorporate valued aspects and *become Latinos by affinity, or corazón*.

And there is more good news: becoming a Latino by *corazón* is a springboard to experiencing other cultures, to becoming a *cultural adaptive*—a person who adopts beneficial behaviors, values, and reference points from a variety of cultures.

There is a hurdle to overcome, however. Historically, when White immigrants came to the United States, they were urged to assimilate.

Due to racism, segregation, and exclusion, Latinos and other people of color kept their cultures and communities intact and *acculturated* to the mainstream. We will look at acculturation as key to becoming cultural adaptive. When mainstream leaders learn to acculturate, they can foster diversity in their organizations and in our society as well.

The final section in chapter 13 summarizes ten steps to actualize Latino power, foster a higher level of collaboration among Latino organizations, and build bridges with mainstream groups.



*Non-Latinos can experience and incorporate valued aspects and become Latinos by affinity, or corazón.*

## ***La Bendición***

**O**UR VENTURE INTO LATINO history, culture, and leadership ends with an ancient spiritual tradition. When people embarked on a journey or a new stage of life, during times of change or challenge, they would ask for a *bendición*, or blessing, from their *abuela* or another respected person. This protected them and prepared them for a good outcome. The ending of this book actually heralds a new beginning: Latinos are ready to integrate their assets and unique leadership forms into the US mainstream and to create a diverse and humanistic society. As we embark on the good work of creating this noble future, a special *bendición* protects and guides us. We will contemplate a vision about today's increasing multicultural people and the contribution Latinos will make to this evolution.

Latinos are becoming an influential cultural group in the United States and are already the predominant population in the Western Hemisphere. *The Power of Latino Leadership* will clarify and claim Latino advancement as the next positive wave of American evolution. It will propose a leadership model uniquely suited to the multicultural Latino-flavored century that is rising.

The management guru Tom Peters, addressing the National Association of American Architects, was *right on* when he said, “Hispanics are just wonderful. They are the next wave of people who will revitalize America . . . if you took away Texas, Florida, Arizona, and California, we’d lose 85 percent of our national vitality.”<sup>17</sup> You heard it from the man! Latino destino is to revitalize and reinvigorate the American spirit. We are living proof of how embracing culture, relishing in diversity, and making a contribution to others enlivens the human spirit and enriches life. This is the essence of the growing Latino power today!

*Welcome to the Latinization of the Americas.*

*We are all going to have a very good time!*

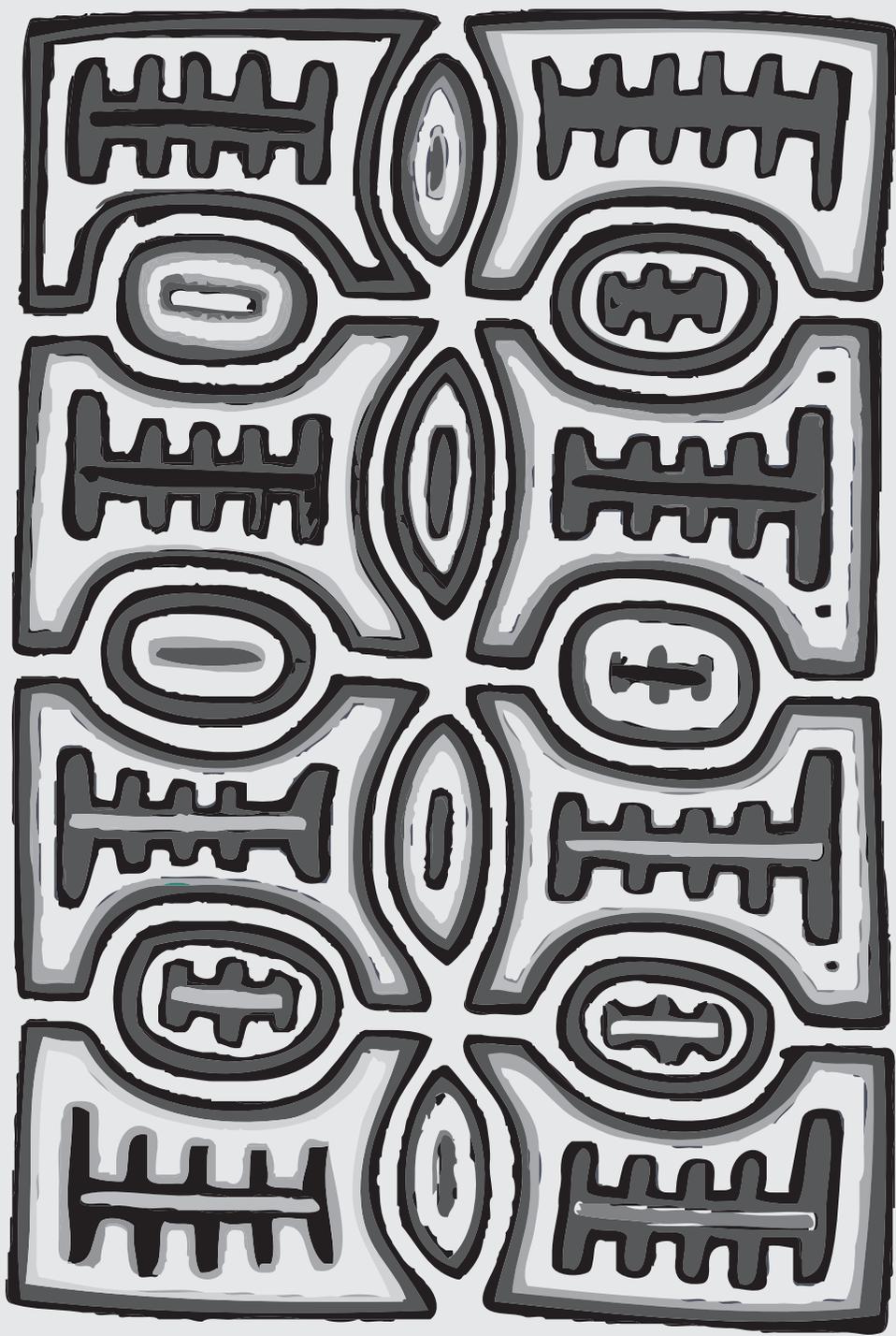
## 10 Latino Leadership Principles

<b>Principle</b>	<b>Overview</b>	<b>Leadership Application</b>
<b>1. Personalismo</b> <i>The Character of the Leader</i> (pages 57–66)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every person has inherent worth and essential value.</li> <li>• The leader’s character earns trust and respect.</li> <li>• Personalismo secures the relational aspects of leadership</li> <li>• Leaders nurture other leaders and build community capacity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treat each person with respect regardless of status or position.</li> <li>• Never forget where you come from.</li> <li>• Connect to people on a personal level first.</li> <li>• Always keep your word.</li> </ul>
<b>2. Conciencia</b> <i>Knowing Oneself and Personal Awareness</i> (pages 67–77)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A leader must engage in in-depth reflection and self-examination.</li> <li>• Integrity requires paying close attention to one’s intuition, impulses, and motives.</li> <li>• The psychology of oppression and “white privilege” are barriers to inclusion.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examine your personal intention: Why do you do what you do?</li> <li>• Listen to your intuition and “inner voice.”</li> <li>• Resolve discrimination or exclusion issues.</li> <li>• Develop a secure cultural identity and know your cultural assets.</li> </ul>
<b>3. Destino</b> <i>Personal and Collective</i> (pages 79–95)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every person has a distinct life path, purpose, and life pattern.</li> <li>• Destino is not fatalism.</li> <li>• Tapping into one’s destino brings clarity, alignment, and sense of direction.</li> <li>• Powerful leaders are in sync with their destino.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know your family history and traditions.</li> <li>• Explore your heart’s desire.</li> <li>• Identify special skills and talents.</li> <li>• Reflect on your legacy and personal vision.</li> <li>• Open the door when opportunity knocks.</li> </ul>
<b>4. La Cultura</b> <i>Culturally Based Leadership</i> (pages 99–111)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Latinos are a culture and an ethnic group, not a race.</li> <li>• Seven key values are fastening points for the culture.</li> <li>• A humanistic orientation (people come first) and diversity/inclusion are cultural mainstays.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have a “We” orientation.</li> <li>• Be simpatico—congenial, likable.</li> <li>• Exercise respect, honesty, and generosity.</li> <li>• Establish personal ties and be part of the familia.</li> </ul>

<b>Principle</b>	<b>Overview</b>	<b>Leadership Application</b>
<b>5. De Colores</b> <i>Inclusiveness and Diversity</i> (pages 113–128)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Latinos are connected to 26 countries.</i></li> <li>• <i>Hispanics were added to the US census in 1980.</i></li> <li>• <i>Hispanics are the only group that “self-identifies” on the census.</i></li> <li>• <i>Latinos embrace all ages with an intergenerational spirit.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Practice <i>bienvenido</i> (welcome).</i></li> <li>• <i>Realize that because culture is learned, people can become Latino by <i>corazón</i>, or affinity.</i></li> <li>• <i>Help forge a collective identity from diversity.</i></li> <li>• <i>Create allies, circular relationships and participation through intergenerational leadership.</i></li> </ul>
<b>6. Juntos</b> <i>Collective Community Stewardship</i> (pages 135–149)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Juntos means “union, being close, joining, being together.”</i></li> <li>• <i>Latinos are servant leaders and community stewards.</i></li> <li>• <i>Leadership is conferred by the community.</i></li> <li>• <i>Leaders build a community of leaders and community capacity.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Work as part of the group and side by side with people.</i></li> <li>• <i>Follow the rules.</i></li> <li>• <i>Anchor collaboration with four practices: sharing a vision; integrating history and cultural traditions; sharing responsibility; and working <i>paso a paso</i>.</i></li> </ul>
<b>7. ¡Adelante!</b> <i>Global Vision and Immigrant Spirit</i> (pages 151–166)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The US is a nation of immigrants who bring initiative, hard work, optimism, and faith.</i></li> <li>• <i>Latino growth has been fueled by immigration.</i></li> <li>• <i>Latinos are acculturating, not assimilating. A cultural revitalization is occurring.</i></li> <li>• <i>Latinos are a prototype for global leadership.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Integrate the newly arrived and provide multiple services.</i></li> <li>• <i>Be aware that 51% of Latinos identify with their nations of origin and that this diversity must be brought together.</i></li> <li>• <i>Address immigration as a civil rights and advocacy issue.</i></li> <li>• <i>Strengthen cultural self-awareness.</i></li> </ul>
<b>8. Sí Se Puede</b> <i>Social Activism and Coalition Leadership</i> (pages 167–181)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Economic discrepancies and social inequalities drive a social activist agenda.</i></li> <li>• <i>Sí se puede is community organizing, coalition building, and advocacy leadership.</i></li> <li>• <i>The Latino model is leadership by the many.</i></li> <li>• <i>The inclusive Latino agenda speaks to the welfare of all Americans.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Build people’s faith that they can take action.</i></li> <li>• <i>Practice <i>consistencia</i>—perseverance and commitment</i></li> <li>• <i>Build networks, be inclusive, and forge coalitions.</i></li> <li>• <i>Be a cultural broker and build partnerships with other groups.</i></li> </ul>

<b>Principle</b>	<b>Overview</b>	<b>Leadership Application</b>
<p><b>9. Gozar la Vida</b>  <i>Leadership That Celebrates Life!</i>            (pages 183–195)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Latinos have a celebratory, expressive, optimistic, and festive culture.</i></li> <li>• <i>Celebration strengthens bonds, a collective identity, and people’s resolve.</i></li> <li>• <i>Latinos are stirring the salsa and gusto into leadership.</i></li> <li>• <i>Communication is key for getting things done through people.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Allow time to socialize.</i></li> <li>• <i>Communicate with carisma (charisma), cariño, (affection), and corazón (heart).</i></li> <li>• <i>Speak the “people’s language” and be a translator for the mainstream culture.</i></li> <li>• <i>Always serve food.</i></li> <li>• <i>Keep a “cultural balance” and exercise strategic thinking and problem solving.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>10. Fe y Esperanza</b>  <i>Sustained by Faith and Hope</i>            (pages 197–208)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Optimism is esperanza, or hope—an essential Latino quality.</i></li> <li>• <i>Gracias (being grateful) allows people to be generous and give back.</i></li> <li>• <i>Latino spirituality centers on relationships and responsibility.</i></li> <li>• <i>Spirituality is a moral obligation to ensure others’ well-being and the collective good.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Be bold—have the faith and courage to make unpopular decisions.</i></li> <li>• <i>Practice humility, modesty, and courtesy, the foundation for the leader as equal.</i></li> <li>• <i>Be clear on your purpose and serve something greater. This lessens self-importance.</i></li> <li>• <i>Tap into optimism, gratitude, and faith to inspire and motivate people.</i></li> </ul>

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## PART I

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# *La Historia: Latino Fusion and Hybrid Vigor*

**L**ATINOS WHO LIVE IN THE Southwest are keenly aware that less than 170 years ago—a historical hiccup—one-third of the continental United States was México. Other people sense this when they traverse states like New Mexico, or states with Spanish names like Arizona (arid zone), Montana (the land of mountains), or Nevada (the place where it snows). Cruising the California freeways, passing city after city named in the Spanish tradition for patron saints (San Diego, Santa Ana, Santa Monica, Santa Barbara, San Jose, San Ramon, San Francisco, and San Rafael), any driver might find it almost impossible to ignore their Hispanic roots—not to mention the *bendición* that comes from having so many *santos* presiding over cities or watching over us as we drive.

It is perhaps in El Pueblo de Nuestra Señora la Reina de Los Angeles del Río de Porciúncula (the Village of Our Lady, the Queen of the Angels of the River Porziuncola), now known as Los Angeles, that the United States' Spanish-Mexican heritage is most apparent. Surfacing like fog lifting off the California coast, the past is etched into street names, historical monuments, the profuse mission architecture, the faces of the brown-skinned children,

the Spanish exchanged on street corners, and the whiff of warm tortillas. The only city with more residents of Mexican descent is Mexico City.<sup>1</sup>

The truth of the matter, however, is that most Americans don't acknowledge these historical roots. Even with these antecedents splattered like graffiti on freeway bridges, city walls, and street corners, the past is tucked away, forgotten.

In the spring of 2005, PBS made a documentary about the Hispanic settling of Colorado (the land of red earth), where I live. The Spanish-Mexican-Indian people, whose progeny are the modern-day Hispanics, herded the cattle and ran the ranchos, planted the *maíz*, *frijoles*, and squash, carved out the mines, laid the railroad tracks, and constituted the economic muscle of the state. The usual whitewashed history of Colorado makes scant reference to these contributions. When the PBS special aired, therefore, there was much celebration among Hispanics.<sup>2</sup> Finally our story was being told. Yet a good friend who is Latino told me that his Anglo wife truthfully said, "I don't know anyone besides you who would be interested in this."

Contemporary America is speeding into the future and not looking in the rearview mirror. Like the great cottonwood trees that grow in the arid Southwest, however, people and societies have roots that anchor them. Roots ground us, holding us firm when the winds of change howl, offer perspective about what is lasting and significant, and nourish growth and future discovery. The past safeguards the values, traditions, and wisdom of previous generations. History gives birth to the present and is the foundation for the future. If Latinos are integral to America's past, then surely they will be a powerful force influencing our future.

## ***Mucho Gusto*—An Introduction to Latino Origins**

**T**HE STORY OF HISPANIC origins begins centuries before the founding of the United States and even before the conquistadores made their tumultuous journey across the vast Atlantic. Spain, considered the mother country of Hispanics, etched a unique landscape

that blended many races, cultures, and nations. This *cultural permeability* is a distinctly Spanish characteristic and is still evident today in the expansive diversity of the Hispanic people.

Chapter 1 begins with Columbus landing in Hispaniola<sup>3</sup> and the conquistadores penetrating the Americas. The Spanish conquest could have washed away the footprints of the indigenous people. Instead, racial blending produced a resilient progeny—the genetic origins of today’s Latinos. The first chapter reveals a beautiful creation story and myth that prophesied the birth of the Latino people and the advent of the Mestizo, or multicultural race.

It is important to note that Latinos are not just a US phenomenon; like the resilient sparrow that flies across many lands to find a home, Latinos are scattered across this hemisphere and many other parts of the world. *The evolution of US Latinos is intertwined with the history of their indigenous and Spanish ancestors.*

In chapter 2, we first look at how Spanish influence profoundly affected our nation’s development. This is followed by a slice of US history, including Manifest Destiny, which proposed that Latinos and other people of color had to learn the superior ways of White civilization. While today this may seem like a historical anomaly, it raises the concept of *destino*—the belief that a country or a people may have a distinct contribution to make. The current state of US Latinos and the cultural explosion that heralds the *Latinization of America* is certainly predicting a new landscape for our country. Latino destino, explored in the final section, presents an intriguing concept about the distinctive contribution this dynamic and diverse people will make. Chapter 2 ends with an overview of the tremendous influence US Latinos have today and their potential for shaping a new American future.

This material has been excerpted from

***The Power of Latino Leadership  
Culture, Inclusion, and Contribution***

by Juana Bordas

Published by Berrett-Koehler Publishers

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