Special issue: Monolith or mosaic? Miami's twenty-first-century Latin@ dynamics

Sarah J. Mahler¹

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Introduction

Regardless of the pan-ethnic term employed—“Hispanics” or “Latinos” (also Latin@s, Latinas/os, Latinx),¹ narratives of “Latino singularity,” both within the academy and beyond, largely construct “Latin@” as an ahistorical and undifferentiated racio-ethnic minority category, akin to “White” and “Black.” In this process, the immense phenotypic, sociocultural, linguistic, political, immigration-related, and socioeconomic differences of the lives of those within this category are largely obscured, while their ostensible similarities are amplified. Zentella (1996) labels this process “the Chiquitification of U.S. Latin@s,” suggesting that this homogenization is affected by interests beyond the groups at stake. All contributions to the present volume converge in acknowledging that homogenizing peoples of diverse backgrounds under an expansive umbrella category reflects the processes of US racial formation (Omi and Winant 2015). Latin@ studies scholars are not the first to grapple with the dialectic between constructed unifying identity categories and varied lived experiences: in fact, debates about the construction of homogenizing identity categories—and the extent to which they should be strategically accepted in politics and social justice movements—have for decades motivated

¹ In this volume, authors use different pan-ethnic terms. As editor, I thought long and hard about which term(s) to employ in the volume's introduction—particularly with regard to the various forms of “Latinos” others have used in this journal and in other publications (Latinas/os, Latinxs and Latin@s). I decided on Latin@s because it both preserves the original, gendered term and complicates it. However, given that, in Miami, “Hispanic” and its Spanish variants are widely used, the volume's introduction uses both, intentionally and interchangeably.

✉ Sarah J. Mahler
mahlers@fiu.edu

¹ Florida International University, Miami, USA

scholars in critical humanities and interpretive social sciences. For example, Black women feminist activists and scholars critiqued second-wave (White) feminists' claims to the ostensibly universal category of "woman," noting that, in its underlying presumption of whiteness, this category did not account for or speak to their experiences in the US racial order (e.g., Collins 2000). Likewise, new scholarship questions the degree to which the terms "Black" or "African American" adequately express the varieties of experience of people with African ancestry in the US (e.g., Greer 2013; Smith 2014). Queer theorists (e.g., Butler 1999; Warner 1993) have similarly critiqued the popular construction of the identity category "gay and lesbian" as a problematic extension of heterosexual norms (e.g., marriage) to a diverse group of people folded into an identity that effaces, distorts, and/or manages their experiences, sexual practices, and relationships.

What motivates the authors of the present volume is the desire to contribute to questioning why similar critiques have occurred only occasionally for Latin@s. One likely reason is that there are political benefits to coalescing varied peoples under unified banners. If that is true, the category of "Hispanic/Latin@" is no different from comparable umbrella categories. In the past, various rights movements—Black, gay, feminist and others—have united varied peoples in order to achieve their goals. However, such strategies carry the risk of essentializing groups, such as when particular individuals claim to represent the group as a whole or when people's lived experiences and identification processes do not fit neatly within popular configurations of the social category.

This volume probes how people classified as "Latin@" or "Hispanic" understand themselves vis-à-vis similarly classified others. Specifically, do they see themselves as more similar to or more different from others in the same category? Do these perspectives affect their interrelationships? Responding to these questions, the authors converge in acknowledging that context must be taken into account. Specifically, the research reported in this volume is situated within metropolitan Miami, one of largest concentrations of Latin@s in the United States and perhaps the most pan-Hispanic area in the world. Varying slightly in defining the region, the authors collectively understand it to be the southeastern corner of Florida, including minimally, but not necessarily limited to, Miami-Dade County. In what follows, an argument is made for why metropolitan Miami is a meaningful context for interrogating intra-Latin@ dynamics. Over the last several decades, peoples of Hispanic heritage have become both a demographic and a politico-economic majority in much of the studied area, a rare if not unique phenomenon across the rest of the US. Within metropolitan Miami, daily transactions in Spanish are normative rather than exceptional—and indeed, occasionally signs reading "We Speak English Here" do occur.²

The demographic, economic, and political influence of Latin@s in metropolitan Miami creates a context wherein the Anglo hegemony, so typical in other US contexts, is quite diminished. However, this space is linguistically, aesthetically,

² The volume authors do not wish to assert or imply that Miami is a Spanish monolingual or even Spanish-dominant city. The literature on language use shows high rates of Spanish usage among immigrants, but declining rates among the Miami-born (see Carter and Lynch 2015 for an overview).

and socioculturally heterogeneous (see Table 1): 65% of Miami-Dade County residents are Latin@ (of whom two-thirds are foreign-born). The only other Hispanic-majority county in the US is in Bexar, Texas (Brown and Lopez 2013),³ where the population is overwhelmingly Mexican in origin. By contrast, Miami's Hispanic population is predominantly Caribbean.

In this context, it makes sense to ask not only how Latin@s as a group view themselves and relate *inter*-ethnically, but also *intra*-ethnically. The former comparison has been extensively researched for Miami (e.g., Portes and Stepick 1993; Stepick et al. 2003); the latter has received only some attention (e.g., Aranda et al. 2014) and is the focus of the present volume, which examines these dynamics from various disciplinary and methodological perspectives. While we are considering how diverse Latin@ groups perceive commonalities, our larger purpose is to resist portraying a homogeneous and ahistorical *latinidad*.

Therefore, this volume stretches beyond the typical boundaries of current scholarship on Latin@s in the US in three aspects. First, the authors examine and question US Latin@ identity formations and the processes that have produced them. Second, they present and analyze evidence of similarities and differences in the *daily lives* of US Latin@s. In doing so—in view of the emphasis on differences—they clarify that “difference” here means neither “deficit” nor “conflict,” but involves “distinctiveness” of experience and its manifestation in identification. Third, in providing research utilizing both qualitative and quantitative data, this interdisciplinary volume features the ideas and experiences of Miami's diverse Hispanic peoples in their own voices.

Made in the US: Constructing and reifying Hispanic/Latin@ pan-ethnicity

Although categories of identity, such as Latin@, Asian, or Native American, are frequently perceived as static, fixed, categorical, homogeneous, and ahistorical constructs, researchers and activists have endeavored to document (and, to a degree, convince the public) that these categories have their own histories of creation, conflict, transformation and, in some cases, disappearance (e.g., Brubaker and Cooper 2000; Espiritu 1992; Frankenberg 1993; Nagel 1994; Rodríguez 2000). For example, Latin@ scholars sought to assess whether or not most Latin@s should be admitted into the category of “White” or whether it would be more appropriate to push “Hispanic/Latino” from an official ethnic to a racial category (O'Brien 2008; Marrow 2009; Rodríguez 2000; Stokes-Brown 2012). What follows is a discussion of three different yet related frameworks for explaining the emergence and popularity of the category of Hispanic/Latin@: “activist,” “reactivist,” and “culturalist.”

³ According to the same report, several Southern California counties come very close.

Table 1 Miami Metropolitan area counties' population–percentage of Latin@s by nationality. *Source* 2014 US census data (American community survey 5-year estimates, Table B03001) accessed via factfinder.census.gov

	Broward county		Miami-Dade county		Palm Beach county		Total metropolitan area	
	Estimate	%	Estimate	%	Estimate	%	Estimate	%
Total population	1,784,889	100	2,549,075	100	1,339,221	100	5,673,185	100
Not Hispanic or Latin@	1,323,497	74%	895,685	35%	1,077,942	80%	3,297,124	58%
Hispanic or Latin@	461,392	26%	1,653,390	65%	261,279	20%	2,376,061	42%
Mexican	30,777	7%	55,303	3%	48,279	18%	134,359	6%
Puerto Rican	80,100	17%	100,942	6%	36,621	14%	217,663	9%
Cuban	91,641	20%	876,855	53%	49,359	19%	1,017,855	43%
Dominican (Dom. Rep.)	30,938	7%	60,382	4%	11,346	4%	102,666	4%
Central American	50,319	11%	232,589	14%	49,553	19%	332,461	14%
Costa Rican	3813	1%	7332	0%	1872	1%	13,017	1%
Guatemalan	6952	2%	21,675	1%	25,428	10%	54,055	2%
Honduran	14,289	3%	63,186	4%	8428	3%	85,903	4%
Nicaraguan	10,378	2%	110,640	7%	5228	2%	126,246	5%
Panamanian	3975	1%	9443	1%	926	0%	14,344	1%
Salvadoran	10,438	2%	19,902	1%	7615	3%	37,955	2%
Other Central American	474	0%	411	0%	56	0%	941	0%
South American	159,139	34%	288,180	17%	56,822	22%	504,141	21%
Argentinean	10,953	2%	27,906	2%	4226	2%	43,085	2%
Bolivian	1479	0%	4028	0%	895	0%	6402	0%
Chilean	4402	1%	10,981	1%	1356	1%	16,739	1%
Colombian	71,220	15%	124,362	8%	26,338	10%	221,920	9%
Ecuadorian	13,704	3%	21,147	1%	6111	2%	40,962	2%
Paraguayan	278	0%	774	0%	284	0%	1336	0%
Peruvian	26,832	6%	42,608	3%	9373	4%	78,813	3%
Uruguayan	3839	1%	6620	0%	2133	1%	12,592	1%
Venezuelan	25,223	5%	49,528	3%	5652	2%	80,403	3%
Other South American	1209	0%	226	0%	454	0%	1889	0%
Other Hispanic/Latin@	18,478	4%	39,139	2%	9299	4%	66,916	3%
Spaniard	5741	1%	11,078	1%	2948	1%	19,767	1%
Spanish	1219	0%	3877	0%	1807	1%	6903	0%
Spanish American	18	0%	104	0%	31	0%	153	0%
All other Hispanic/Latin@	11,500	2%	24,080	1%	4513	2%	40,093	2%

Percentages have been rounded

Activist

The first approach I term “activist” because it is the version which explains how various peoples organized toward official recognition as Hispanics/Latin@s. Attempts to unify Hispanics predate the civil rights era (DeSipio 1996; Sánchez 1993), but a critical turning point was reached with the civil rights movement and its legislative outcomes. Civil rights laws of the 1960s sought to reduce racial and ethnic discrimination against and open up opportunities for heretofore marginalized groups. Some argue that these laws were enacted to thwart racial minority movements, such as the Black Panthers and (Puerto Rican) Young Lords (Beltrán 2010; De Genova and Ramos-Zayas 2003; Oboler 1995). To monitor the effectiveness of those laws, the government needed measurements. Was discrimination declining, for example, in bank lending, access to housing, voter registration, and employment opportunities? Answering these questions required a specific type of data collection—one organized to identify people by their racial/ethnic identity. However, in the 1960s, few measures existed, so more had to be invented and implemented across myriad institutions (Choldin 1986).

Introducing quantitative measures became critical not only for testing the efficacy of civil rights legislation, but also for ensuring that groups received their due proportion of federally distributed government resources. Group size translated into a greater potential political power for accessing resources. This motivated coalition-building, so that Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans and smaller national origin groups met to see if and how they could overcome their differences in order to form larger alliances (Mora 2014). Activists, often abetted by foundations, religious institutions, the media, and marketing agencies, faced the daunting dual task of (1) convincing others (e.g., the government, corporations) that the category “Latin@” was valid and meaningful and (2) persuading their disparate constituencies that, despite their differences, they indeed shared many commonalities (Dávila 2001; DeSipio 1996; Francis-Fallon 2012). Mora (2014) documents how, early on in the coalition-forming process, it was not uncommon for activists of different national origins and regions to bicker, and even occasionally engage in fistfights, over their constituencies’ disparate interests. Furthermore, Dávila (2001) specifies how a small group of (predominantly Cuban) Hispanic marketers invented the “Hispanic consumer” and ascribed to them certain unifying characteristics, such as being religious, traditional, family-oriented, and loyal to particular brands. These marketers were aware of the diversity of the so-called Hispanic market; they knew that selling to Mexican-Americans in the Southwest was different from selling to Puerto Ricans in Chicago or Cubans in Miami. However, corporate clients desired unified sales strategies. Consequently, marketing professionals carefully sold the complex insider knowledge to local clients, while simultaneously promoting the simplified Hispanic consumer nationally. The Spanish-language media also played a major role in this crafting of a unified *hispanidad*, requiring newscasters to adopt standardized Spanish accents and to play down any preference for particular nationalities (Dávila 2001; Mora 2014). Overall, the “activist” argument underscores Hispanics’ own agency in producing and sustaining their unity: the slogan “united we stand, divided we fall” nicely fits this perspective.

Reactivist

The second approach can be termed “reactivist,” created by combining “reaction” and “activist.” This approach emphasizes how Latin@s have been portrayed as a threat to the US as a nation, as people who deliberately refuse to assimilate and, thus, as a group whose arrival must be curtailed if not halted. In *The Latino Threat*, Leo Chavez (2008) articulates this perspective:

Latinos, whether immigrant or U.S.-born, are [viewed as] a homogeneous population that somehow stands apart from normal processes of social and cultural change. They are uneducated, monolingual Spanish speakers, segregated in ethnic enclaves. Because they lead separate social and linguistic lives, one must assume that they marry only their own kind. They are locked into Catholic doctrine, leading to high fertility rates. In this narrative, Latinos, especially Mexican immigrants and their children, are seldom represented as agents of positive change, because their unwillingness to integrate denies them the opportunity to influence the larger society in any appreciable way, except in the negative—as a threat to existing institutions (e.g., education, social services, medical). (Ibid., p. 41)

Although Chavez rebuts each mischaracterization above, the tropes animating it persevere in the broader populace, fueled even further by the news that Latin@s have become the largest US minority and that, around 2040, their growth would drive the decline of the “White” majority to minority status. Before these demographic facts became widely known, pundits and politicians stoked fears that Hispanics would demographically overwhelm the country and, given their purported but unsubstantiated resistance to assimilation, change the very nature of the US. As Sam Huntington (2004, p. 1) wrote,

The persistent inflow of Hispanic immigrants threatens to divide the United States into two peoples, two cultures, and two languages. Unlike past immigrant groups, Mexicans and other Latinos have not assimilated into mainstream U.S. culture, forming instead their own political and linguistic enclaves—from Los Angeles to Miami—and rejecting the Anglo-Protestant values that built the American dream. The United States ignores this challenge at its peril.

Of note, long before the current wave of antipathy, Hispanics had been targeted repeatedly for expulsion or forced assimilation, including mass deportations during the Depression in the 1930s, accusations of perpetuating a “culture of poverty” among Puerto Ricans in New York, and denial of educational instruction in their primary language under the US English and English-only movements of the 1980s and 1990s. Recent vehement anti-Hispanic rhetoric by Donald J. Trump continues this long-standing legacy of scapegoating peoples of Hispanic heritage for myriad social ills, driving wedges between “them” and the so-called American mainstream.

This reverberating meme of Latin@s as a threat to the (American) nation understandably spurs Latin@s to cleave together to both jointly react against the essentialized stereotyping and fear-mongering and to assert their unity in the face of

adversity. Paradoxically, however, the more Hispanics unify, the greater they can be, and are likely to be, perceived as a threat and vilified.

Culturalist

A third approach to making “Latin@s” a useful category can be termed “culturalist.” From this perspective, the peoples of Hispanic heritage in the US either share or acquire the characteristics that make them similar to each other and distinctive from other populations within the nation. This argument is widely used—albeit sometimes for different reasons—by Hispanics and non-Hispanics alike. The “culturalist” approach should neither be confused with “culture of poverty” notions of Latin@s (and people in their homelands) stemming from the work by Oscar Lewis on Puerto Ricans and Mexicans,⁴ nor reduced to an essentialist notion of inalienable traits. Rather, any demographic category requires membership criteria and boundaries. In his extensive and thoughtful attempt to define Latin@, Corlett (2003) describes how difficult it is to establish objective criteria for belonging:

How would a governing body determine who counts as a Latino in terms of criteria such as Latino culture, morphological characteristics, and language? Exactly which morphological characteristics would count as being adequately Latino? And just which cultural traits would count? And what level of competency in which Latino language or dialect would count for such purposes of public policy administration?

It would appear then that a significantly more workable conception of Latino identity would be one that seeks to define the boundaries of Latinohood in some property or cluster of properties that the current U.S. law... can, in principle and in practice, verify or falsify empirically: for instance, genealogical ties.... This anchors Latino ethnicity in Latino genealogical lineage. (Ibid., pp. 23–24)

Corlett favors a government-led classification scheme. By contrast, the contributors to the present volume examine how putative members of a group classify themselves, both pan-ethnically and ethnically (i.e., by national origin or dialect). How do the region’s Latin@s identify each other in their daily lives? What is most salient: phenotype, accent, clothing, or politics? What are the membership criteria and boundaries among the region’s Latin@s, and how are they perceived and negotiated?

The various rationales for Latin@ unity briefly discussed above hopefully convey why many, if not most, US Latin@s experience some feelings of commonality and why the category of “Hispanic/Latin@,” a relatively recent construct, is widely accepted and used. In a country as diverse as the United States, creating and using pan-ethnic demographic groups makes sense for a variety of practical reasons,

⁴ However, it is likely that some lingering effects infect non-Latin@ popular views about Hispanics, particularly as politicians use the research in stereotyped, non-scholarly ways to fan the flames of xenophobia—such as former California governor Pete Wilson, Phoenix-area sheriff Joe Arpaio, and Donald J. Trump.

ranging from the mundane (accurate counting) to the emancipatory (political power). However, ignoring or erasing differences has its consequences. For example, how can nutritional education be effective unless variations in groups' preferred diets are taken into consideration, rather than accepting the overarching culturalist notion that all Latin@s prefer rice and beans? Is it meaningful to aggregate or segregate people of Mexican heritage from national-level data when they constitute two-thirds of all Latin@s? Does arrival into a new country erase all vectors of differentiation operative in immigrants' countries of origin, so that, for example, Mixtecs acquire the same ethnicity as their Mexican co-nationals from nonindigenous backgrounds? Given that the overwhelming majority of Latin@s live in just five US states, should researchers (advertisers, policy innovators, or political parties) focus on those states, or should they also extend their studies to the communities and states with few Latin@s but high rates of Latin@ newcomers? This volume addresses the fundamental conundrum illustrated in the examples above: there are good arguments both for and against characterizing various groups as "Latin@s," just as there are social forces simultaneously bringing Hispanics together and distancing them from each other and from the larger populace.

It's (still) complicated: Appreciating Hispanic heterogeneity

More than three decades ago, Nelson and Tienda (1985, p. 50) questioned the use of pan-ethnic labels for Latin@s for historical and theoretical reasons. They noted that the label "Hispanic" "combines colonized natives and their offspring, foreigners and political refugees under one ethnic umbrella." Some scholars argue that "Latin@" is more a methodological artifact than a real construct, as identification varies according to how questions are posed during data collection (Diaz McConnell and Delgado-Romero 2004). Still others contend that using pan-ethnic terms obscures the experiences of "Other" Latinos—that is, those not among the top three or four demographic groups (Falconi and Mazzotti 2007). And there are also researchers, including the present volume's authors, who argue that pan-ethnic terms for Hispanics obscure significant differences in the backgrounds and experiences of the many peoples these terms attempt to unite (e.g., Aparicio 2016; Guarnaccia et al. 2007; Oboler 1995). Indeed, Latin@s hail from dozens of countries with long-standing histories of alliances with and/or aggressions against each other and with many internal divisions within and beyond the classic socioeconomic divides, such as, among others, language, religion, politics, race, ethnicity (indigenous, mestizo), and region (rural/urban, highland/lowland).

Put simply, Hispanics were colonized inside the US or have entered it with many differences and have been differentially treated (Gutiérrez and Almaguer 2016). Admittedly, this fact has been richly described in memoirs and novels (e.g., Alvarez 1991; Anaya 1994; Blanco 2014; Ortiz Cofer 1990; Ponce 1993; Rodríguez 1982). Numerous scholars have scrupulously documented the experiences of a widening array of Hispanic populations, including, among others, Mexican-Americans (e.g., de la Garza 1985; Massey et al. 1987; Sánchez 1993), Puerto Ricans (e.g., Rodríguez 1989), Salvadorans (e.g., Mahler 1995; Menjívar 2000), Cubans (e.g.,

Eckstein 2009; Masud-Piloto 1988), and Dominicans (e.g., Torres-Saillant and Hernández 1998). However, this has been done largely through case studies rather than through comparisons.

What emerges from this literature is that Latin@s vary widely and significantly in both demographic characteristics (e.g., education level, age, gender, class background, health, nationality, birthplace, etc.) and institutional factors (e.g., conditions leading to emigration from homeland, US government policy toward groups, condition of the economy at time of arrival, local and national racial formations, etc.). Moreover, these differences help explain variation in the groups' socioeconomic success in the US as measured nationally or in specific geographic contexts (see, e.g., Aranda et al. 2014; Portes and Bach 1985; Portes and Rumbaut 2014). They also aid in understanding the variability in people's degree of pan-ethnic identification. The 1989 Latino National Political Survey (LNPS) found that a very small percentage of foreign-born Hispanics (10%) and a modestly higher percentage of the native-born (20%) preferred a pan-ethnic term over identifying by their own nationality (de la Garza et al. 1992). Notwithstanding an increasing pan-ethnic identification over time and, particularly, over generations (Jones-Correa and Leal 1996; Taylor et al. 2012), subsequent surveys confirmed the continued preference among people of Hispanic heritage for national over pan-ethnic identifiers.

Furthermore, some comparative volumes (e.g., Gutiérrez 2004; Gutiérrez and Almaguer 2016; Reimers 2005; Romero et al. 1997) have addressed variations in Hispanic groups' histories and experiences. This research tends to follow a formula where several chapters address Latin@s pan-ethnically, while others address groups ethnically. Much more scarce, however, are the volumes examining how different Latin@ groups view each other and interrelate in the context of their extensive background differences (e.g., De Genova and Ramos-Zayas 2003).

Unlike the migrations to the US of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, post-1965 immigration has continued unabated. The world wars and/or national origin quotas that slowed or almost halted previous migration waves have not hit the current one. Rather, post-1965 migration is characterized by what Jiménez (2010) terms "replenished" ethnicity, suggesting that there are important and understudied ramifications of sustained, continuous migrations. Thus, along with social forces afoot in the United States working to transform disparate nationalities into "Hispanics," other forces promote persistent differentiation of newcomers. Among those, essential is the continuous influx of newcomers bringing along their native country/regional cultural practices and preferences. This underresearched phenomenon could explain the 2011 Pew Hispanic Center survey finding that over two-thirds of respondents agreed that "Latinos in the US have many different cultures rather than a common culture" (Taylor et al. 2012). Moreover, differentiation related to sustained migration does not occur solely *among* nationalities, but also, in the event there are high numbers of both native-born and foreign-born people from the same nationality, *within* nationalities (e.g., Eckstein 2009).

The forces for and against identifying under a common *latinidad* also emerge in a small literature focused on Latin@s living in specific metropolitan areas. Here, the work by Padilla (1985), who pioneered this important strand of research for Chicago, has been revisited and expanded on by numerous authors (e.g., De Genova

and Ramos-Zayas 2003; Potowski 2015; Rosa 2015; Torres and Potowski 2008). Furthermore, other US metropolitan areas, such as New York (e.g., Dávila 2001; Cordero Guzmán et al. 2001; Haslip-Viera and Baver 1996; Mahler 1995), Los Angeles (e.g., García Bedolla 2005; Ochoa and Ochoa 2005), and Miami (the present volume), have also been examined. The findings in this body of research indicate some antipathy, discrimination, and social distancing between US-born Latin@s and their foreign-born co-ethnics, as well as between the undocumented and those enjoying legal status (García Bedolla 2005; Córdova and Cervantes 2010). Furthermore, linguistic research documents how speaking Spanish—a characteristic of cultural unity—actually differentiates Latin@s through their accents and degrees of fluency (e.g., Carter and Lynch 2015; Márquez Reiter and Rojo 2015; Negrón 2014; Potowski 2015; Zentella 1990).

This comparative scholarship suggests greater complexities beneath the veneer of pan-ethnic solidarity, many and varied differences nourished by sustained immigration and vagaries of location. In some contexts pan-ethnic solidarity is fostered—particularly those wherein Latin@s are a small minority and feel marginalized and/or discriminated against by non-Hispanics, as is the case in “new immigrant destinations” in the South, Midwest, and Northwest (e.g., Allegro and Wood 2013; Marrow 2009, 2011; Martinez 2011; Vega 2015). In other contexts, wherein Latin@s form a large minority or even a demographic majority, pan-ethnic activist and reactivist strategies are arguably less important. Meanwhile, intra-Hispanic cultural distinctiveness may gain more importance, especially if groups enjoy unequal status and access to resources. However, available studies addressing these contexts are too scarce to be definitive, and the present volume seeks to fill this gap.

Why Miami?

As evidenced in Fig. 1, what makes metropolitan Miami a particularly important research site for this volume's task is that, in Miami-Dade County, Latin@s form a demographic and political majority, and this influence increasingly extends to neighboring counties. The region features residential segregation not unlike other major metropolitan areas of the US, but what should stand out to readers is how much of Miami-Dade is majority Latin@. That county's neighbor to the north—Broward County—is undergoing demographic transitions not unlike what its southern neighbor experienced in previous decades. The story in this visual is more complex than meets the eye. To truly understand the region, it is important to unpack “Latin@” and comprehend its internal diversity.

Compared with many other US metropolitan areas (see Table 1), Miami offers the country's most diverse concentrated demographic collection of Latin American and Caribbean Hispanics. The largest and most powerful nationality is Cubans, whose impact has been well-documented (e.g., Portes and Stepick 1993; Eckstein 2009); this population is rapidly aging, however, while metropolitan Miami annually receives tens of thousands of new Hispanic immigrants, both from Cuba and from a variety of other countries (see Table 2). In Miami-Dade County alone, 50% of residents (the highest percentage for a major metropolitan region in the US)

Fig. 1 Map of Miami-Dade and Broward counties by race-ethnicity

are foreign-born (see Table 1). Each year, the area also hosts millions of tourists from immigrants' countries of origin,⁵ not to mention the visits of local residents to Latin America and the Caribbean.

⁵ Over 4.6 million foreign tourists visited the region in 2014, making it the second-most-visited destination after New York. http://travel.trade.gov/outreachpages/inbound.general_information.inbound_overview.html.

Table 2 Persons obtaining lawful permanent resident status for Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach, Fl. *Source* US Department of Homeland Security. Yearbooks of immigration statistics, Supplementary Table #2 for Fiscal years 2014, 2013, 2012

Country of Birth*	Fiscal Year 2012	Fiscal Year 2013	Fiscal Year 2014	Total 2012–14
Argentina	1,319	1,321	1,186	3,826
Belize	45	28	37	110
Bolivia	202	167	163	532
Brazil**	1,741	1,700	1459	4,900
Chile	282	287	306	875
Colombia	5,038	4,904	4,321	14,263
Costa Rica	184	224	212	620
Cuba	21,906	22,171	31,483	75,560
Dominican Republic	1,856	2,102	1,863	5,821
Ecuador	773	871	887	2,531
El Salvador	312	389	413	1,114
Guatemala	447	454	448	1,349
Honduras	1,007	1,344	1,180	3,531
Mexico	1,098	1,167	1,199	3,464
Nicaragua	1,252	1,144	1,134	3,530
Panama	154	149	156	459
Paraguay	61	59	46	166
Peru	1,842	1,908	1,631	5,381
Uruguay	410	351	296	1,057
Venezuela	4,109	4,531	3,828	12,468
Annual Total	44,038	45,271	52,248	
Cumulative Total 2012–14				141,557

Statistical areas (CBSA) of residence and selected countries of birth: Fiscal years 2012–2014

*Puerto Rico is not listed as it is a commonwealth of the United States and not a separate country of origin

**Brazil's figures are included there for informational purposes. Brazilians are inconsistently characterized as Latin@s

In terms of language, Miami is also unique, even if it is not as Spanish-dominant as is commonly believed. Census data on language use at home show that Spanish is indeed widespread across Miami-Dade County, practiced almost as much in upper-class neighborhoods as in working-class ones (Carter and Lynch 2015). Heard more than English in the majority of Miami-Dade neighborhoods, Spanish is also rising in use in nearby counties. To *not* speak Spanish in the region is definitely a disadvantage—a rare phenomenon in the US. Another reason to study Miami is that it has long been a critical hub for producing Spanish-language and *generación N* (US-born Hispanic) mass media, a very cultural production of *latinidad* (Dávila 2001; Mora 2014). The two largest Spanish-broadcast companies—Univisión and

Telemundo—have major footprints in metropolitan Miami, which is also home to numerous newspapers in Spanish. Dozens of Spanish-language radio stations report far more news from Latin America and the Caribbean than English-language media. Radio and television programs emit nonstop Latin music and foreign- and domestic-produced programs, including the ever-popular soap operas; on top of that, Miami regularly hosts the Latin Grammys.

Alongside producing and marketing pan-ethnicity, the region also reinforces ethnic lines. Many neighborhoods reflect ethnic rather than pan-ethnic concentrations in population and businesses (see papers this volume). Catholic parishes cater to their *feligreses* by celebrating their home country patron saint days, even decorating their sanctuaries with statues of those saints, while people express their origins or ancestry by decorating their cars or themselves with items bearing national flags or sports teams' symbols. In sum, there is no one metropolitan Miami *latinidad* but multiple *latinidades* that overlap as well as segregate.

The above justifies the choice of Miami as an appropriate site for probing into intra-ethnic identification processes and relations undertaken by this volume's papers. The very propinquity of so many Latin@ peoples of different nationalities, generations, classes, and races both emboldens and burdens the processes of *latinidad*. The critical insight into ethnicity by Barth (1969) is very germane here. According to Barth, to claim distinctiveness, peoples need not be very different from each other, as sharing similar characteristics makes the work of distinction even more important. Thus, if there are indeed real cultural similarities among different Latin@ groups, there can still be grounds for (re)producing distinctiveness, especially if groups do not occupy the same structural position in the society with regard to resources. That is, stratification systems are built on a foundation of distinctiveness through which those in power proffer fewer or more resources to different groups (Massey 2007).

Additionally, ethnicity situationally varies according to who is making the determination (insider vs. outsider, etc.) and is multiple or layered. Thus, the processes of bonding and separation can and often do co-occur, particularly when analytical scale is factored in. A good case in point is the observation made by Nagel (1994):

An individual of Cuban ancestry may be a Latino vis-à-vis non-Spanish-speaking ethnic groups, a Cuban-American vis-à-vis other Spanish-speaking groups, a Marielito vis-à-vis other Cubans, and white vis-à-vis African Americans. (Ibid., p. 155)

Nagel also argues that the same individual's identity should not be limited to any specific nation's categories, which some have termed "methodological nationalism" (Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2003). Rather, in a globalized universe, this same person might be characterized as a "refugee" by the US government, a "traitor" by the Cuban government, and an "exotic Latin" in many other countries. Categories useful for characterizing belonging and alienation shift by context in ways easily handled by people in their everyday lives (both for themselves and about others), but which are difficult to map, let alone explain. That is, people socially locate themselves with reference to others and across various scales of analysis; therefore,

to understand this complexity, it is important to bring their own perspectives into the data and analysis, as is done in this volume.

Overview

The purpose of this volume is to bring a focused lens to the Latin@/Hispanic umbrella category for the particular context of Greater Miami. Of note, the volume reflects a confluence of uncoordinated research: the authors coincidentally conducted research on Miami's Latin@ populations at about the same time. They subsequently found out about one another's work, compared the results, presented them at conferences, and conceived of this volume. Given their multiple disciplinary and methodological vantage points, the papers do not tell the same story, yet have a common narrative: distinctiveness is perceived and matters, even if the population also identifies pan-ethnically to some degree. In order to logically present this complexity, the papers are ordered along a continuum, starting with those that discuss differences less and finishing with those that discuss differences more. Similarly, the contributions are ordered from those more oriented toward unity to those more oriented toward dissonance. The *Vivencias* accompanying the volume complement the papers by bringing additional insights into the region's Latin@ diversity.

In the first article, by Mahler, Cogua-López and Chaudhuri, two anthropologists and a sociologist use the theoretical framework of boundary work to analyze how Latin@s from seven nationalities negotiate their collective and ethnic memberships. Latin@ college student interviewees both identified what they viewed as commonalities and differences among Latin@s in the region and explained their perspectives. Content analysis of the interviewees' feedback shows overlap in the top three themes: language, culture, and food. However, a qualitative analysis of the respondents' data explains the apparent contradictions. The authors also draw on structural factors and demographic characteristics to explain additional themes emerging from the analysis, such as race, class, and immigration experience.

The second paper focuses on the US Spanish-language media. Journalism professor Sallie Hughes and collaborators organized regional Latin@s into focus groups—some homogeneous by ethnicity (national origins) and others heterogeneous—and studied their reactions to various media representations of immigrants, immigrant communities, and city projects in Spanish-language news. Hughes reports that these Latin@ audiences respond commonly only to messages about local government and services. Otherwise they respond disparately. Hughes explains differences by connecting them to the audiences' varied national origins/heritages, personal immigration experiences, and relative positioning in regional social hierarchies of class, race, gender, and immigration status. Some groups feel they are absent in media or stereotyped and that other groups, especially Cubans and Mexicans, are the target audience. The main argument is that, rather than one Latin@ audience or one unified *latinidad*, there are many audiences, and some of them—particularly those whose local numbers are relatively small—feel marginalized by the media dominated by larger groups.

The third paper, by sociolinguists Carter and Callesano, addresses how Spanish and non-Spanish speakers in Miami perceive accents reflecting three national-origin varieties of Spanish commonly heard in metropolitan Miami: Cuban, Colombian, and Peninsular (Spaniard). The authors test the degree to which residents are able to correctly match speakers' demographics to voices. They also examine whether listeners make predictive judgments about speakers' nonlinguistic, social attributes relating to class, including family wealth, personal income, and profession. What the authors find is that both Latin@s and non-Latin@s from the region judge voices and impute characteristics to those voices. Some accents are favored over others, producing a social hierarchy. People deemed high on the hierarchy based on these accents enjoy esteem, no matter whether their own achievements match.

While a Latin@ social hierarchy emerges experimentally in Carter and Callesano's accents research, it surfaces organically in the volume's final article, by sociologists Marie Mallet and Joanna Pinto-Coelho. In the analysis of forty-five wide-ranging semi-structured qualitative interviews with Latin@ immigrants of different nationalities in Miami-Dade County, the authors find that one-third of the participants report their interactions with other Latin@s to be more negative than positive. Furthermore, the authors find that a significant division, the one used as the basis for a local ethnic hierarchy, is between Caribbean Latin@s (Cubans, Dominicans, and Puerto Ricans grouped) and Continental Latin American Latinos.

In addition to the volume's articles are two shorter essays ("Vivencias") that complement the articles' content. First is an analysis of the 2016 presidential elections for three important Hispanic voting groups in Miami-Dade. Eduardo Gamarra's investigation reveals that, contrary to many assumptions, the county consistently votes Democratic. He drills beneath the surface to explain why, noting, in particular, generational shifts afoot among Miami's populous Cuban voters. Local immigrants' rights activist Jeannette Smith, for her Vivencia, interviewed various regional NGO and union member activists to bring their voices and their communities' experiences into our conversation. The Vivencia's three segments document how the region's diverse Latin@s find common ground. This ground shifts, however, because of the pull from institutions, particularly US government policies and how they affect localities, putting pressure on the region's Latin@s to cleave along class, nationality, and legal status lines.

An earnest invitation

Over the past five decades, Latin@ studies has grown into an established field of inquiry and debate. This research has filled a major gap in our understanding of both the collective and contrasting experiences of peoples of Hispanic heritage in the US (and elsewhere). Honoring what divides and binds people is not an easy task, particularly when they have been marginalized and maligned as an essentialized group by the larger society. However, focusing primarily on unity risks ignoring heterogeneity within a group and may marginalize or even erase the experiences of some members. The authors of the present volume understand that processes of racial formation have pressure-cooked diverse peoples into the pan-ethnic moniker

of “Latin@,” a counterpart of “African American,” “White,” “Asian,” and so on (Beltrán 2010, p. 123; Fraga et al. 2012; Taylor et al. 2012). Regardless of the internal acceptance and wide use of this label, there are still important reasons to grapple with the dialectics between constructed identity categories and their members’ lived experiences. The goal is to do justice to both while providing a greater nuance to the latter. Addressing the issue from multiple disciplinary and methodological perspectives, this volume aims to fill a gap in our understanding of these dialectics within a specific Latin@-prominent region.

In conclusion, it is important to reiterate that the volume’s papers do not stem from a single research project, nor were they solicited; only after independent research did authors discover convergence in our findings. Nonetheless, neither the editor nor the volume contributors assert that our findings can serve as a definitive proof of imminent or inevitable trends; rather, the volume presents empirical research reflecting a particular context at a specific moment in time. This said, we invite and hope to inspire additional scholars to conduct intra-Latin@ research and to compare their findings with ours, whether in Miami or beyond.

Acknowledgements First and foremost, I would like to thank the editor of *Latino Studies*, Lourdes Torres, and the journal’s editorial board for their enthusiastic support of this special volume and their assistance in bringing it from idea to publication. Gracias also goes to María Isabel Ochoa-Alvarez, the journal’s managing editor, who graciously answered many questions. I am also indebted to the authors of both the articles and Vivencias, whose patience and perseverance show in the quality of the work this volume is able to bring to the journal’s readers. Great appreciation to my colleague Derrick Scott for his talents with GIS in creating the map in Fig. 1. Thanks to the many anonymous reviewers whose input enhanced our output. It is important to thank my department and university—the Department of Global and Sociocultural Studies at Florida International University—for their support and funding over the many months of work this volume has taken. On behalf of those authors, I want to thank the many residents of Greater Miami who gave of their time and resources to this project. Finally, I thank my family, who put up with many of my absences as I edited and edited.

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Sarah J. Mahler is Associate Professor of anthropology at Florida International University in the multidisciplinary Department of Global and Sociocultural Studies. Her research and publications have focused primarily on Latin American and Caribbean migration to the United States and on the development of transnational ties between migrants and their home communities. A particular interest is how gender shapes migrants' experiences. Among her books are *American Dreaming: Immigrant Life on the Margins* and *Churches and Charity in the Immigrant City*.