

This Latinx - #EstaLatinx Project Proposal

Goal/Purpose statement

Language shapes our society and by examining certain terms we can reveal critical issues around power and culture that impact our world. The trending American term “Latinx” represents a cross section of different cultural touchpoints in society. We hope the exploration of the term will expose the multiple lines of discourse around race, ethnicity, gender and identity. And we also hope to show how a crowd source discourse on the term “Latinx” can demonstrate how our worldview is constructed through categorizations, personal and institutional relationships, ideology, and politics.

Project structure

The project will be launched during the Mediamorfosis event in Mexico City on 27 June. The gathered audience will be asked to participate in a critical analysis of the American term “Latinx.”

The audience will watch a video of Latinx person (also a intersex non-binary human rights activist). We will learn how s/he came to use and identify with the term and what it means to he/r.

Then we ask them to participate and begin to add their ideas about what is “This Latinx.” There will be a short presentation of images gathered from searches of the Internet around the term. While this will help the audience understand what we are looking for, we will ask them to go beyond and think out of the box – to offer up their individual authentic point of view. They will use Twitter to post their views of the term, (using visuals if possible) to express opinions (positive or negative) and include the tag #EstaLatinx

We will then capture the results and organize the data in a way to frame the key discussion points that we discover. After we have had time to analyze the outcomes, we will present a data visualization of the responses. This will include a curation of responses and images and responses. – positive and negative present the findings

Technical Components

The following are very basic notes/questions I want to go over when we can chat.

A way to capture responses from Twitter.

Facebook as a way to showcase the results.

Various options to show results. Including data viz that will reveal the major discussion points. Can we use the social graph of the participants to help analyze the different points of view?

Curation tool – a way to highlight popular vs typical responses.

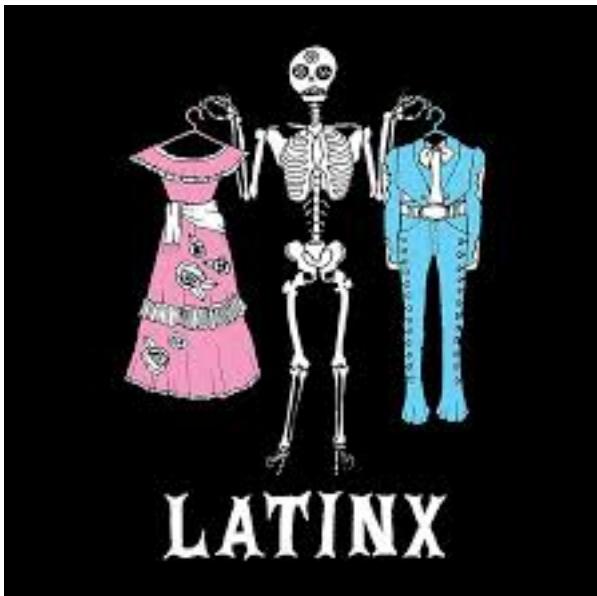
What is an end value proposition? A longer tail?

Background on “Latinx”

The term has evolved over the last 50 years as US governmental organizations (i.e. the census bureau) attempted to categorize citizens of Latin American descent. Initially the terms that was used was “hispanic” but this term turned off many Spanish speaking Americans for its harsh “H” sound and eventually a new term “Latino or Latina” emerged as a more ethnically conscious term. (The traditional hyphenate approach would not work as you would end up with something like Latin America-Americans). But over the last decade as discourse around gender and sexual identity issues, the term “Latinx” has become more popular among some parts of the community.

Visual response ideas





Latinx Person (Hida Viloria) Video

Hida's personal statement – this will be shortened to fit a 1 minute video.

Thoughts on Latinx

"Hispanic" History/Info/Reactions

- I'm the child of Venezuelan & Colombian immigrants, and Spanish was my first language and the language of my early home life till 1st grade.
- I remember hearing "Hispanic" for the 1st time when I was as kid in NYC, and that I didn't like the sound of it
- The way I heard white journalists pronouncing the word, with a strong H, made it sound like a very foreign, white term was being imposed on us
- Many years later I learned, in an immigration studies course at U.C.B., that "Hispanic" was indeed invented by white American in 1977 (when I would have been nine), for the U.S. census, as they wanted a way to describe all these immigrants from Latin America who spoke Spanish
- Many view the word as referring specifically to Spanish speaking Americans, with an implication towards Americans of strictly Spanish descent.
- Official definitions include: adjective 1. relating to Spain or to Spanish-speaking countries, especially those of Latin America.
noun 2. a Spanish-speaking person living in the US, especially one of Latin American descent.

Creation of/Transition to "Latino/Latina"

- Apparently I'm not the only one that disliked the term hispanic.
- In the same immigration course referenced above, which I took in 1997 or '98, there was discussion of the newer term/label "Latino."
- My memory/impression of this is that people who didn't like the white and colonialist associations of "hispanic" wanted an alternative label, and that
- Latino emerged, I believe, due to the linguistic similarity/existing linguistic connection with "Latinoamerica," a word used throughout Central and South America which I heard growing up in the U.S. as a child of Latino immigrants (see how quickly I adopted it, lol! ;)
- The definition of Latinoamerica is:

Those countries in the Americas and related islands which speak Latin-derived languages, mostly Spanish and Portuguese: Latin America.

- The definition of Latino is: noun 1. (in North America) a person of Latin American origin or descent, especially a man or boy.
adjective 1. relating to Latinos.

-- I immediately, very much, preferred Latino to Hispanic when I 1st heard it, sometime before the '97/'98 class, although I can't recall an exact year.

-- Latino sounds and feels more like my cultural and linguistic experience as a child of Colombian and Venezuelan parents; it reminds me of it.

-- I also enjoyed the way 'Latina," used to refer specifically to American women of Latin American descent, linguistically embraced my feminine side.

-- Although I think the terms Latino/Latina originated in the U.S., I feel like I've heard Mexicans, possibly Salma Hayek, refer to themselves as Latinas. ---- What about Canada? lol

-- I quickly rejected the term hispanic, and never used it to refer to myself again, when I discovered the terms Latino and Latina.

-- I did however notice, and dislike, that whenever you weren't speaking about men or women separately, but together, everyone became the masculine Latino. It reminded me of how people used to commonly say "men": to refer to all genders until a certain point in my youth (when did that change?80's?)

Shift to "Latinx"

-- By 1998-ish, when I was using the gender neutral pronoun "ze" and looking very male or indiscernably in-between (as I thought of that , it became obvious to me that having to choose Latina or Latino, as an exrteremely androgynous intersex bodied person, or herm, as ZI call that today, was awkward and challenging, to say the exist.

-- I was used to having to do this with the terms man and woman in English, b/c it was too strange to use the word "hermaphrodite" socially, & still is in most cases, but "non-binary" didn't exist yet & "genderqueer" was barely heard of & i didn;t like it much b/c it sounded too long & specific to be a substitute for man or woman. So doing it in Spanish too did not feel out of the ordinary.

-- The linguistic binary of Latino/Latino became difficult however when I began speaking and writing in Spanish as an intersex activist with a, as it is known now, non-binary, gender identity.

-- It came to a head at a 2015 keynote lecture I presented entirely in Spanish, in Madrid. I kept saying "Latino/a," and it felt awkward on the tongue.

-- I had known that Latinx existed and used it occasionally