In 2014, Alfonso Cuaron became the first Latino in the more than eight-decade history of the Academy Awards to win an Oscar for Best Director. The following year, Alejandro González Iñárritu was presented with the same award. During the ceremony, actor Sean Penn, right before announcing the award, “jokingly” stated, “Who gave this son-of-a-bitch a green card?” González Iñárritu, who is reportedly a friend of Penn, joked, “Maybe next year the government will inflict some immigration rules to the Academy. Two Mexicans in a row, that’s suspicious, I guess” (Iñárritu 2015). During his acceptance speech he dedicated the award to:

My fellow Mexicans. The ones who live in Mexico, I pray that we can find and build the government that we deserve. And the ones that live in this country who are part of the latest generation of immigrants in this country, I just pray that they can be treated with the same dignity and respect as the ones who came before and built this incredible immigrant nation.

(Iñárritu 2015)

The exchange between Penn and Iñárritu ignited a firestorm of opinions on Twitter and other social media. Latin@s were able to deplore and denounce Penn’s comments as being, at best, in “bad taste,” and, at worst, blatantly racist and nativist. The events at the 2014 and 2015 Academy Award ceremonies also brought to the fore two themes that this chapter seeks to address: (1) Hollywood’s and mainstream media’s continuation of stereotypical and derogatory depictions of Latinos and Latinas—the disconnect with, disregard for, and discomfort with the demographic realities of a growing Latino population in the United States, and (2) the new ways in which Latin@s choose to represent themselves in the digital age or, in other words, social networks and new media are creating new opportunities for Latin@s to represent themselves through the creation of counter-narratives.

Aside from serving as an introduction into the field of race, ethnicity, and the media, paying specific attention to representations of Latinos and Latinas in the media in the digital age, this chapter presents some of the major theoretical lenses through which scholars...
have analyzed Latin@s, media, and representation. Beyond creating a snapshot of the state of the field, the chapter provides some examples of how mainstream media represent (or misrepresent) Latin@s in the United States, as well as discusses how Latin@s choose to portray and depict themselves, along with some of the possibilities and challenges in so doing in a twenty-first-century digital landscape.

The Majority–Minority Context

Since the nineteenth century, Latino communities have evolved as a result of transnational processes: while U.S. capital flowed south, people headed north. Throughout the second half of the twentieth century, the effects of industrialization, the dismantling of traditional agriculture, armed conflicts, and the pressures of social exclusion and political instability exacerbated the factors that pushed the emigration of Latin Americans, while economic conditions in the United States increasingly pulled immigrants north (Retis 2006); further, as Juan González (2011) points out, in contrast to what tends to be portrayed in popular media discourse, these movements were not caused by a surprise collective desire for material benefits of U.S. society, but were rather the result of civil wars and social chaos generated by the processes of military and economic interventions and in many cases were backed and influenced by U.S. imperialistic policies in the region.

Throughout the last five decades the U.S. Census has noted the growth and diversification of Latino communities, conceived, however, as a supposedly homogeneous group to incorporate in the category of Hispanics in official records and promoted by media and marketing discourses (Dávila 2001; Yúdice 2009). Despite their diversity, as Yúdice reminds us, Latin@s are still perceived as a homogeneous group, assumed to share the same culture based on the language (Spanish) and religion (Catholicism). Therefore, similar to the case of Asians, Latinos end up being treated as a separate “race,” especially in everyday life. This is due not only to their cultural difference from blacks and whites, but also to their designation by the government, police, and education (e.g., schools), and categorization by the labor market, media, advertising, and medical institutions (Yúdice 2009: 17).

General media tend to overlook the fact that most Latino immigrants arrived during the 1990s and frequently ignore the geopolitical and economic contexts of these influxes. While critical theories interpreted the 1980s as the “Lost Decade” when analyzing the effects of structural adjustment programs in Latin American countries (Retis 2006), American public discourse designated it as the “Hispanic Decade” to refer to the growing Latino presence (Yúdice 2014). During those years, more than 4 million arrived, double the amount of the previous decade and quadruple the number during the 1960s (Retis 2014). If during the “Hispanic Decade,” population growth was based upon the Anglo population, during the 1990s a change in process started and intensified during the next decade. For the first time the contribution of population growth came from those who up until that time were considered the second largest minority in the country: Latinos comprised 34 percent of total U.S. population growth (Canales 2011).

The most recent demographic studies noted new rearrangements and processes of geographical concentration and dispersion of Latin@s in the United States. Hispanic groups now make up 55.4 million, 17.4 percent of the population (Krogstad and Lopez 2015), almost 400 percent more than in 1980 (14.8 million, 6.5 percent of the total population). In some states such as California (15 million, 38 percent), Texas (10 million, 38 percent), New Mexico (1 million, 47 percent), and Arizona (2 million, 30 percent),
or some counties such as Los Angeles (5 million, 48 percent), Harris County, Texas (1.7 million, 41 percent), Miami-Dade County, Florida (1.6 million, 65 percent), Cook County, Illinois (1.2 million, 24 percent), Maricopa County, Arizona (1.1 million, 30 percent), or Bexar County, Texas (1 million, 59 percent), where they are referred to as minorities, Latino groups now make up the majority of the population. They are part of what the U.S. Census has identified as states or equivalents with majority–minority populations (Hawaii, District of Columbia, California, New Mexico, and Texas), or the 11 percent of the counties with majority–minority in 2014 (U.S. Census Bureau 2015). Yet, despite the demographic shifts, as will be discussed below, mainstream media has largely ignored the new majority–minority reality.

Conceptual Frameworks for Analyzing and Understanding Latin@s and Representation

To understand issues of representation of ethnic and racial groups in the United States, historical and demographic realities must be considered. These social and cultural contingencies have influenced the ways in which dominant media construct various groups of people and have had and continue to have real social, cultural, and economic impacts on people of color in the US (Báez and Castañeda 2014).

In the midst of and partly as a response to a growing Latino population in the United States, various states have passed legal measures that specifically seek to exclude and diminish this group from civic engagement and social mobility. Some of the most exclusionary measures have been passed in states such as Arizona, where Latinos make up more than one-third of the population, and in Georgia, where the Latin@ population has grown dramatically in recent years (Santa Ana and González de Bustamante 2012). Further, the condition of exclusion for heritage speakers in academic and social environments (Schreffler 2007; Harklau 2009) has been considered as a way of re-segregating Latino groups in secondary and college education systems (Chao 2012; Yosso and Solorzano 2006) and demonstrates how language proficiency becomes a barrier to social mobility (Spence, Rojas, and Straubhaar 2011).

It is essential to understand these processes at the local, national, regional, and transnational levels. Research requires interdisciplinary approaches and more comprehensive analyses of social stratification and socioeconomic inequalities that transcend the prism of immigration, race, and ethnicity. Critical researchers discuss whether we are confronting the mass media or the class media when analyzing the composition, structure, and behavior of the mainstream media in the United States (Wilson, Gutiérrez, and Chao 2003) or how stereotypes allow the mental organization of collective perceptions about other groups as different from the in-group or reference group (Fiske and Taylor 1991). Other scholars have analyzed how the general market media characterized Latin@ communities and Latinidad incorporating two inter-related ideological processes: genderization and racialization (Molina Guzman 2005; Valdivia 2011, 2000; Fregoso 2003) or how contemporary media representations simultaneously feminize the racial Other and racialize the feminine Other (Molina Guzman 2006; Valdivia 2011; Molina Guzman, and Valdivia 2010).

At first glance, it might seem obvious that the topic of Latin@s, media, and representation would fit squarely with Critical Race Theory (CRT), which looks at studying and transforming the relationships among race, racism, and power (Delgado and Stefancic 2012). Yet while there has been work in that area, Anguiano and Castañeda (2014) illustrate that communication researchers have not been overly exuberant in connecting
their work within this tradition. In this globalized world of digital media, Anguiano and Castañeda propose a confluence of the subfields of CRT and Latino CRT or LatCrit to create “Latina/o Critical Communication Theory,” in an effort to “contribute to critical communication studies and its commitment to investigate inequality in order to foster social change” (Anguiano and Castañeda 2014: 109). The explanatory power of a communication framework that focuses on Latina/o discursive and performance strategies is not meant to be exclusive, but rather seeks to avoid the dichotomization of racial identities to which Orbe and Allen have referred and have called upon scholars to consider (2008).

Structural Inequalities and the Media

There are several structural factors that help to explain why and how Latino groups have been and continue to be represented and underrepresented in news and entertainment media. First, they are made “invisible” or, as Tuchman (1978) stated, “silently annihilated” in media coverage. Second, when they are included in general media content, they tend to be portrayed as sources of societal problems. Third, the lack of diversity of producers in entertainment and news media serves to exacerbate historical tendencies in Latino media portrayals and representation. Fourth, while Hollywood and general news media have remained reluctant to include Latino groups in content, they have been and continue to pursue Latino communities as consumers.

Invisibility in the News

Research has demonstrated that Latin@s are made invisible in the mainstream media discourse, and when they do appear they are represented in a misinformed way and with greater negative connotations than other ethnic minorities (National Council of La Raza 1997; Santa Ana 2013). In the 1990s, the amount of national news concerning Hispanics represented 1 percent of all news produced (National Council of La Raza 1994), which was even less than the amount of news covering African Americans or Asians (Entman and Rojecky 2000). Two decades later a study by the National Association of Hispanic Journalists (NAHJ 2006) showed that in the case of TV news, the representation margin was less than in the printed news media outlets. Only 0.83 percent of broadcast stories by ABC, CBS, and NBC in 2005 covered Hispanics. This low percentage was, paradoxically, an increase from the previous year, when the average was 0.72 percent. Santa Ana (2013) analyzed over 12,000 stories broadcast in 2004 by the four top American networks (ABC, CBS, NBC, and CNN) and found that less than 1 percent of these stories addressed Latino issues, and that “given that Latinos comprised 14 percent of the United States population at the time, the nation’s understanding of Latinos from network news programs was and remains wholly inadequate” (Santa Ana 2013: xvii).

Social Conflict as Newsworthy

Vargas (2000) views newsmaking as key to the (re)production of knowledge, and she argues that the power/knowledge perspective postulates that professional journalistic practices help to legitimize the discourse necessary to construct power relations that come to be seen as natural. In that sense, news media contribute to the social construction of the perception of Latin@s in the United States. So what Latin@ stories do make the
news? The NAHJ Report (2006) found that there were five predominant topics: those related to national government (19 percent), crime (18.1 percent), human-interest issues (17 percent), immigration (14.3 percent), and sports (11.4 percent). NAHJ’s report also found that Hispanics were non-existent in those stories that were not “overtly” related to Hispanics. Santa Ana (2013) identified the two criteria that made a Latino event news-worthy in 2004: “Either it was an ‘inside-the-Beltway’ topic or it was a story about death and mayhem. It follows that the networks still did not consider Latinos to be an integral part of the American social fabric” (2013: xviii). Vargas (2000) argues that newspapers, perhaps despite editors’ and reporters’ efforts to do otherwise, reproduce a racializing discourse that constructs Latinos as an underclass.

Despite changing demographics, in mainstream media Latin@s continue to be portrayed in stereotypical and distorted ways in a post-9/11 media landscape (Chavez 2008). Most analyses have involved the main broadcast TV networks, but Dixon and Williams’ work moves beyond network television to include cable news networks. They found that “Latino perpetrators were significantly more likely to be seen as immigrants (97 percent) on network and cable news than to actually be immigrants in U.S. society (47 percent), according to official reports” (2015: 31). The continued distortion of perceptions-versus-realities fosters misunderstandings about various ethnic groups, including Latin@s.

In their study of English-language and Spanish-language media coverage of the 2008 economic crisis, Báez and Castañeda (2014) found that framing of Latin@s has resulted in a new form of redlining (28), and that “low income racial and ethnic minorities were framed as irrational and irresponsible in mainstream and conservative media for taking on subprime mortgages and, thus, are one of the primary reasons for the mortgage meltdown.” English-language media portrayed Latin@s within a victim/threat binary, and generally depicted Latin@s through the use of statistics in lieu of personal stories. This is similar to what González de Bustamante (2012) found regarding coverage of undocumented immigrants in Arizona during the 1970s.

Less Diversity in the Newsroom

Examining news production from a “sociology of news media” perspective is useful when considering current trends in newsrooms, as journalists have increasingly fewer opportunities to specialize on issues of social and human interest (Retis and Sierra 2011). And, while diversity has increased in newsrooms over the past decades (from 3.95 percent in 1978 to 12.76 percent in 2015), Hispanics only make up 4 percent of the journalists working in American newsrooms (ASNE 2015). A recent survey among Latino journalists found that 42 percent reported downsizing or cutbacks in staff hours at work, and more than 75 percent agreed that they have been forced to do more with less resources (NAHJ 2014), and a large percentage (40.2 percent) are concerned about job security (NAHJ 2015).

Entertainment Media Exclusion

By sheer numbers, entertainment media are only slightly better than news media when it comes to representation of Latino groups and issues. A 2014 report titled “The Latino Media Gap” summarized eight principal findings: (1) Latino participation in programming and movies is extremely limited; (2) Latino men have disappeared as leading actors, though the percentage of Latinas and Afro-Latino actors is rising; (3) Latinos are still missing behind the scenes; (4) stereotypes restrict opportunities and perceptions; (5) news
is worse than fiction; (6) Latino content and audiences expand viewership; (7) consumer pressure creates impact; (8) Latinos drive new media production and innovation (Negrón-Muntaner et al. 2014).

Statistics regarding representation make it somewhat remarkable that in both 2014 and 2015, films of two Hollywood directors of Mexican origin won “Best Picture.” Aside from some exceptional successes, inclusion of Latinos in entertainment media has not improved in dramatic ways, but the political economy of representation is complex. The 2015 Hollywood blockbuster San Andreas is somewhat illustrative. The main plot of the movie, directed by Canadian-born Brad Peyton, centers on a massive earthquake that jolts the entire state of California from Los Angeles to San Francisco. The subplot surrounds a dysfunctional and divided family, led by its patriarch, Raymond (Ray) Gaines, played by Dwayne “the Rock” Johnson.

While some ethnic and racial minorities figure into the screenplay (Johnson is black, Nova Scotian, and Samoan) none of the central characters is Latin@. There is a scene in which Ray Gaines helps a Latino “pedestrian” (E. Ambriz DeColosio) and his son avoid getting crushed by falling debris from a building (IMDb 2015). The real diversity in the cast is seen in the overrepresentation of actors from outside of the United States, including a Canadian (The Rock), two Australians, a young Irish actor, and an English actor of Indian descent who plays a reporter. The only real “characters” of Latino origin are the places in which the movie transpires, such as San Francisco, Los Angeles, and of course, San Andreas, the great fault line that runs through the entire state. Viewers/consumers are left with a historical reference to what was once part of the Spanish colonial empire, and later, part of Mexico, but almost no present-day reference to the state’s demographic realities are featured in the film (Nelson 2015). Latin@s are quite literally made almost invisible. Given that California has the largest Latino population in the country (15 million), and that Latin@s make up the largest ethnic/racial group in the state, the lack of representation of any Latin@ as central characters is staggering and somewhat stupefying.

Entertainment media are attempting to approximate Latin@s through the production of some content. In 2014, the U.S. television network CW released Jane the Virgin, a comedy-drama that was adapted from the original Venezuelan soap opera, Juana la virgen. Members of the main cast of the series are Latin@s. Written and produced by Jennie Snyder Urman, the series has won Peabody and Golden Globe awards, proving that a program with primarily Latin@ characters can draw a consistent audience and does not always have to reaffirm gender and ethnic stereotypes to gain acclaim and an audience.4 In accepting the award for “Best Actress in a Comedy Series” in 2015, Gina Rodriguez stated, “This award is so much more than myself. It represents a culture that wants to see themselves as heroes” (Zeilinger 2015). The series Jane the Virgin, and Ugly Betty before it, which was also an adaptation from the Colombian Betty la fea, include attempts to market programming to Latino audiences.

Consumers, But Not Producers

In the world of entertainment media, Latino groups are pursued as a market, but less so as actual producers of content. In some cases, their presence on camera has increased slightly in corporate media channels, but Hollywood, cable, and other corporate entertainment media have a far less stellar record in providing avenues for Latinos to be in decision-making positions such as producers, directors, and managers. In other words, the powers that control mainstream entertainment media are willing to target programming
to Latinos, but less willing to give up control and enable Latinos and Latinas to create programs and represent/present themselves.

Among mainstream television entertainment producers, Latinos represented only 1.1 percent of producers, 2 percent of writers, and 4.1 percent of directors, according to the Latino Media Gap report. Data show that there is an overrepresentation of Latin@s in the box office: they constitute 17 percent of the total population, but include 32 percent of viewers who went to the movies in 2013 (Negrón-Muntaner et al. 2014).

The “Hispanic Market”

While the growth of Hispanics as consumers has been substantial (1.5 trillion, according to Nielsen 2014b), it has been barely significant when examining the participation of Latin@s in media production or management roles. The growing buying power of Latinos has been recognized by major corporations who decided to invest in the Hispanic market, particularly in the Spanish-language broadcast media. According to Nielsen (2014a), the Hispanic radio audience grew by more than 500,000 listeners in 2013. Nearly 40 million Latin@s use the radio every week, with a slight male majority (53 percent), 67 percent mostly outside home, and in the morning between 6 a.m. and 10 a.m. Hispanic consumers spend about $135 a year on music (above the average, $105) and $72 on concerts and festivals (above the average, $48). There are more than 500 Spanish-language radio stations around the country. These stations are heavily geared toward entertainment programming, with only 30 out of the 500 stations offering news and talk radio programs (Pew Center Research 2014). The latest data on Latino-oriented TV also reflect a growing pattern in the industry. In 2000, there were only 17 Spanish-language TV stations on cable, by 2010 there were already over 70, and in 2015 there were 134 (Retis and Badillo 2015).

Self-Representation in the Digital Age: Challenges and Opportunities

The digital era has brought with it a new set of opportunities and challenges for Latin@ representation in news and entertainment media. Advances in technology have facilitated production of content. At the same time, audiences are fragmented, and past scholarship has demonstrated that people tend to watch and gravitate toward programming and information that fits within and reinforces their worldviews (Abrams and Giles 2007; Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch 1974). In other words, through new media and technology, more members of Latino groups are creating their own programming but, in general, the impact of these program forms on mass audiences has been limited. At the same time, while the Hollywood film industry and mainstream media have not kept up with demographic realities, the digital media picture has improved somewhat. Of the 50 most-watched channels on YouTube.com, 18 percent are produced either by Latin@s or feature Latino-oriented content. The digital media landscape has opened doors for an increase in entertainment and informational programs about Latin@s that are produced by Latin@s (Negrón-Muntaner 2014).

When consumer behaviors are taken into consideration, the possibilities are bright for Latin@s who are poised to produce digital programming for Latin@ groups. Recent surveys indicated that Latin@s displayed the largest increase in Internet usage, greater than that of non-Hispanic blacks or non-Hispanic whites. The rapid growth of Latino
homes with access solely to cellular telephones and not landlines reveals an increase in other forms of technology (Livingstone, Parker, and Fox 2009). A 2013 study found that Hispanics are more likely than non-Hispanics to consider a cell phone a necessity as opposed to a luxury (59 percent), a figure that is significantly higher than that of non-Hispanic whites (46 percent) and non-Hispanic blacks (46 percent). Forty-nine percent of all Hispanic mobile telephone users send and receive text messages (López, Barrera, and Patten 2013).

Hispanic consumers are ahead in the digital curve as they have quickly adopted multi-screen practices in video consumption, represent 47 million traditional viewers, and continue to grow. They spend more time watching videos on digital devices, with an average of 8 hours per month, which is 90 minutes more than the U.S. average. Latino consumers are acquiring smart-phones at a faster rate than any other demographic group; almost three out of four Hispanics have a smart-phone (72 percent), 10 percent above the U.S. average (10 million watch videos on their phones, with an average of 6 hours per month) and play videogames about 8 hours per month, almost an hour more than the general population (Nielsen 2014b). These data speak of active digital consumers and a growing trend, data that have already been noted by private companies that are producing new synergies in the production and distribution of cultural goods and services (Retis and Badillo 2015).

The Significance of Spanish-Language Media

As they have in the past, Spanish-language media continue to play an important role in shaping and reflecting the identity of Latin@ communities throughout the United States. Báez and Castañeda (2014) found that Spanish-language media portrayals of Latin@s involved in the mortgage crisis included voices of those affected and, thus, provided alternative perspectives. In other words, those most directly involved in the crisis were not mere numbers, but were depicted as human beings who were struggling through a challenging time. The advocacy role of Spanish-language media has been noted in other studies (Casillas 2014; Vigon, Bustos-Martinez and González de Bustamante 2012).

In 2014, audiences grew for the nation’s second largest Spanish-language network, Telemundo, while they dipped a bit for the largest Spanish-language network, Univision (Pew Research Center 2015). At the same time, revenue for Spanish-language media saw growth in 2014. The same study showed that the behavior of Spanish-language media consumers is changing, in that more often they use their mobile devices instead of desktops to access information and content produced by Univision and Telemundo (Pew Research Center 2015). Despite the important role of Spanish-language media in presenting and representing Latin@ voices in the media, there has been a decline in audiences. Part of this trend relates to demographic shifts that demonstrate that much of the growth of Latin@s in the United States since 2000 is the result of U.S. births of Latin@s rather than new immigrants. Further, about six out of ten adult Latinos/as speak English or are bilingual (Pew Research Center 2015).

Emerging Avenues for Latin@ Representations and Research

English-language outlets such as Fusion.net target millennials, presenting a variety of news content, including “news and views from the other Americas” (fusion.net). The network also features programs such as “America with Jorge Ramos,” designed to attract
young Latino/a viewers. Other news and informational websites such as New America Media, AJ+, and Huffingtonpost.com are creating journalism that includes voices of various ethnic and racial groups, but their reach is limited. They offer a counter-narrative, but those watching these newcomers to the net are often familiar with the issues related to Latin@s. They tend not to attract viewers who are watching mainstream television and those who could benefit from hearing and seeing alternative points of view. In other words, what ends up happening is a sort of “preaching to the choir” type of media pattern and behavior that does little to further the diversity of representation of ethnic groups. Over time, as media consumers continue to shift away from the small screen (television) to mobile devices, the full picture of representation could change, but for now, some groups continue to be largely underrepresented.

The Internet and YouTube allow almost anyone with a connection and the right digital equipment to produce their own content for people around the world to see. Further, according to some experts, the future of high-quality programming is on the Internet and this is where Latin@s can be included in a larger part of the media landscape in terms of both representation and production. Latin@ producers are making their mark in a variety of online and digital platforms, individually, in joint ventures, and through Latin@-focused media associations.

In 2013, Robert Rodriguez created El Rey Network, a 24-hour English-language cable venture that offers programming to about 40 million U.S. cable subscribers to Comcast and Time Warner Cable and to DirecTV customers. The Texas-based network has a distinctly Latino point of view, and its programming includes a wrestling series, “Lucha Underground,” based on the Mexican lucha libre sport, a variation of wrestling (Spangler 2015). In addition, Rodriguez has moved beyond traditional methods of casting; the creator of the Spy Kids series has gone online to search for talent (Spangler 2015). He has also teamed up with Jeff Gomez, CEO of Starlight Runner and a leader in transmedia approaches to content, to produce a host of multiplatform products around the Lucha Libre series.

Organizations such as the National Association of Latino Independent Producers (NALIP) have worked to support the development of Latin@ producers and directors. According to NALIP, since its creation in 1999, the organization has grown to more than 40,000 members online. The group supports up-and-coming directors through training and development programs such as the Latino Producers Academy and the Latino Writers Lab. In 2015, NALIP created LatinoLens, which concentrates on the following four areas: narrative, digital/tech, documentary, and TV/streaming (NALIP 2015). While the examples discussed above are viewed as positive steps, and perhaps they are harbingers of what could come in the future, at present, they remain exceptions to the general media landscape.

Given the challenges and structural factors that have excluded Latin@s from fully participating in the media landscape, the authors reaffirm a call for further research. We find valuable the suggestion made by Anguiano and Castañeda (2014) to approach the subject from an interdisciplinary and CRT perspective. The authors also suggest that, given the geopolitical factors that have influenced migration patterns, scholarship should examine the topic of representation from a transnational perspective. There are numerous questions and areas of import that remain unanswered or unclear, such as: the grand paradox between targeting Latin@s as consumers, but not as producers; the continued lack of diversity in newsrooms; the exclusion and symbolic annihilation of Latin@s on the big and small screens; and analyses of content produced by general media, alternative media,
and by Latin@s themselves. Without continued and further research on the subject, students and scholars alike are left scratching their heads about the disconnect between the demographic realities and contemporary patterns of Latin@ media production and (mis)representation.

Notes
1 The authors opt for the terms Latin@s (Latinos/as) and Hispanics interchangeably to refer to U.S.-born men and women of Latin-American origin, as well as immigrants from nations in Latin America and the Caribbean. Both terms are used throughout the United States, although the term Hispanic is more frequently used in the eastern part of the US, while Latino/a is used more frequently in the western US, even though the majority (54 percent) tend to identify with their country of origin and only 24 percent prefer the usage of these panethnic labels (Taylor et al. 2012).
2 The annexation of more than half of the country of Mexico and the Puerto Rican territory resulted in the incorporation of major Latin@ groups, and after WWII, the Bracero Program brought around 100,000 workers a year. The guest-worker program would last in one form or another until 1965, when it ended (González 2011: 103). During the latter half of the twentieth century, the expansion of U.S. economic and political intervention in Latin America led to population flows in the opposite direction of U.S. capital interests in the region (Retis 2006, 2014).
3 The groups that arrived during the second half of the twentieth century settled in “ethnic enclaves” (Portes and Wilson 1980) formed in previous decades by other Latin@s due to strengthening of transnational immigrant networks (Menjivar 1997; Hodagneu-Sotelo 1994) consolidating initial processes of geographical concentration.
4 It should be noted that while in some cases the series breaks from some ethnic stereotypes, it continues to reinforce a somewhat stereotypical gendered image of the “hot” and highly sexualized Latina.

References


Latin@s


Further Reading


Gonzalez, J. (2011) *Harvest of Empire: A History of Latinos in America*. New York: Penguin. (Describes and explains the long history of Latinos and Latinas in the United States and the important contributions they have made.)