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## Utah State University's Cache Valley Latinx Voices Project: Social Justice in the Archives

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## **Cover Page Footnote**

The authors wish to thank Elisaida Méndez and Jorge Rodas for their expertise and hard work that made this project a reality, as well as all the generous interviewees and interviewers who worked to preserve the important voices of Latino/as in Cache Valley.

# Utah State University's Cache Valley Latinx Voices Project: Social Justice in the Archives

Randy Williams  
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## ABSTRACT

Northern Utah Speaks is an in-depth ethnographic effort by Utah State University Libraries' Special Collections and Archives (SCA) to bring diverse voices of Northern Utah communities into the Archives. Since 2006, the focus is with social justice in mind as SCA endeavors to bring the voices of underrepresented and historically excluded people into the Archives. Calls to make archival records more inclusive stretch back fifty years, however for many archival institutions this work has moved forward in fits and starts, if at all, and most often without the input and assistance from the community to be studied, collected, and included. In 2007, USU partnered with the local Latino community to produce the award-winning Latino/a Voices Project that collaboratively and ethically gathered, preserved, and now presents the voices from Cache Valley's robust Latinx communities. The interviews explore the richness and diversity of Latinos and Latinas in Cache Valley. Through archiving the voices from a small but representational section of the local Latinx community, the Project allows opportunities for equal participation and representation of the Hispanic community in the local archive, and thus the social fabric of the community for present and future researchers, enhancing scholars' ability to reconstruct our shared history.

Cache Valley is nestled between jagged mountain ranges and sits astride Northern Utah and Southeastern Idaho.<sup>1</sup> Home to the Shoshone Nation, by the early 1800s fur traders and mountain men began moving through the area capitalizing on its abundance of prey and plentiful water. In 1857, members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Church of Jesus Christ) of mainly western European descent settled in the Valley. Today, this ethno-religious community continues as the overwhelming majority. Over the years, other diverse groups have come to the Valley, including itinerant Japanese laborers, migrant Mexican agricultural workers, and Non-Church of Jesus Christ Utah State University (USU) students and academics. More recently, people have arrived from all parts of South and Central America, Vietnam, Myanmar, Eritrea, and Somalia, among other places. Today, while the area is more

1. The authors wish to thank Carrie Reed for editorial assistance with this article.

“racially diverse,” for many, integration into the seemingly homogeneous local community proves difficult.<sup>2</sup> Religious, ethnic, and cultural differences often hinder their inclusion. This is especially true for the Latinx community, the largest minority group in the Valley.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, integration into local repositories can also prove difficult for many minority communities.

The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate the significant impact of and critical need for documenting and depositing in an archive, minority oral histories (and associated materials) of people who have contributed to and helped shape the social framework of their communities, but whose narratives have previously been absent, even omitted, from this record. Likewise, this article will show the diversity of the Latinx population in Cache Valley and give a historical overview of the arrival of Latinx in the western U.S., Utah, and Cache Valley.

USU’s Special Collections and Archives (SCA) is home to the Fife Folklore Archives (FFA), the repository of folklore and oral history holdings. FFA Curator Randy Williams had an “aha” moment in 2006, as she prepared to move the folklore collections from the old, soon-to-be-torn-down Merrill Library to the new Merrill-Cazier Library. It occurred to her that the life experiences and languages of Cache Valley’s ethnic communities that she saw and heard locally were not represented in SCA holdings. While much is preserved—and therefore written about—from Cache Valley’s Church of Jesus Christ pioneers and their settlements, other groups in the Valley, including the Latinx communities, have not enjoyed the same archival presence. Thus, in 2007, Williams partnered with Cache Valley Latinx communities to preserve the voices of the Valley’s Hispanic community in the Latinx Voices Project (LVP). She worked with community scholars, including co-authors Eduardo Ortiz and María Luisa Spicer-Escalante, and organizations, to document the stories of 45 adult community members (Phase I: 2007) and eight Latinx students at Mountain Crest High School in Hyrum, Utah (Phase II: 2012).<sup>4</sup>

The lack of an archival presence for many minorities in archival holdings mirrors what occurs in many communities. Throughout the United States there are “significant numbers of people who have never been assimilated,” *embraced and*

2. Ross Peterson, *A History of Cache County* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Utah State Historical Society, Cache County Council, 1997), 342.
3. When launched, the project was the Latino/Latina Voices Project, noting Latino (men) and Latina (women) voices. Today, the term Latinx defines both. Thus in October 2018, the team changed the name to Latinx Voices Project. As with Latino/a, Latinx more fully reflects the voices collected, specifically those from Latin America, the Caribbean, and the U.S. For purposes of this article the authors occasionally use Hispanic, which while also reflective of this community, denotes a specific relationship with ancient Hispania (Iberian Peninsula) and those speaking Spanish.
4. For a detailed description of the Latinx Voices Project (formerly Latino/Latina Voices Project) see Williams’s article in USU’s DigitalCommons: Randy Williams, “01: Voices: USU’s Latino/a Voices Project,” *Latino Voices in Cache Valley*, 3 (2012), [https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/latino\\_voices/3/](https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/latino_voices/3/) (accessed October 22 2018).

*included*, into the fabric of the local society, nor been given a place in archival holdings.<sup>5,6</sup> This is true in Cache Valley, Utah where the predominant population often excludes minorities. Archival repositories, in part because sources are more prevalent for the predominant culture, have also been remiss in representing minorities in their holdings.<sup>7</sup> Thus in an effort to ameliorate this inequity and build a more representative archive, SCA has made documenting the lives of Cache Valley's minority populations a focus beginning with its LVP. Yet the inclusions from all classes and walks of life from Cache Valley were not a collecting focus for SCA (established in 1965) until nearly forty years later.<sup>8</sup> Focused work for greater inclusion began in 2003 with Northern Utah Speaks (NSU) to help address the need for greater diversity of voices—especially underrepresented communities—into the archives.<sup>9</sup>

In the introduction to their edited volume *Through the Archival Looking Glass: A Reader on Diversity and Inclusion*, Mary A. Caldera and Kathryn M. Neal write that “the literature on documenting underrepresented communities” began in 1970 with Howard Zinn’s Society of American Archivist (SAA) address.<sup>10</sup> Zinn, speaking about social justice, war, and archival professionalism, asks the audience (and later readers) to question the “status quo” in the archives. Which is exactly what Williams did. He ends his remarks by calling on archivists to “take the trouble to compile a whole new world of documentary material, [a]bout the lives, desires, needs of ordinary people.”<sup>11</sup> In 1975, F. Gerald Ham began his essay “The Archival Edge” with the charge that “our most important and intellectually demanding task as archivists is to make an informed selection of information that will provide the future with a representative

5. The word assimilate conjures up feelings of colonialism, and of removing a community’s culture to replace it with another—that is not the focus of this article. The authors are writing about inclusion not assimilation. Richard O. Ulibarri, “Utah’s Ethnic Minorities: A Survey,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 40, no. 3 (1972): 210-232.
6. Through extensive interviews with “Hispanic and non-Hispanic” residents of a rural Idaho town, sociologist Richard Baker’s research reveals deep-seated racial attitudes and subtle—and sometimes not so subtle—behaviors that impede “equal participation of Mexican Americans in the town’s social processes and institutions.” Richard Baker, *Los Dos Mundos: Rural Mexican Americans, Another America* (Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, 1995), back cover.
7. Patricia Montiel-Overall, Annabelle Villaescusa Nuñez, and Verónica Reyes-Escudero, *Latinos in Libraries, Museums, and Archives: Cultural Competence in Action! An Asset-Based Approach* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 2015).
8. Utah State University, “History and Traditions,” <https://www.usu.edu/about/history/> (accessed March 27, 2018).
9. Special Collections & Archives, “Northern Utah Speaks,” Utah State University, <https://archives.usu.edu/folklo/northernutahspeaks.php> (accessed October 22, 2018).
10. Mary A. Caldera and Kathryn M. Neal, “Introduction,” in *Through the Looking Glass: A Reader on Diversity and Inclusion*, ed. Caldera and Neal (Chicago: SAA, 2018), xv.
11. Howard Zinn, “Secrecy, Archivists, and the Public Interest,” *Midwestern Archivist* 2, no. 2 (1977): 25.
12. F. Gerald Ham, “Archival Edge,” *The American Archivist* 38 (Winter 1975): 5.

record of human experience in our time.”<sup>12</sup> He ends the piece with some recommendations:

*Finally, the archivist must realize that he [or she] can no longer abdicate his role in this demanding intellectual process of documenting culture.... He must know the scope, quality, and direction of research in an open-ended future depends upon the soundness of his judgement and the keenness of his perceptions about scholarly inquiry. But if he is passive, uninformed, with a limited view of what constitutes the archival record, the collections that he acquires [or creates with partners] will never hold up a mirror for mankind. And, if we are not holding up a mirror, if we are not helping people understand the world they live in, and if this is not what archives is all about, then I do not know what it is we are doing that is all that important.*<sup>13</sup>

Ham’s words, written at the conclusion of the Vietnam War and within a decade of the Cultural Revolution in the 1960s, speak truth to the ideals of new social history and the aims of U.S. folklorists.

Recent archival writings detail the progress made since Zinn’s charge toward inclusivity of excluded voices in archives and decision-making in regard to archival collection control. This progress includes indigenous knowledge and human rights (Mifflin), inclusion of Native communities (Walters); efforts with community autonomy and social justice (Williams and Duncan); memory, accountability, and social justice (Jimerson); Latinos and cultural competence in action, and work inside archival institutions (Thibodeau); and areas to improve in archival inclusivity, integrating ethical considerations (Behrnd-Klodt and Wosh).<sup>14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20</sup>

13. Ibid., 13.

14. Jeffrey Mifflin, “Regarding Indigenous Knowledge in Archives,” in *Through the Looking Glass: A Reader on Diversity and Inclusion*, ed. Caldera and Neal (Chicago: SAA, 2018), 61-90.

15. Kim Walters, “Respecting Their Word: How the Braun Research Library Works with Native Communities,” in *Through the Looking Glass: A Reader on Diversity and Inclusion*, Caldera and Neal, editors, (Chicago: SAA, 2018), 177-194.

16. Randy Williams and Jennifer Duncan, “Voices from Drug Court: Partnering to Bring the Voices of Historically Excluded Communities into the Archives,” *Journal of Western Archives* (2019).

17. Randall C. Jimerson, *Archives Power: Memory, Accountably, and Social Justice* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2009).

18. Ibid.; Montiel-Overall, Nuñez, and Reyes-Escudero.

19. Sharon Thibodeau, “Building Diversity Inside Archival Institutions,” in *Through the Looking Glass: A Reader on Diversity and Inclusion*, ed. Caldera and Neal (Chicago: SAA, 2018): 195-211.

20. Menzi L. Behrnd-Klodt and Peter J. Wosh, editors, *Privacy and Confidentiality Perspectives: Archivists and Archival Records* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005).

In the third edition of *The Oral History Reader* (2016), Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson introduce the “Advocacy and Empowerment” section with these apt words:

*Knowledge and understanding about the past have a profound impact upon contemporary social and political life. Though the use of recorded interviews is not necessarily a radical historical intervention in itself, many oral historians [folklorists, archivists, community scholars] aim to transform both history and society through their work. Oral history testimony is frequently used alongside other sources to recover neglect or silenced accounts of past experience, and as a way of challenging dominate histories that underpin repressive attitudes and policy. Some oral historians involve interviewees in the process of interpreting their lives and developing strategies for personal and social change.<sup>21</sup>*

This is true of the Latinx Voices Project—both Ortiz and Spicer-Escalante are interviewees. The chapters in the “Advocacy and Empowerment” section work to give voice to people in post-apartheid Cape Town (Field), efforts with Inuit youths and elders (Payne), and narrative accounts of people with learning disabilities (Rolph and Walmsley).<sup>22, 23, 24</sup>

A survey of WorldCat and ArchiveGrid reveals many oral history efforts over the last thirty years with Latinx (Hispanic) people and communities throughout the U.S. Many reflect the desire, as with the FFA, for greater inclusion in archives of hitherto excluded voices, including local and topical considerations. An example is “The Hispanic Rural Teachers Oral History Project, 1989-1997,” produced by the Center for Regional Studies and the Southwest Hispanic Research Institute at the University of New Mexico, housed at the University of New Mexico’s Zimmerman Library. “The goal of this oral history project was to document the lives of Hispanic women who were devoted to educating children in rural New Mexico during the period surrounding statehood.”<sup>25</sup> This project, like the LVP, aims to show the important contributions of Latinas (and Latinos) in the western U.S. The University of Utah’s

21. Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson, editors, *The Oral History Reader* (London and New York: Routledge, 3rd edition, 2016), 569.
22. Sean Field, “Imagining Communities: Memory, Loss and Resilience in Post-Apartheid Cape Town,” in *The Oral History Reader* (London and New York: Routledge, 3rd edition, 2016), 581-94.
23. Carol Payne, “‘You Hear It in Their Voice’: Photographs and Cultural Consolidation Among Inuit Youths and Elders,” in *The Oral History Reader* (London and New York: Routledge, 3rd edition, 2016), 611-25.
24. Sheena Rolph and Jan Walmsley “Oral History and New Orthodoxies: Narrative Accounts in the History of Learning Disability,” in *The Oral History Reader* (London and New York: Routledge, 3rd edition, 2016), 656-673.
25. “Inventory of the Hispanic Rural Teachers Oral History Project, 1989-1997 (bulk 1992),” The University of New Mexico, University Libraries, Center for Southwest Research, 2000, <https://rmoa.unm.edu/docviewer.php?docId=nmuumss634bc.xml> (accessed October 26, 2018).

“Hispanic Oral Histories, 1984-1987 Project,” was conducted by the Oral History Institute of Salt Lake City, Utah, to “document the interaction between the dominant culture and various minority cultures in Utah. Interviews were conducted with members of individual ethnic and cultural groups including members of the dominant white culture.”<sup>26</sup> Another compelling and inclusive project.

In her 2016 “Diversity in Archives” blog post for *The National Archives*, Vicky Iglkowski noted that the aim of The National Archives’ annual Diversity Week efforts were to “showcase the work we do all year round to tease out diverse stories or ‘hidden’ histories from our records and share them with as wide an audience as possible.”<sup>27</sup> However, she notes that some question whether diverse history months are still necessary.

*This always seems a topic of hot debate every time LGBT History Month or Black History Month rolls around. Do history months confine an already marginalised history to one month a year, or do they promote for a short period a history that is developing all year round on a national stage?*<sup>28</sup>

Along with working to make space for diverse collections in archives “all year round,” it is important to make space for diversity of *the lenses applied* by archivists and curators in collection building, processing, and guide preparation, allowing for lenses that can tease out diverse issues inside collections, spotlighting “hidden diversity.” In her article “Queering the Archive: Transforming the Archival Process,” Lizeth Zepeda turned a queer lens to the Sarah S. Valencia Collection, held at the Arizona Historical Society. While processing the 1860s collection of Valencia, a Mexican–American woman and her family, Zepeda found “queerness” which she explains “could have only been discovered through a queer of color lens.”<sup>29</sup> We can apply the diversity lens, which Zepeda notes, by employing curatorial diversity to change “how we define lives and allows for infinite possibilities of inclusivity for social justice and reframing of history” in our holdings.<sup>30</sup>

However, as Ian Johnston suggests in his article “Whose History is it Anyway?” there are still challenges to fully representing the faces and voices from a community in the archives, especially in regards to ethics, representation, objectivity, and

26. “Hispanic Oral Histories, 1984-1987,” Oral History Institute, University of Utah Libraries Special Collections, <http://archiveswest.orbiscascade.org/ark:/80444/xv46923> (accessed October 26, 2018).

27. Vicky Iglkowski, “Diversity in Archives” blog post for The National Archives, January 18, 2016, <http://blog.nationalarchives.gov.uk/blog/diversity-archives/> (accessed 15 May 2018).

28. Ibid.

29. Lizeth Zepeda, “Queering the Archive: Transforming the Archival Process,” *disclosure* 27, no. 17 (July 2018), 94.

30. Ibid.

neutrality.<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless, it is gratifying to know that real gains are being made in the archival community for inclusivity in collecting and processing. And, although this work may come in fits and starts, committed-to-diversity archives and archivists endeavor to build on the best practices of the past and discard outmoded and outdated ways of working (and thinking), all in an effort to create an archival record that reflects the lives of ordinary people, especially the excluded.<sup>32</sup> Under this context, and in order to amend the situation at Utah State University, the Latinx Voices Project was SCA's first attempt to build a more inclusive archive.

As noted, the shifting cultural trends in the 1960s planted the seeds for this work. The rise of new social history, folklore, ethnic, and gender studies programs encouraged scholars to look at the others in history, work to record, and tell their stories. In 1966, folklorists Austin and Alta Fife deposited their extensive folklore collections made up of ethnographic fieldwork at the USU Merrill Library and labored tirelessly to establish the Fife Folklore Archives (FFA) in 1972. In 1975, USU established a companion Folklore Program in the English Department. The folklore archive housed in USU's brand new Special Collections and Archives, in concert with the academic program, focused on teaching students to collect, preserve, analyze, and present the voices of everyday men and women.<sup>33</sup> The Fifes and their USU academic folklore descendants and student collectors helped to give voice to an array of communities. Over a quarter century lapsed, however, before FFA launched its effort to train collectors and sustain in-depth ethnographic inquiry of the area, especially focused on underrepresented communities, with Northern Utah Speaks (NUS). Inclusion of these *other* voices into the local repository is helping to weave disparate communities into the fabric of society. Williams, a trained folklorist launched NUS using a folkloric lens.

Before we share the details of the Latinx Voices Project, we believe some historical context is necessary in order to understand the circumstances of Latinx in the western U.S. and Cache Valley in general, and therefore a strong need for representation in USU's Archive.

31. Ibid.; Caldera and Neal, xvi.

32. Ibid.; Zinn, 5.

33. Examples include Austin and Alta Fife's fieldwork on folklore of members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Fife Mormon Collection, 1940-1976: <http://archiveswest.orbiscascade.org/ark:/80444/xv34716>), western songs (Fife American Collection, 1940-1976: <http://archiveswest.orbiscascade.org/ark:/80444/xv14770>), and vernacular architecture (Fife Slide Collection of Western U.S. Vernacular Architecture: <http://digital.lib.usu.edu/cdm/landingpage/collection/Slides>). The USU Graduate Student Fieldwork Collection, 1984-2012 has many examples of the "every day man and woman": <http://archiveswest.orbiscascade.org/ark:/80444/xv78375>. The Grouse Creek (Utah) Cultural Survey Collection, July 1985-October 2016, a joint project with the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress, has examples of modern-day ranch culture and practices in a homogenous, rural Northern Utah community: <http://archiveswest.orbiscascade.org/ark:/80444/xv88137>.

Before the onset of Anglo settlement, generations of Mexican and other Hispanic families lived in the western U.S. The history of Mexican-American people is inevitably and closely related to the history of the state of Utah. However, Utah's mainstream history largely fails "to consider the participation of Mexican-American people." This "oversight prevails even though Utah is an important part of the Southwest."<sup>34</sup> In 1848, Mexico lost half of its territory to the United States in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Outnumbered but never silenced, the voices of Hispanic people persisted throughout the Southwest. Although the Hispanic presence in Utah was less than in other states such as Arizona, California, Colorado, or New Mexico, "the limited presence of Mexican Americans in the Utah territory at the beginning of the century does not disqualify the Utah territory as part of Mexican American history, as traced back to the Aztecs."<sup>35</sup>

After 1910, the U.S. saw a rise in Mexican migration due to a turbulent revolution and poor economic conditions in Mexico. Many Mexicans came to work in low-paying railroad, mining, and agricultural jobs where they "composed a large but obscure segment of the United States population."<sup>36</sup> Yet it was not until World War II that Utah witnessed its first large wave of Mexican immigration. Designed to bolster the defense industry, Mexico and the United States established the Bracero Program that allowed large numbers of Mexicans to work in the U.S. for short periods, most for low wages.<sup>37</sup> Although the Bracero Program formally ended in 1964, workers from Mexico and other parts of Central America continued coming to the U.S., creating in Utah "an energetic Mexican-American culture."<sup>38</sup> In part, the Bracero Program explains the large Mexican presence in the U.S., which accounts for 64% of the total U.S. Hispanic population; and particularly their presence in Utah, where the Hispanic population accounts for 13% of the total population today.<sup>39</sup>

34. Armando Solórzano, "Struggle over Memory," *Aztlan* 23, no. 2 (1998): 81.

35. Jorge Iber, *Hispanics in the Mormon Zion, 1912-1999* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2000), xvi, 182; Solórzano, 81-82.

36. Rosemary Cole Washburn, "Los Betabeleros: Hispanic Sugar Beet Laborers in Cache Valley, 1941-1981" (Master's Thesis, Utah State University, 2002), 1.

37. Bracero Program, 1942: During the Great Depression in the U.S., many Mexican laborers were deported, and others forced to leave. Then during WWII, with the demand for labor, the Bracero Program opened the door for manual laborers from Mexico to come to the U.S. and work, starting with agricultural laborers and spreading to other labor markets. See: Guadalupe Váldez, "Bilingualism and Language Use Among Mexican Americans," in *New Immigrants in the United States*, ed. Sandra Lee McKay & Sau-ling Cynthia Wong (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 99-136.

38. Edward H. Mayer, "The Evolution of Culture and Tradition in Utah's Mexican-American Community," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 49 (1981):133.

39. "A Demographic Portrait of Mexican-Origin Hispanics in the United States," Pew Research Hispanic Trends Project, May 1 2013, <http://www.pewhispanic.org/2013/05/01/a-demographic-portrait-of-mexican-origin-hispanics-in-the-united-states/> (accessed March 28, 2018); U.S. Census Bureau, "The Hispanic Population: 2010," May 2011, <http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-04.pdf> (accessed March 28, 2018); Pew Research Center: Hispanic Trends, "Demographic profile of Hispanics in Utah, 2014," <http://www.pewhispanic.org/states/state/ut/> (accessed March 28, 2018).

Other Hispanic groups, such as Bolivians, Argentinians, Salvadorans, and Dominicans, driven by the political, social, educational, and economic challenges in their native countries came to the U.S. looking for new opportunities and for an alternate way of life. As of 2017, 57.5 million Hispanics live in this country, representing approximately 17.8% of the total U.S. population.<sup>40</sup>

Early Utah Hispanic communities were located mainly in the Salt Lake City and Ogden areas of northern Utah, where members worked in the mines, for the railroad, as shepherds, or migrant fieldworkers. Later, large numbers of Hispanics relocated to Carbon County, where they found work in Utah's coal mines.<sup>41</sup> More recently, the Latinx population has spread to other less densely populated and fairly homogenous areas of Utah, including Cache Valley.

In 1970, less than 1% of Cache Valley's population was Hispanic/Latinx; however, by 2010 that percentage surged to more than 10%—an increase of more than 3,208%.<sup>42</sup> Historically by far, the largest Latinx group in Cache Valley are immigrants from Mexico. Today, nearly three-fourths of Cache Valley's Latinx population is of Mexican descent; and 18 of the 53 Project interviewees trace their roots back to Mexico. The Hispanic Latinx population in Cache Valley also includes a large number of young second-generation immigrants, those born in the U.S. but having at least one foreign parent. Furthermore, the current percentage of Latinx youth in Cache Valley represents a large proportion of its total group population.

Beginning in 1941, Cache Valley farmers who “relied on sugar beets as an important cash crop” heavily recruited and depended on Mexican agricultural workers, known as *betabeleros*, to do the tedious and backbreaking work of culling and harvesting sugar beets.<sup>43</sup> Because of the poor economic situation in Mexico, the *betabeleros* were in a desperate situation and labored for low wages, often at the mercy of their employers, because of the workforce's undocumented and therefore marginal status in the community. This represented one of the first large-scale immigration influxes of Hispanics in Cache Valley, lasting until 1981.<sup>44</sup>

40. “Facts for Features: Hispanic Heritage Month 2017,” United States Census Bureau, August 31, 2017, <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/facts-for-features/2017/hispanic-heritage.html> (accessed October 22, 2018); Antonio Flores, “How the U.S Hispanic Population Is Changing,” Pew Research Center, <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/09/18/how-the-u-s-hispanic-population-is-changing/> (accessed March 28, 2018).

41. Iber; Mayer; Solórzano; Armando Solórzano, Lisa M. Ralph and Lynn J. England “Community and Ethnicity: Hispanic Women in Utah's Carbon County,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 76, no. 1 (2010), 58-75.

42. Table generated in October 2013 for each census year from 1970 to 2010 using census data for Cache Valley, Utah, using Social Explorer, <http://www.socialexplorer.com/>.

43. Rosemary Washburn Cole, “Los Betabeleros,” 1.

44. Ibid.

An important political event allowing Latinx to relocate to other areas of Utah and the nation was the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA), also known as the Simpson-Rodino bill. This bill granted legal status to more than three million illegal workers in the U.S., of which about 70% were Mexican descendants.<sup>45</sup> Suddenly, workers who had been in the U.S., either as *braceros* (manual laborers) or doing other jobs, were allowed to bring their families and to move freely within the U.S. to pursue new opportunities and develop a more stable life for themselves and their families. IRCA made possible the geographic dispersion of Mexican immigrants from traditional gateway regions, such as California or Texas, to other less racial and ethnically diverse states, such as Utah. As large numbers of newly legalized Mexican immigrants left historic enclaves and dispersed geographically, other relatives and closely connected associates joined them soon afterwards.<sup>46</sup>

Concurrent with IRCA, the economic boom of the late 1980s brought job opportunities in areas not commonly known for high Latinx concentrations or places that were not the traditional destinations (outside of migrant farm work) for Latinx. One such place is Hyrum, Utah in the southern end of Cache Valley where the JB Swift & Company (formerly E. A Miller's) meatpacking plant is located.<sup>47</sup> The Latino workers at the meatpacking plant are an example of the immigration precedent set long ago by the Bracero Program, as well as the consequences of IRCA.<sup>48</sup>

During the past three decades, there has been a significant influx of workers from several parts of Mexico and Central America, who have historic connections with former braceros.<sup>49</sup> The *Salt Lake Tribune* reported on Mexican workers from La Huacana, a region in the Mexican State of Michoacán, who came to Cache Valley

45. Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA), <https://www.uscis.gov/tools/glossary/immigration-reform-and-control-act-1986-irca> (accessed March 31, 2018): "Its major provisions stipulate legalization of undocumented aliens who had been continuously unlawfully present since 1982, legalization of certain agricultural workers, and sanctions for employers who knowingly hire undocumented workers, and increased enforcement at U.S. borders." Jorge Durand, Douglas S. Massey, and Emilio A. Parrado, "The New Era of Mexican Migration to the United States," *Journal of American History* 86 (1999), no. 2.

46. Kristin E. Neuman and Marta Tienda, "The Settlement and Secondary Migration Patterns of Legalized Aliens: Insights from Administrative Records," in *Immigration and Ethnicity: The Integration of America's Newest Arrivals*, ed. Barry Edmonston and Jeffrey Passel (Washington, D.C.: Urban Institute Press, 1994), 187-226.

47. Today, many of the workers at JBS are refugees from Myanmar (Burma), Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sudan, and Somalia. For more information on refugees in Cache Valley, see the Cache Valley Refugee Oral History Project, conducted by USU Special Collections and Archives as part of the 2015 USU/Library of Congress Field School on Cultural Documentation, <http://digital.lib.usu.edu/cdm/landingpage/collection/p16944coll14> (accessed January 29, 2019).

48. Jerry Kammer, "The 2006 Swift Raids: Assessing the Impact of Immigration Enforcement Actions at Six Facilities," Center for Immigration Studies, March 18, 2009, <http://cis.org/2006SwiftRaids> (accessed March 31, 2018).

49. *Ibid.*

“lured by job opportunities at various companies, including the Swift meatpacking plant in Hyrum. JBS provided steady jobs and good wages, but most immigrants,” the reporters allowed, “worked illegally under strangers’ names.”<sup>50</sup>

The Latinx Voices Project intersects with this history as this information is reflected in high school LVP participant Maria R’s explanation that her father came to Cache Valley from Michoacán, Mexico, to work at the Hyrum meat processing plant, without papers, on the advice of his brother.<sup>51</sup>

Like Maria’s father, many who came in the 1990s and 2000s to work at JBS were undocumented. The undocumented status of the workers would have serious repercussions. On December 12, 2006, U.S. Immigration agents “poured into the [Hyrum] Swift plant, arresting 154 undocumented Latino workers and charging all but seven with violating federal and state identity-fraud and immigration statutes.”<sup>52</sup> The raid, known as “Operation Wagon Train,” targeted six Swift & Company plants throughout the U.S. Swift & Company had been working with the Government for months to curb its practice of hiring undocumented/illegal workers and was aware of the impending raid. The company did not inform their workers.<sup>53</sup> The raid separated parents from children, husbands from wives, and brought the topic of immigration to the forefront in Cache Valley. Many community organizations worked to find temporary homes for the displaced children and families at Christmas time and to provide legal aid to those arrested.

It seems the *official* (Bracero Program and IRCA) and other times *unofficial* (looking the other way) invitations to Mexican laborers to come to the U.S. to perform jobs that others seemingly did not want to do, set the stage for undocumented workers to be hired by some employers for lower wages and in most cases with little protection. The raid brought to the surface heightened tensions between the Hispanic (deportees, illegal workers, affected families, other local Hispanic citizens) and the non-Hispanic (local non-Hispanic citizens, employers, law enforcement, and legislators). For the non-Hispanic majority community in Cache

50. Jennifer W. Sanchez and Tom Harvey, “Swift Raid Aftermath: Success or Human Tragedy,” *The Salt Lake Tribune*, February 10, 2008, [http://archive.sltrib.com/story.php?ref=/ci\\_8185714](http://archive.sltrib.com/story.php?ref=/ci_8185714) (accessed March 31, 2018). The suggestion of “good wages” is most likely relative to other wages received by Latinos during this time.

51. “Maria R. Interview, November 16, 2012,” Utah State University Special Collections & Archives, Latinx Voices Project Oral Histories, 2007, 2012, Latinx Voices of Cache Valley, FOLK COLL 38 Box 12 Folder 15, <http://digital.lib.usu.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/Latino/id/768> (accessed January 29, 2019).

52. Sanchez and Harvey.

53. Michael Chertoff, Julie L. Myers, and Deborah Platt Majoras, “Remarks by Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff, Immigration and Customs Enforcement Assistant Secretary Julie Myers, and Federal Trade Commission Chairman Deborah Platt Majoras at a Press Conference on Operation,” December 13, 2006, <https://www.hsdil.org/?abstract&did=475833> (accessed March 31, 2018).

Valley, most were not aware of U.S. programs and laws that initiated migration, both legal and illegal, for work by Mexican nationals. Fear, as is usually the case, had the objectionable effect of creating mistrust and misinformation among both non-Latinx and Latinx peoples in Cache Valley during this time. When in the midst of all this the *Logan Herald Journal* chose Leo Bravo, Director of the Multicultural Center of Cache Valley (now closed), as the 2006 Resident of the Year, the newspaper's publisher lamented how he received many calls from locals who threatened to cancel their paper subscriptions.<sup>54</sup>

Along with the hope of finding employment, Latinx families also moved to Cache Valley because it offered a safer place to raise their children. Sixteen-year-old Yasmeen Pineda noted in her 2012 interview for Phase II of the LVP that her Mexican-born parents chose to move to Utah from California because "there was a bunch of violence, and they heard that Utah was a quiet place to come and live, and raise a family."<sup>55</sup> Similarly, Ena Murillo, a local nurse practitioner who grew up in El Salvador during that country's civil war, observed that there "is peace and security here; you go out and you are not afraid of getting assaulted, robbed, and killed."<sup>56</sup> Fifteen-year-old Luis Madrigal's father moved the family from Michoacán, Mexico to Los Angeles, California, where Luis was born. In LA, his father became concerned about the growing gang activity and moved his family to Cache Valley.<sup>57</sup> These examples provide only a few reasons for the rapid and steady expansion of the Latinx population (especially those from Mexico) in Cache Valley during the last four decades.

The Latinx Voices Project began, as with all responsible ethnographic documentation projects, by reaching out to community scholars to help guide and direct the proposal. To facilitate this, Williams first created an advisory board drawn from local Latinx community members and university specialists. Under the board's direction, Williams applied for funding from the Marriner S. Eccles Foundation to

54. Bruce Smith, personal conversation with Randy Williams, January 2007.

55. "Yasmeen Pineda Interview, November 14, 2012", 2, Utah State University Special Collections & Archives, Latinx Voices Project Oral Histories, 2007, 2012, Latinx Voices of Cache Valley, FOLK COLL 38 Box 12 Folder 14, <http://digital.lib.usu.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/Latino/id/722/rec/1> (accessed March 31, 2018).

56. "Ena Murillo Interview, June 27, 2007", 8, Utah State University Special Collections & Archives, Latinx Voices Project Oral Histories, 2007, 2012, Latinx Voices of Cache Valley, FOLK COLL 38, <http://digital.lib.usu.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/Latino/id/555/rec/2> (accessed March 31, 2018).

57. "Luis 'Luigi' Madrigal Interview, November 16, 2012", Utah State University Special Collections & Archives, Latinx Voices Project Oral Histories, 2007, 2012, Latinx Voices of Cache Valley, FOLK COLL 38 Box 12 Folder 11, <http://digital.lib.usu.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/Latino/id/759/rec/2> (accessed March 31, 2018).

hire a native Spanish speaker with cultural currency to help direct the project and to train and engage interested Latinx community members to do the interviewing. Additionally, Williams applied for and received USU Institutional Review Board approval (1772), certifying that the community's best interests were foremost (a career-long aim for Williams) and showing institutional support.

Next, SCA advertised for a bilingual assistant director and received more than fifteen applications. SCA hired Elisaida Méndez, a native of Puerto Rico and a doctoral student in Psychology at USU. Drawing further from this pool, the Library also hired Jorge Rodas, a local real estate agent, to train project interviewers and recruit project interviewees. At 19, Rodas immigrated to the United States from Guatemala with his parents. He brought firsthand understanding of migration concerns, which mirrored the life histories of many of the interviewees. Furthermore, Rodas had personal experience with the two prominent religious traditions in Cache Valley's Latinx communities: The Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. These life experiences gave Rodas the cultural tools needed to introduce the project, get feedback from Latinx community members (which allowed the team to revise the project goals), and enlist their help and support.

Embedding community scholars directly, with *paid opportunities*, in all aspects of ethnographic documentation was critical to the Project's success. Also vital was the ability to gain the support and trust from the community being documented. To this end, Williams and Méndez followed the American Folklore Society best practice that enjoins oral history professionals to work "at the invitation of and with the collaboration of the members of [the] community."<sup>58</sup> By doing so, the team ensured that all literature, advertisements, forms, and training materials were in Spanish and English, providing access for many in the Hispanic community. The team employed translators to examine all of the documents, which Méndez and Spicer-Escalante (USU Professor of Linguistics & Spanish), meticulously reviewed. It is imperative to employ thoughtful and culturally-significant questions in an ethnographic documentation project.

After six months of preparation, the team began recruiting individuals to participate. Along with posting bilingual flyers throughout the collecting area, Rodas engaged the collecting community at barbershops, soccer games, *tiendas* (grocers), etc., in an effort to share project information and enlist interested community members. In June 2007, the team hosted an oral history workshop, supported by Utah Humanities and the Utah Division of State History. Sixteen community members attended and thirteen agreed to participate as interviewers.<sup>59</sup>

58. "AFS Position Statement on Research with Human Subjects," American Folklore Society, <http://www.afsnet.org/?page=HumanSubjects> (accessed March 27, 2018).

59. In March 2007, Williams trained five USU Spanish linguistics students who each interviewed one community member for course service learning.

**Ayudanos a Forjar la Historia Latina con el Proyecto de Voces Latinas de Utah State University**

<b>EVENTO:</b> Taller GRATIS para entrevistadores	<b>WHAT:</b> FREE workshop to train interviewers.
<b>POR QUE:</b> Aprenda a obtener la historia de su familia, amigos y vecinos. Contribuya al crecimiento de la colección latina de Utah State University	<b>WHY:</b> Learn to collect the life story of your family, friends & neighbors & help USU's Latino Collection grow
<b>CUANDO:</b> Sábado 2 de Junio, 10-3p.m. Se proveerá almuerzo	<b>WHEN:</b> Saturday 2 June, 10-3 p.m. lunch provided
<b>LUGAR:</b> Whitier Community Center, 290 Norte 400 Este, Logan	<b>WHERE:</b> Whitier Community Center, 290 North 400 East, Logan
<b>COMO:</b> Llame a Ellie al (435) 730-6101. La capacidad es limitada. Los participantes tendrán oportunidad de solicitar la posición de entrevistador con remuneración.	<b>HOW:</b> Call Ellie to sign up (435) 730-6101. Limited enrollment call NOW! Workshop participants will be eligible to apply to be paid interviewers.
<b>CUENTE SU HISTORIA:</b> Si desea ser entrevistado, ó conoce alguna persona que desee ser entrevistado, llame a Jorge al (435) 760-6941.	<b>TELL YOUR STORY:</b> If you are interested in being interviewed or know someone who would like to participate, let us know, call Jorge at (435) 760-6941.

Remover despues del 2 de Junio 2007 Post until 2 June 2007

 **UtahState UNIVERSITY** &  **MERRILL-CAZIER LIBRARY**  **UTAH STATE HISTORY**

Figure 1. Bilingual LVP advertising flyer.

The training was very successful. Méndez shared information on cultural sensitivity, Rodas taught community-building skills, while Williams taught oral history best practices. The participants clearly caught the vision of oral history work and expressed excitement at being part of this project. “I was very impressed with the scope and depth of this program,” exclaimed one, noting how similar projects should be pursued “in Davis County [Utah] where I grew up.” Participants universally expressed their belief that the Project would give a “voice to the Latino community... [and] help the Latino community feel more a part of Cache Valley.”<sup>60</sup> Méndez offered a similar sentiment as both “a member of this community, and a direct contributor to the project’s fulfillment, I cannot think of a better way to bring the Latino community to light.” The Project, she asserted, will illuminate the “qualities and strength of character that have helped [my community] forge a present and a future in a western corner of a great nation.”<sup>61</sup> At the conclusion of the workshop, Williams and Méndez worked with the community interviewers—most Spanish-first—to collect the important voices of Latinx community members in Cache Valley.

The LVP received a Human Ties Award from Utah Humanities, who provided generous funding, along with Utah State Division of History, for interview transcription. The Project also received support for translation and transcription from the Utah State Historical Records Advisory Board (USHRAB) and the Marriner S. Eccles Foundation.

By archiving the voices from a small but representational section of the local Latinx community, we submit that the LVP allowed opportunities for equal participation and representation of the Hispanic community in the local social fabric of Cache Valley. Interviewers asked questions that helped community members tell their story. This will enable future researchers to discover and include the story of Latinx in Cache Valley in written history. Questions included: Where did you come from? How long have you been here? Why did you come? How did the dominant community accept you?

In 2008 as an effort to solicit guidance for the review and analysis of the voices in the LVP collection, Williams and Méndez hosted a Latinx Voices Project Symposium that included the authors and some interviewees and interviewers. This article is an outgrowth of that gathering, which called for the active presentation and analysis of the voices in the Project. Thus, using the voices in the collection, we highlight three themes found within the interviews: 1) the homelands of participants, 2) social justice concerns, and 3) efforts to preserve ethnic customs and traditions by Cache Valley Latinx. These are just a few of the topics and themes presented in the Latinx Voices Project. It is our hope that other researchers will use the collection to better tell the story of Cache Valley, Utah, and the Intermountain West.

60. Randy Williams, “01: Voices: USU’s Latino/a Voices Project,” *Latino Voices in Cache Valley*, 3 (2012), [https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/latino\\_voices/3/](https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/latino_voices/3/), 2 (accessed March 28, 2018).

61. *Ibid.*, 2-3.

## Life in Homelands

Project participants and other Latinx who relocated to live and work in Cache Valley include American citizens born in the United States, as well as those from Mexico, South America, Central America, and the Caribbean, many of whom are now U.S. citizens or have student visas, green cards, or work visas, and some who are undocumented. As such, Cache Valley's Latinx population reflects a wide array of human experiences. As the Project participants talked about their lives, they shared family traditions of work and leisure; educational experiences; the disquieting effects of war, poverty, illness and death; and their experiences of adapting and inclusion, or lack thereof, in Cache Valley society. For Yolanda Mendiola Bates, her childhood in Mexico was a mixture of trauma and triumph.<sup>62</sup> The experience at a young age of her parents' divorce was countered by her success as a world-class swimmer. A member of the Mexican National Swim Team, she received a full-ride swimming scholarship to Brigham Young University. While at BYU, she married a local and stayed in Utah where she continued her passion coaching young people in competitive swimming.

Clara Galeano talked about her childhood in Paraguay, living and working in the countryside and her difficult, yet critical, decision to move to Utah at 18 for medical reasons.<sup>63</sup> Since coming to the U.S., Galeano has undergone thirteen surgeries. She attended USU and worked at the English Language Center. Twice, she received the Utah Governor's Silver Bowl Award for service.

Maria R. was only six when she left Tanguancuaro, Michoacán, Mexico, with her mother.<sup>64</sup> They journeyed to join her father who, noted earlier, came to Cache Valley on the advice of his brother to work at the JBS Plant. Maria remembers the harrowing journey to the U.S., including the several days' walk across the scorching desert before crossing into Arizona. She paints a vivid picture of her encounter with border patrol dogs, "breathing on me...almost on me...I still remember [that]!" she exclaimed. Maria still finds this childhood experience unnerving. To this day, "when I see a dog with [its] the mouth open...I run...I'm [still] scared."<sup>65</sup>

62. "Yolanda Bates Interview 1, July 6, 2007," 6, Utah State University Special Collections & Archives, Latinx Voices Project Oral Histories, 2007, 2012, Latinx Voices of Cache Valley, FOLK COLL 38, <http://digital.lib.usu.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/Latino/id/645/rec/2> (accessed March 31, 2018).

63. "Clara Galeano Interview, April 4, 2007," Utah State University Special Collections & Archives, Latinx Voices Project Oral Histories, 2007, 2012, Latinx Voices of Cache Valley, FOLK COLL 38, <http://digital.lib.usu.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/Latino/id/520/rec/2> (accessed March 31, 2018). In Latin cultures, people have two last names; the first is the paternal name, used most often in the U.S., the second name is the maternal name. Not everyone in the LVP gave/used both names, most notably the youths; in these cases they used the paternal (first last name). As well, today some Latinas living in the U.S. use their maiden name as their middle and their married name as the last, like Ginny Martinez McGee and Yolanda Mendiola Bates.

64. "Maria R. Interview, November 16, 2012," 3.

65. *Ibid.*, 42.

Along with helping produce the Project, Jorge Rodas was interviewed. He characterized his life in Guatemala as “very nice,” “very peaceful.”<sup>66</sup> The youngest of seven children, Rodas’s parents supported his studies at the university. During the 1980s, as Guatemala’s “political situation [became] very unstable,” his family applied for and was granted political asylum in the U.S. There were “bombings,” he vividly recalled. “I personally saw the police kill a person.”<sup>67</sup> The family’s relocation to the U.S. allowed Jorge to continue his studies, resulting in fulfilling work and a rich family life.

High school student Karen Franco was born in Logan to an El Salvadoran mother and Guatemalan father. Her parents met while working in Cache Valley; today her father is a supervisor at a local manufacturing company. Franco, the youngest of six, works hard to get good grades, something her father desires. She believes her mother’s childhood was much harder than hers was. “I actually appreciate my parents a lot,” she said, when “we go over there [El Salvador] and I have seen the huge difference [from] here.” Franco laments stereotypes of her as a Latinx: “Oh, she’s probably pregnant.” She notes if we “try to combine, then maybe we can be a better Cache County.”<sup>68</sup>

John Hernandez was born and raised in Wendover, Utah.<sup>69</sup> His parents were both from Guadalajara, Mexico. John attended school, played sports, was an altar boy at the local Catholic Church, worked at the potash plant, and taught school in both Nevada and Utah. Part of his childhood memories revolve around food. He recalls, “our family was also quite famous in our town for the Mexican food they made. My mother was quite a good cook...they would make food and set up stands and have big fiestas at our house.... They’d bring Mexican music and food to gatherings.”<sup>70</sup> Retired now, John was a respected educator in Cache Valley and an ambassador for the Valley’s cycling community.

66. “Jorge Rodas Interview, July 13, 2007,” 3, Utah State University Special Collections & Archives, Latinx Voices Project Oral Histories, 2007, 2012, Latinx Voices of Cache Valley, FOLK COLL 38, <http://digital.lib.usu.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/Latino/id/580/rec/1> (accessed March 31, 2018).

67. *Ibid.*, 4.

68. “Karen Franco Interview, November 14, 2012,” 14, 23, Utah State University Special Collections & Archives, Latinx Voices Project Oral Histories, 2007, 2012, Latinx Voices of Cache Valley, FOLK COLL 38 Box 12 Folder 9, <http://digital.lib.usu.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/Latino/id/755/rec/1> (accessed March 31, 2018).

69. “John Hernandez Interview, June 18, 2007,” 3, Utah State University Special Collections & Archives, Latinx Voices Project Oral Histories, 2007, 2012, Latinx Voices of Cache Valley, FOLK COLL 38, <http://digital.lib.usu.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/Latino/id/570/rec/2> (accessed March 31, 2018).

70. *Ibid.*, 3-4.

## Social Justice

In the Pew Hispanic Center's *Changing Faiths: Latinos and the Transformation of American Religion* survey, 4,600 Latinx of all faiths were interviewed about their religious beliefs and behaviors and their association with political thinking. The respondents noted that religion deeply influences Latino political activity.<sup>71</sup> Nationally, many churches have established programs to address the political concerns of Latinx parishioners. Social justice, the egalitarian application of justice among all classes of people, is a preeminent political concern for many Latinx. Among Latinx in Cache Valley, the most important social justice concern is immigration. St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church has a social justice group, as does the local Unitarian Universalists Church, which allocates a part of members' church offerings toward scholarships for students applying for the now endangered Dream Act.<sup>72</sup> Cache Valley Unitarian Universalists also participated in the demonstration held in Phoenix in 2012 to protest Arizona's strict immigration laws.<sup>73</sup>

Other community organizations, such as Asociación Cultural Educativa Latino Americana, founded at Ogden, Utah in early 2000, have also been active in working for social, educational, political, and humanitarian causes.<sup>74</sup> Project contributor Rolando Murillo participated at the April 2013 rally in Salt Lake City, where he joined faith leaders and representatives of the League of United Latin American Citizens, to call for immigration reforms. Speaking to the gathering, he declared that immigration is "a human issue" and that "our main concern [is] the division of families and preserving the concept of humanitarianism that built this great nation of ours."<sup>75</sup> The event began and closed with prayer because, as Murillo confirmed, "this is a spiritual activity as we see it."<sup>76</sup>

Many Project participants confessed, however, that they had only limited interaction with the Anglo community in Cache Valley. Even so, they continue to seek areas of common interest, such as having regular social activities with their

71. "Changing Faiths: Latinos and the Transformation of American," Pew Research Center, April 25, 2007, <http://www.pewhispanic.org/2007/04/25/changing-faiths-latinos-and-the-transformation-of-american-religion/> (accessed March 30, 2018).

72. Beth Walden phone conversation with Randy Williams, October 29, 2013.

73. Ibid.

74. "Rolando Murillo Interview, June 28, 2007," 7, Utah State University Special Collections & Archives, Latinx Voices Project Oral Histories, 2007, 2012, Latinx Voices of Cache Valley, FOLK COLL 38, <http://digital.lib.usu.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/Latino/id/718/rec/1> (accessed March 31, 2018).

75. Rolando Murillo as quoted, Marjorie Cortez, "Faith Leaders Call for Immigration Reforms That Preserve Families," *Deseret News*, April 15, 2013, accessed March 31, 2018, <https://www.deseretnews.com/article/865578327/Faith-leaders-call-for-immigration-reforms-that-preserve-families.html?pg=all>.

76. Ibid.

neighbors or going to public social events. The integration process for Latinx represents a challenge that is influenced by levels of education, personality, time of residence, and willingness by themselves and the larger community to find opportunities for interaction. The lack of English language proficiency for many constitutes a significant barrier, as do cultural differences, including family traditions, music, and food. Some participants sensed a strong notion of “us” and “them.” Added to this is the implication of racial stereotyping.

“When I arrived in Utah,” Arian Baquero González remembered, “my first class was a fun biology workshop” where the class looked at stereotypes.<sup>77</sup> The class assignment paired two students together; each was given a slip of paper and in 30 seconds they were to write down their first impressions of their partner. Baquero, the only Latinx, recalled that “this quiet, quiet gal unfolded the paper.” I told her, “You got a Mexican Latino.” Inviting her to tell him what she had written and that he would not “get upset;” unfortunately, the words she had written did sting.<sup>78</sup> “She told me that we are ‘poor, lazy and uneducated.’”<sup>79</sup> You “cannot block that and that is truly what is in your head as a stereotype.”<sup>80</sup> The LVP shows otherwise.

## Preserving Customs and Traditions

Preserving customs and traditions in the face of such ungrounded stereotypes and with a growing sense of the need to integrate into the mainstream culture can present an enigma for Latinx who bring their homeland customs and knowledge with them to the U.S. These include folk attitudes, mores, aesthetics, and beliefs that inform worldview, and which are performed in very prescribed ways specific to respective homelands and ethnic communities. Preserving traditions often takes on a heightened sense of importance and meaning when a person is away from their homeland and family, and in some cases “maintaining traditions which may have changed or disappeared in the original home country” becomes a high priority.<sup>81</sup> Learning to negotiate the preservation of “old-world” traditions in a new country is both important and tricky. In some instances, trying to locate traditional music, adornments, and foods can be problematic. Several Cache Valley businesses address this need and supply the Latinx population with traditional goods, including *tiendas*, *panaderías* (bakeries), several dress shops, and many restaurants.

77. “Arian F. Baquero Interview, June 25, 2007,” 19, Utah State University Special Collections & Archives, Latinx Voices Project Oral Histories, 2007, 2012, Latinx Voices of Cache Valley, FOLK COLL 38, accessed March 31, 2018, <http://digital.lib.usu.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/Latino/id/500/rec/1>.

78. Ibid.

79. Ibid.

80. Ibid.

81. Barre Toelken, *The Dynamics of Folklore* (Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, 1996).

Some who were interviewed for the LVP noted that having to work on homeland holidays that are not celebrated in the U.S. can be difficult and often results in the shifting of holiday celebrations or adaptation to U.S. traditions for celebratory days. A native of Ecuador, Lara Linares takes “U.S. holidays off at the University, but these generally do not match our own symbolic holidays. So the 4th of July, for example, is important for the United States but doesn’t mean much to me; however, my daughters were born here and this will be their country, so you start to pay a little more attention.”<sup>82</sup> Similarly, fireworks are traditionally a part of Christmas and New Year’s celebrations in Rolando Murillo’s native El Salvador. We burned “a lot of gun powder, the fireworks and all that,” he stated. “Now we still do that but we don’t do it at Christmas and New Year’s; we do it on the 4th of July.”<sup>83</sup>

Although changing, the preservation of customs and traditions continues and serves multiple functions, including the desire to pass along homeland traditions, beliefs, and attitudes to younger generations, while introducing new world neighbors and family to old world ways. Enriqueta “Arce” Cuevas Carmona explained her pride in having been named for her uncle Enrique, “a true and admirable man. It is a name with a great force of power and also very kind, very generous with everyone,” attributes that she would like to attain.<sup>84</sup> Even so, when Enriqueta began elementary school in the U.S., her teacher complained that her first name was too hard for her to pronounce and asked Arce if they used a shorter name at home. She responded, “my family calls me ‘the chocolate one’ because I’m the dark one in the family.”<sup>85</sup> “No, no” her teacher told her, “that’s a nickname and I can’t call you a nickname at school.” Enriqueta explained this to her mother who told Enriqueta to use the English translation Henrietta, but when Enriqueta told her teacher, she still thought the name too long and shortened it to Henry. She went home crying and told her mom, “Mommy, I’m not a boy. I’m a girl.” She recalled, “I was a sea of tears. So she suggested they call me by my second name and that worked perfectly well,” she laughed.<sup>86</sup>

Another example of preserving customs and traditions is the *quinceañera*, which celebrates a Latina’s fifteenth birthday. A *quinceañera* is an elaborate rite of passage in which the family requests the support of the entire community to help “escort” the

82. “Lara Linares Interview, July 6, 2007,” 9, Utah State University Special Collections & Archives, Latinx Voices Project Oral Histories, 2007, 2012, Latinx Voices of Cache Valley, FOLK COLL 38, <http://digital.lib.usu.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/Latino/id/605/rec/2> (accessed March 31, 2018).

83. “Rolando Murillo Interview, June 28, 2007,” 8.

84. “Enriqueta Arce Cuevas Carmona Interview, July 24, 2007,” 2, Utah State University Special Collections & Archives, Latinx Voices Project Oral Histories, 2007, 2012, Latinx Voices of Cache Valley, FOLK COLL 38, <http://digital.lib.usu.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/Latino/id/590/rec/1> (accessed March 31, 2018).

85. Ibid.

86. Ibid.

young woman from childhood to young adulthood.<sup>87</sup> The event includes a religious ceremony and a family/community party with music, dancing, food, and traditional clothing, which has symbolic meanings—in some instances very similar to a wedding celebration in both pageantry and cost. A *quinceañera* is not just a birthday party (a tradition) but also a celebration of a continuation of a way of life (a worldview). In Cache Valley, many young women and their families continue to mark this transition with a *quinceañera*.

Maria R.'s family hosted a fairly traditional *quinceañera* for her fifteenth birthday. The celebration, held at Club New York in Logan, featured a band performing *banda* music, and included her parents, godparents, family, and friends. Her court of honor included nine *chambelanes* (boys); she chose not to have *damas* (girls). A highlight of the evening was the traditional first waltz with her father, an event of emotional consequence for both of them. There was also a doll exchange, traditional Mexican foods, and dancing. When asked about the significance of the *quinceañera*, Maria explained that it is “like you’re leaving your childhood (doll) behind and you’re going into adulthood.”<sup>88</sup>

While the *quinceañera* is a rite of passage for young Latinas, not all are celebrated in the same way. When given the option of a lavish party or a new car and a smaller celebration, Karen Franco chose the latter. Franco was born in Logan and wasn’t “really into” tradition. “I didn’t want to waste [money] in a salon—I just find it pointless. So we had it in the backyard of my house.... I didn’t want to wear a dress—I just wore a really nice outfit,” she recalled.<sup>89</sup> The one element of the *quinceañera* that Franco retained, however, was the sentimental “first dance” with her father. “I was emotional,” she laughed. “I don’t know, it’s just like that time you have with your dad. I don’t really talk to my dad a lot, but that time was just like, so close, and we were just talking. And because I’m not so traditional, I danced a song of *bachata*.”<sup>90</sup> Along with changes to traditions, there are adaptations. Luis Madrigal, whose mother often caters for local *quinceañeras*, notes that “traditionally *quinceañeras* were mainly for girls, but now they’re [*quinceañero*] starting to catch on with guys (in California, mostly), and it’s starting to catch on here.”<sup>91</sup>

Along with familial celebrations, folklorico groups that exist in Cache Valley desire to preserve the songs, dances, and stories associated with their homeland

87. “Quinceañera!: A Celebration of Latina womanhood,” *Voices: The Journal of New York Folklore Society* 28 (2002), <http://www.nyfolklore.org/pubs/voic28-3-4/onair.html> (accessed November 12, 2012); Norma E. Cantú and Olga Najera-Ramírez, *Chica Traditions: Continuity and Change* (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 2002).

88. “Maria R. Interview, November 16, 2012,” 20.

89. “Karen Franco Interview, November 14, 2012,” 6.

90. *Ibid.*, 6.

91. “Luis ‘Luigi’ Madrigal Interview, November 16, 2012,” 14.

traditions. Héctor Mendiola's wife, Margarita, he notes "had the idea of teaching [children] Mexican folk dance," and they performed at various venues in Cache Valley.<sup>92</sup> And Valley soccer leagues (recreational and club) provide another way for Latinos to connect to homeland lifeways.

For the majority of people interviewed, Christmas, Easter, country anniversaries, birthdays, and other significant lifecycle events continue to be celebrated in the U.S. Others that are not officially observed are recalled with fondness and discussed with children. For some parents whose children were born in the U.S., working to incorporate their homeland celebrations with their children is both a unique and exciting endeavor.

Each person interviewed for the Cache Valley Latinx Voices Project spoke about life in their homeland, including family relationships, local and family traditions, and social structures—religious, political, familial, work, and educational. They related stories about their lives in Utah now. The interviews explored the richness and diversity of Latinx in Cache Valley. It is our hope that the interviews will connect the reader to the complexities of worldviews of the Latinos and Latinas represented in the Latinx Voices Project. We believe that LVP serves as a springboard to enable fuller participation in the social fabric and written histories of local Latinx community members in Cache Valley. We believe that understanding and valuing where a person came from, whether Mexico or Wendover, Chile or Logan, can guide policy makers, educators, parents and neighbors, to better serve all Cache Valley citizens, including Latinx. We hope that the generation of "kids" growing up now will "see a very different Utah" from the ones their parents and older siblings know, one of greater inclusion, one that looks more like them.<sup>93</sup>

92. "Héctor Mendiola Interview, July 6, 2007," 10, Utah State University Special Collections & Archives, Latinx Voices Project Oral Histories, 2007, 2012, Latinx Voices of Cache Valley, FOLK COLL 38, <http://digital.lib.usu.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/Latino/id/565/rec/1> (accessed March 31, 2018).

93. Pam Perlich as quoted, Lee Davidson, "Utah Minority Population Gaining on Whites," *The Salt Lake Tribune*, June 13, 2013, <http://www.sltrib.com/sltrib/politics/56449431-90/percent-utah-population-2012.html.csp> (accessed January 15, 2014).