



INSIGHTS

Insights is a quarterly publication of Multicultural Insights

FOURTH QUARTER 2010

VOLUME 7, ISSUE 4

Dear Colleagues:

In this issue of *Insights* we bring you articles about the many ways Hispanics celebrate Christmas, about the vacancy in Hispanic leadership in the nation, and how we can learn from Hispanics health habits and live longer. In this issue we have also included a quiz...take a shot at identifying the advertising faux pas that could have been avoided by conducting a little research.

As always we welcome your comments and feedback. We wish you and your families a wonderful holiday season and a happy and prosperous New Year!

Feliz Navidad!

The Multicultural Insights Team



IN THIS ISSUE:

Does anyone celebrate “Las Navidades,” “Navidad” or “Las Pascuas” quite like Hispanics do?

By Jacqueline Sánchez-Volny

- Does anyone celebrate “Las Navidades”, “Navidad” or “Las Pascuas” quite like Hispanics do?
- National Latino Leader? The Job is Open.
- The Latino Paradox
- Poorly Research: Advertising Faux Pas

Yes, you read correctly: three names for one Holiday, Christmas. Correction, one Holiday Season (with emphasis on the *extended season*).

Oh, the Latin American Christmas traditions! So varied, so delightful. Some so reverent, others frankly, hilarious. And do U.S. Hispanics carry some of these traditions into their mixed culture here? Yes, some. But for a moment, let’s just revel in the traditions that still exist in full force in parts of Latin America today.

While the celebrations vary from country to country (or

even region to region) certain elements like nativity scenes; days of plays, processions, fireworks, caroling, and Christmas markets; Midnight Mass; the Three Kings; and endless days of parties dominate the festive landscape in Latin America.

Christmas in Latin America is unapologetically a religious holiday openly celebrated in people’s homes, in churches, in plazas, and in village and city streets where representations of the birth of Christ abound. Depictions of Santa and Christmas trees have also come on the scene, but the traditional, religious symbols dominate.

And it’s not just a holiday; it is an *extended season* during which daily life takes a marked transformation. In parts of Mexico government offices and even banks close for between one and two weeks. In Colombia, the celebrations open on December 7^h, the eve of the *Day of the Virgin Mary*, and in some countries end as late as February 2nd the day Christmas decorations are removed with still another religious and culinary festivity.

The most intensive celebrations of the season start on December 16th. Various

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

South American countries like Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela celebrate the days leading up to Christmas with the **nine-day Novena de Aguinaldos** (“*novena*” based on the number 9, plus “*aguinaldo*” which refers to either Christmas carols or tips given out to workers over Christmas). Believers meet in homes to pray the *rosary*, to sing religious carols sounding along with homemade rattles and using the tops of pans like cymbals, to share food, and to celebrate the joy of the season.

During these same nine days people attend a **5:30 am mass called Misa de Aguinaldo (Mass of the Carolers)** filled with singing, inspiring some to continue the caroling on their way out of the church as they head home. Venezuelans uniquely celebrate with *Patinetes (roller skating parties)* where children are awakened in the middle of the night (at 3 or 4 am) to burst out into the streets on roller skates while neighbors blast the rhythmic Christmas carols called *Gaitas*. After skating, dancing and playing in the streets, celebrants flock to the crack of dawn church services on *roller skates!* In many towns the roads are closed until 8am to allow for the festivities and pilgrimage on those mornings. Reportedly, during this *novena* season, Venezuelan children may sleep with a string around their toes that they hang out the windows, so that when skaters zip by they playfully tug at the

strings, like one tugging on the chord of a church bell.



Nacimientos or Peséberes (Nativity scenes) set up in homes as well as in churches and stores are often home made, elaborate, and may occupy whole rooms. They frequently depict an entire region, replete with hills, valleys and different village scenes. But the Nativity (the manger with the Holy Family) is the centerpiece. Typically, the figure of the Baby Jesus is not placed into the scene until after midnight of Christmas Eve, to symbolize Jesus’ birth. Different countries add their own unique flair. Costa Ricans for example decorate the manger scene, which they call a *portal*, with wild jungle orchids and brilliant fresh fruit. In fact, in all the festivities in Latin America, the manger scene is front and center, taking priority over Christmas trees (which have been growing in popularity) and certainly Santa.

In Mexico as well as in other countries, for the nine days preceding Christmas, groups of villagers, led by children (*Santos Peregrinos* or holy pilgrims) either dress up as characters in the nativity story, (even riding on donkeys), or, display images of the Holy Family in **mini candle lit processions called Posadas**. They reenact the Holy

Family’s journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem and their quest for lodging by going door to door, where they are initially “rejected” the first nights or first few tries. In Mexico, traditionally, the third house the pilgrims visit hosts the *Posada* for that night, where after songs and prayers around the nativity, participants enjoy hot punch and *tamales* (corn meal patties wrapped in corn husks and filled with a variety of flavorful fillings, from meats to sweets). On the last he last night, the celebration culminates with all who have participated in these eight nights of *posadas* being welcomed in for a grand celebration. Children smash a piñata, blindfolded until it breaks, showering them with candies, fruits, and little gifts, while adults enjoy ‘*ponche con piquete*’ (punch with a ‘sting’ of alcohol (something akin to a spiked apple cider). Nowadays, the *posada* tradition is sometimes distilled to nine less religious, consecutive days of parties in friends’ homes.

In other countries in Latin America, in lieu of a *posada*, **groups of carolers, called ‘Paranderos’** in Puerto Rico, go house to house (or farm to farm) sometimes dressed in costumes like Magi, or in Puerto Rico, dressed in straw hats like country peasants, accompanied by musical instruments. As they proceed they are invited in for food and drink. Often those whose home they have visited join in, and the crowd of celebrant carolers continues to grow and to parade through town. The custom in Puerto Rico is to playfully

“assault” the hosts anytime after 10pm and surprise them, so carolers sneak up to the door and start up the band, hoping to wake up their friends.

Friends and families stroll through the streets visiting **puestos (market stalls)** established in the plazas where an extensive array of traditional holiday foods, crafts and novelties, and poinsettias are sold. (And I bet you did not know what Christmas established Poinsettia’s as the Christmas flower?....Mexico!) .

The days leading up to Christmas include many more holiday celebrations including **Pastorelas, Christmas plays** held in the plazas or churches, and acts of charity towards the underprivileged like the *chocolatadas* of Peru where poor children receive a cup of hot chocolate and a small gift.

Now that we are all warmed up to the big event, let me tell you about what happens on the day and **night of the 24th of December, Noche Buena**, the highlight of the Christmas season. On *Noche Buena*, after days of culinary preparations, a grand dinner celebration, where more food is served than can be consumed, is shared with extended family and neighbors either before or after Midnight Mass. Friends and family may spend the day dropping in on each other all day and evening long, gathering to sing *villancicos* (carols) around the nativity, sharing fabulous

(Continued from page 2)

tasty treats and sometimes, exchanging gifts.

When I consider the noisy and explosive traditions in Venezuela, I cannot help but wonder if those who have any intention of sleeping past dawn on the 24th might not do well to wear earplugs. The arrival of Christmas Eve day is heralded in pre-dawn hours with firecrackers and church bells to awaken residents and draw them in for church services starting from very early morning. Basically, they leave you no room for any excuse. There's simply no way to have "overlooked" attending church on the 24th.

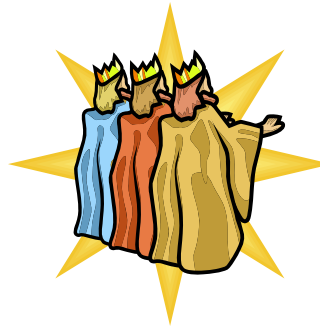


On this day, all over Latin America (including Cuba again after 1997) crowds of people from the truly devout to those who only attend services at Christmas and Easter, flock to **Misa de Gallo, (Mass of the Rooster) at midnight**. In Cuba, Fidel Castro had proclaimed the nation to be atheist 1962, but in 1997 when the Pope came to visit Cuba, Castro put Christmas back on the calendar after having outlawed it altogether as Christmas 'interfered' with the harvesting of sugar, their greatest export.

In towns and cities alike, just as Midnight Mass is about to begin church bells sound, **fireworks**, cherry bombs and sparklers, known as *estrellitas explotan everywhere* announcing the birth of Christ and beckoning people to attend the service. In the midst of what may appear in some places like a crazed battlefield, people hug and celebrate gleefully much like Americans (or should I say, *Norte Americanos*) do at the turn of midnight on New Year's Eve.

In most of Latin America the magical gift giver is 'Baby Jesus', *El Niño Jesús* or *El Niño Dios*. A few countries celebrate with *Papá Noel* (Father Christmas), and similarly, San Nicolas in Guatemala, and el Viejito Pascuero (Old Man Christmas) in Chile—all characters who look a lot like Santa, with Father Christmas even riding on reindeer. But more and more *Santa Clós* is making inroads, particularly among the affluent.

Christmas day is less of an event in Latin America in general than in the US. One country that does have a Christmas Day tradition is Ecuador where the Andean Indians come down in a procession from the highlands with brightly decorated llamas bringing gifts of produce to lay before the Christ child at their employers' ranch nativity. There the children make speeches of gratitude to Baby Jesus and request blessings on their family and animals. After this, revelry begins with dancing, singing and the ranch owners giving gifts to the workers and their families.



In some countries, presents are withheld until January 6th. **The Day of the Epiphany, El Día de los Reyes Magos**, the day that honors the Three Kings coming from the East following the star to visit the Christ Child in Bethlehem. Children write letters to the Kings or Wise Men as they do here to Santa. In one Mexican town, kids gather at the central plaza to purchase helium balloons onto which they attach their letters and send them out into the sky. (For some lucky kids, like those in Puerto Rico and formerly Cuba, this is second opportunity to receive presents.) Children put out their shoes night before and may even set out grass or hay and water for the camels in the hopes that the Kings will deem them as having been "good," and reward them by filling their shoes with candies and gifts. (In Puerto Rico, the idea of camels just doesn't fly, so hay is set out for the 'horses'.) Another of my favorite variations on this theme takes place in parts of Venezuela, where children awaken to cheeks smeared with a smudge of charcoal to represent the visit from the ebony skinned King Balthazar from Ethiopia.

And it's not over yet! That afternoon or evening a

Merienda is served with hot chocolate and a characteristic *Rosca de Reyes*, a crown-shaped sweet bread decorated with fruits and jewels with figurine of a baby hidden in it. And what does that lead to? Traditionally, the person whose slice contains the baby figurine bears the honor of being the "godparent" of Baby Jesus and hosting yet another dinner celebration on February 2nd *Día del Candelario* or *Candelmas*, the final day of the Christmas season—the day the Manger or Nativity is put away. Again, cause for another party.

My goodness I skipped New Years Eve! Just know it is another state of delightfully mad revelry where some Latin Americans run around carrying globes and suitcases to *bring a year of great travels and gobble down 12 seeded grapes in 12 seconds as the clock chimes down to the stroke of midnight*.

Finally, in describing these holiday celebrations I had to contact myself and not elaborate on the countless specialty dishes and beverages served at this time of year all across Latin America. For for now, you will just have to imagine.... ■

National Latino Leader? The Job is Open

Pew Hispanic Center

By their own reckoning, Latinos living in the United States do not have a national leader. When asked in an open-ended question to name the person they consider "the most important Latino leader in the country today," nearly two-thirds (64%) of Hispanic respondents said they did not know. An additional 10% said "no one."

These findings emerge from the 2010 National Survey of Latinos, a bilingual national survey of 1,375 Hispanic adults conducted prior to this month's mid-term elections by the Pew Hispanic Center, a project of the Pew Research Center.

The most frequently named individual was Sonia Sotomayor, appointed last year to the U.S. Supreme Court. Some 7% of respondents said she is the most important Latino leader in the country. U.S. Rep. Luis Gutierrez (D-Ill.) of Chicago is next at 5%. Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa draws 3%, and Jorge Ramos, an anchor on *Noticiero Univision*, the national evening news program on the Spanish-language television network Univision, drew 2%.

No one else was named by more than 1% of respondents in the 2010 National Survey of Latinos conducted August 17 through September 19, 2010, by landline and cellular telephone. The margin of error for the full sample is plus or minus 3.3 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

The survey explored the subject of leadership in the Latino community in another way. Respondents were presented with the names of eight prominent Latinos and asked if they had heard of each. Those who said they had were then asked if they considered that person to be a leader.

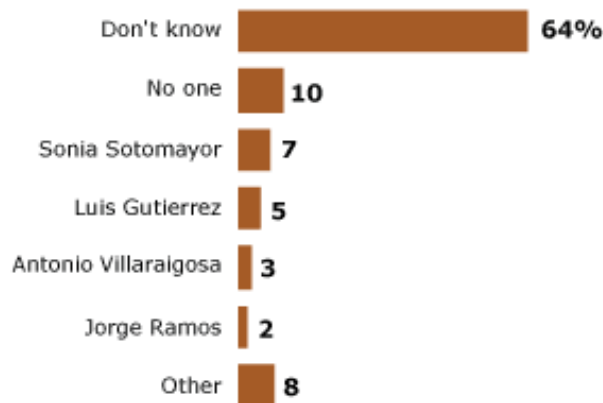
Of the eight names presented, just two were familiar to a majority of respondents: Sotomayor (67%) and Ramos (59%). Four others were known by more than a quarter of respondents: Villaraigosa (44%), Gutierrez (38%), New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson (35%), and UFW co-founder Dolores Huerta (28%). The other two were familiar to only a small share of respondents: U.S. Rep. Raúl Grijalva (D-AZ) of Tucson, Arizona (13%), and Janet Murguía, President and Chief Executive Officer of the National Council of La Raza (8%).

In the follow-up question, anywhere between one-third and two-thirds of



respondents who had heard of each prominent Latino said that they considered that person to be a leader. The highest leadership "score" was received by Sotomayor. Among the 67% who said they had heard of her, some 68% said they consider her to be a leader—meaning that, when the questions are posed in this manner, a total of 45% of survey respondents (67% × 68%) consider her a leader. Ramos is next with a leadership score of 38%, followed by Villaraigosa at 29% and Gutierrez at 23%. No one else on the list had a score above 20%. ■

Who is the Most Important Latino Leader in the Country Today?



Pew Hispanic Center

The Latino Paradox

Studying the long life spans of Latinos in the U.S. might be good for the health of all Americans.

Los Angeles Times

Imagine if the United States could stretch the life span of its population by a couple of years without spending billions of dollars on extra doctor visits or medical technology. That would be worth looking into, right?

Yet as a nation, we have paid scant attention to the so-called Latino paradox – the surprising health of Latinos in the United States considering their generally lower incomes and education levels. They are less likely to have health insurance; they go to doctors less often and receive less in the way of hospitalization or high-level care when they are sick. Yet they appear to have lower rates of heart disease, cancer and stroke, the biggest killers of Americans. Pregnant Latino women get less prenatal care, yet infant mortality is lower among this group.

A recent study by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggests that federal interest has been piqued. The report, released in October, found that Latinos in this country outlive both whites and blacks, with a life expectancy of 80.6 years, compared with 77.7 for the nation as a whole. (People of Asian ancestry have even longer life spans, but because of their relatively high education and affluence levels, those findings are not considered surprising.) Latinos tend to be less educated than African Americans and their poverty rates are similar, yet Latinos outlive black people by nearly eight years.

How can this be? The CDC makes a couple of guesses but offers nothing in the way of research-based explanations. Its study doesn't distinguish between immigrants and non-immigrants, poor Latinos and affluent, people of Bolivian heritage and those of Mexican or Puerto Rican heritage. Yet teasing out the reasons for

Latino health and life expectancy might be one of the most important public-health endeavors the nation could undertake.

Latinos are the fastest-growing minority in the United States, and longevity is an integral part of the nation's health profile. In addition, explanations for the paradox might offer an-



swers to improved well-being and longer life for all Americans.

In a few places across the country, researchers have been probing this mystery for years. Their investigations, though, are limited in funding and in scope – for example, the UCLA Center for the Study of Latino Health and Culture examines data on Latinos only in California. They have not been able to unearth the reasons, but their findings so far have led David Hayes-Bautista, director of the UCLA center, to doubt the main possibilities set forth by the CDC.

The CDC suggests, for instance, that the data might simply be wrong, that perhaps people's ages at death were misstated. But Hayes-Bautista says that the data are always questioned at first because the results are so surprising, yet studies keep reaching the same conclusion. Another theory put forward by the CDC is that the difficulty of immigrating might lead only the hardiest people to come to the United States. In response, Hayes-Bautista points out that most Latinos are born here, and there are no huge differences in health – at least so far -

- between them and immigrants. The CDC also brings up what's known as the "salmon bias" – the possibility that older, ailing Latino immigrants might return home for their last months of life. To this, Hayes-Bautista responds that most elderly Latino immigrants have lived in the U.S. for decades and have deep family and community ties here; there is little to draw them back to their native countries. Simple genetic differences are seen as unlikely because, even within individual Latin American nations, people come from a variety of ethnic backgrounds.

Another explanation – that aspects of Latino culture such as health-related behaviors, attitudes and social networks are at play – is mentioned only briefly in the CDC report, which focuses solely on a statistical analysis of death certificates. The next step for the federal government, which is looking to reduce medical costs and increase wellness by boosting preventive care and healthy lifestyles, should be to fund large-scale national research on the topic. Others cannot suddenly adopt Latinos' DNA, but they can learn to change how they act.

For example, pregnant Latino women are less likely to smoke, drink alcohol, use drugs or have sexually transmitted diseases than American women as a whole. That probably helps to explain the lower infant mortality rates, and quite probably health later in life.

Here's another behavioral difference: According to a Stanford study, white adults know more about nutrition than Latino adults – but Latinos eat somewhat more healthfully, with higher consumption of fruits and vegetables. Another possibility is exercise. In California, a 2005 study found, Latinos walk more than any ethnic group except American Indians, though another study found that

Latinos get less exercise. Much of that walking is for transportation rather than leisure, because they are less likely to own a car.

Many studies have found that social networks have a profound effect on health. Latino culture is particularly family-oriented; there also are strong community and neighborhood networks, often tied to the church.



If any or all of these are factors in the Latino paradox, there's reason for concern that they will diminish over time. Second- and third-generation Latinos in the United States tend to smoke and drink more than their immigrant forebears. Fast food, an expensive luxury in such countries as Mexico, is often the cheapest available food here and dominates the restaurant scene in poor black and Latino neighborhoods. Billboards for fast food also are more common in these neighborhoods, according to a report this month from Yale University's Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity. And a report last week from the National Council of La Raza concludes that although Latino children who immigrate to the U.S. with their parents have lower rates of obesity than their U.S.-born peers, their risk of obesity increases the longer they live here. Nearly 40% of Latino children in this country are overweight or

obese. Mexican American women are 30% more likely to be overweight than white American women.

Of the top 10 causes of death in the United States, one – diabetes, an obesity-related disease – is far more common among Latinos than the population as a whole. In other words, acculturation to the American way of life may worsen the health of Latinos, especially when combined with lack of access to medical care.

The piecemeal research so far offers tantalizing hints to preserving life and health with a minimum of spending, but it will take a large-scale epidemiological study to unravel the lessons in the Latino paradox for all of us. ■

Hispanic Market Briefs

Small, Focused, Quick Turnaround Quantitative Studies



A cost efficient, quick turnaround way to learn about the Hispanic consumer.

Ideal for agency pitches or for quick answers to marketing questions.

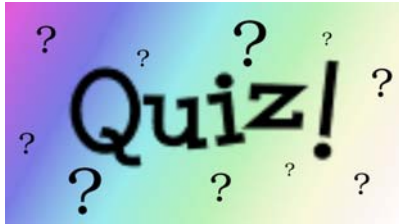
Sample Size:	n=100
Market:	Client selected from top 10
Deliverables:	Cross tabulations (20 banner points)
Questionnaire:	12-13 minutes in length (close ends) / no less than 35% incidence/ Language of preference (English or Spanish)
Sampling:	Dual frame (surname and population density)
Cost:	\$5,000 (each additional n=100 is \$4,500)

For additional information contact:

305-445-2211

Poorly Researched: Advertising Faux Pas

Here are some examples of where market research would have avoided some marketing mistakes. See if you can figure out what the mistakes were...



- In Taiwan, Pepsi-Cola made a very grave error (no pun intended) with their slogan 'Come alive with the Pepsi generation'. The catch phrase was translated a little too literally in Taiwanese, and ended up saying what?
 - Death to all drinkers, then rebirth
 - Pepsi will bring your ancestors back from the dead
 - Pepsi will bring your ancestors back from the dead
 - Bring your pets alive once more with Pepsi
- In South America, a company marketed cars called 'Pinto'. After a while, they wondered why they weren't selling. It was because in Brazil 'Pinto' is a slang term for small male genitalia. Which company produced the 'Pinto'?
 - Ford
 - Nissan
 - Chrysler
 - Fiat
- In China, Coca-Cola used the name 'Ke-Kou-Ke-La', which means 'bite the wax tadpole' or 'a female horse stuffed with wax' until it was realised what this slogan meant. They had to make do with 'Ko-Kou-Ko-Le' in the end. What does 'Ko-Kou-Ko-Le' mean?
 - Coca-Cola makes a happy drinker
 - Happiness in the mouth
 - Smile Coca-Cola
 - Glee
- Coca-Cola in the Caribbean: in Cuba, the Coca-Cola Company tried to write 'Tome Coca-Cola' in the sky, but an unfortunate wind blew the sign. Instead of saying 'Drink Coca-Cola', it said 'Fear Coca-Cola'. What word was 'tome' mistaken for?
 - Tiepe
 - Lome
 - Tandra
 - Teme
- The Parker company made a colossal mistake when they tried to market their leak proof pens. Instead of advertising 'It won't leak in your pocket and embarrass you', they accidentally claimed that 'It won't leak in your pocket and make you pregnant'. In what language was this mistake made?
 - Portuguese
 - Spanish
 - Chinese
 - Greek
- When sung, the lyrics of this French Coca-Cola marketing campaign were easy to mishear. Instead of then telling you to 'Have a Coke and a smile', you may have heard them telling you to have a Coke and a ____?
 - Mouse
 - Revolver
 - Cake
 - Apothecary
- Chi Chi's, the Mexican food chain, is actually American. After all, no self-respecting Mexican would call a restaurant Chi Chi's, as it is a rude term. What are 'Chi Chis' in Mexico?
 - Badly behaved children
 - Breasts
 - Old cars
 - Vagrants
- 'Mensa' also got their name fundamentally wrong. Once again, Spanish is the problematic language, as 'Mensa' means something very ironic to the people of all Spanish speaking countries. What, though?
 - Stupid woman
 - Wires
 - Cafeteria
 - Useless
- KFC told the world that their chicken was 'finger lickin' good', but what did they tell the people of China?
 - Horrible death now
 - The best dead birds
 - Eat your fingers off
 - Lick it and love
- When the Dairy Association experienced huge success with the 'Got Milk?' campaign, they decided to run the advertisement in Mexico. It was soon brought to their attention the Spanish translation meant something rather inappropriate. What?
 - Milk - from the cow to you
 - Nothing sucks like this
 - Are you lactating?
 - Drink milk and die

If you want the answers to these 10 questions send us an email at info@multicultural-insights.com and in the subject line type "Answer Key" and we will send you the correct responses. ■

Multicultural Insights

4130 Aurora Street
Suite F
Coral Gables, FL 33146
Tel: 305-445-2211
Fax: 305-445-8554
info@multicultural-insights.com



Sylvia Nieto-Vidal
Managing Partner, Operations
Marlise Rojas
Managing Partner, Project Mgt.
Rose Becker
Managing Partner, Data Management
Jacqueline Sánchez-Volny
Qualitative Director